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Lincoln, Nebraska

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**The First National Bank**

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THESE SAUCES are really "home-made," put up expressly for family use from old well tried West India recipes, and are acknowledged to be "Standard" goods wherever they are used. Address Lancaster, F. O., Lancaster county, Nebraska.

**COUNT MITKIEWICZ.**

HOW HE NEGOTIATED CERTAIN CONCESSIONS FROM CHINA.

The Count Converses with a Correspondent on His Experiences in the Celestial Empire—How He Dined with and Dribbed the Prime Minister.



Count Mitkiewicz is an interesting character. Few men within the past few years have occupied more of general public attention, and few men are personally more popular in Washington.

Several years ago the count conceived the idea of going into the comparatively unknown country of the "heathen Chinese" and of obtaining certain valuable concessions for American capitalists.

It never appears to have struck any other progressive and aggressive American in the world for investment. Here was a country with 400,000,000 inhabitants and an area so great that even the United States would be comparatively lost if placed in one corner. With all this population and with all this territory there was but one telegraph and one railroad, not a single telephone, no letter carrier system, no government mint, and, what was still more surprising, no system of governmental revenue.

The count determined to penetrate the barriers which had been raised about the Chinese empire principally by British capital and British enterprise. The greatest difficulty encountered by the count in pushing his scheme was really in America. He first had to overcome the natural prejudice in this country against foreigners. His scheme also was so far away, and at the same time so gigantic in its conception and the results it promised, that many American capitalists who were approached were startled by its very magnitude. The first man to take hold of these Chinese concessions was no less a man than the prominent banker, Wharton Barker, of Philadelphia. Later the gigantic deal had for its supporters such men as Colonel Elliott F. Shepard and the Chinese minister at Washington.

So far the count has been unable to produce these Chinese concessions and deliver them over to his associates in the enterprise. But he has by no means despaired of accomplishing this result. In fact he said today that he regarded this as the work of his life and would certainly succeed before he died. The count claims that it is simply a battle between English and American enterprise and capital, and that, as a naturalized American, he is determined to see the thing brought to a successful conclusion. After many months of work the count finally sailed for China, backed not only by American capital, but with the letters of introduction which guaranteed to him an introduction and an audience with Li Hung Chang, the prime minister of the Chinese empire and the seventh prince, the uncle of the emperor. The count's remarkable experience in China reads like a fairy tale, and is best told in his own words. In describing it he said:

"On my arrival at Shanghai I was informed that shortly a steamer sent by the Viceroy Li Hung Chang would be placed at my disposal. The vessel was such as is used only by the royalty, and from this I was convinced that my letters of introduction to the Chinese officials were of the very best. I went unattended, and was compelled to rely altogether upon an interpreter whose services I secured in Shanghai. But it seems that my person was sacred, and this doubtless accounts for the universal courtesy and attention I met with on every hand.

"I do not doubt but what this attention was very largely due to the lavish expenditure of money. It is a universal custom in China to pay tribute to everything and everybody, and in that country no official considers it a crime to accept a bribe. In fact they do not consider it as a bribe, but rather as one of their legitimate perquisites. I started in with the Chinamen who handled my

luggage and worked my way up to the prime minister of the Chinese empire, and what with presents of costly silks and diamonds at the end of a two months' trip I found that my expenses had reached the enormous sum of twenty-five thousand odd dollars.

"A small fortune, you might say, and in truth it was, but in reality it was but the beginning. There has already been spent on these Chinese concessions certainly not less than \$200,000, and it will take as much more to secure them. What will they be worth? No man can tell. Millions certainly, but how many? It takes one's breath away in very truth when he thinks of the possibility. Just think of the value today of the entire railroad system of the United States, the telegraph reaching into every hole and corner of the land, and the telephone system now in nearly every city of any size. Their value is billions of dollars—not millions. Such sum ultimately be the value of the same kind of property in China, where there are 400,000,000 people, and where there is an area four times the size of the United States.

"Every Chinaman is on the make. I don't care how small he is officially, or how young he is in years, each and every one of them is after the mighty dollar. It matters not whether it is an American dollar or a British sovereign or a Chinese tael, it is all the same to the pigtail gentry of the empire. It is a very rare thing indeed for a foreigner to secure an audience with the prime minister of China; in fact it was even more difficult than securing an audience with James G. Blaine when he was secretary of state, and that, you know, was regarded as one of the most difficult things in Washington.

"I had a very indefinite idea of Chinese customs, and had assumed, with my American ideas, that being presented to the prime minister coupled with it a presentation to his immediate family. But I was doomed to disappointment. On my way from Shanghai to Peking I had heard a great deal about the wonderful beauty of the wives of Li Hung Chang, and had looked forward to the pleasure of meeting them. But during my entire interview with the minister I never set eyes on anything in the shape of Chinese womanhood, notwithstanding the fact that he has some twenty odd wives, each and every one of them with as much curiosity as any American woman that ever lived.

"I mentioned they had but one railroad in all China, and that, too, but twelve miles in length. There is nothing,



therefore, in the way of rapid transit there. You either have to go by boat or ride in a wagon train. Both are extremely slow, and an ordinary journey occupies two or three days. The aristocracy of China and all visitors who come with proper credentials are carried about the streets in litters. When I reached Peking they took me to a hotel and gave me a sumptuous apartment in which the predominating colors were red and yellow. The house was built of bamboo, the ceilings were low, but I must confess that everything about it was well built, and the effect on the whole could not help but be pleasing. I have heard it said that Chinamen know nothing of the harmony of color, but my experience is that they usually get an effect which is pleasing even to the artistic eye.

"I shall never forget my first supper in China. Of course I had to eat with chopsticks, and I do not doubt that my efforts to impress the attendants who were constantly about me with an idea that I was thoroughly accustomed to everything Chinese accounted largely for the many subdued smiles I noted on the stolid countenances of those who served me. I cannot say that this supper, or in fact any other meal of which I partook while in China, had that self-satisfying result that good old-fashioned beefsteak and potatoes have for me in America. To be perfectly frank, I went hungry most of the time, and that was my condition on the night I was presented to Li Hung Chang, the prime minister of China.

"Shortly after dark a high official of the government called upon me, and through my interpreter informed me that my presence was demanded at the imperial mansion. I had on my dress coat, which made me all the more out of keeping with the elaborate costumes of the richly clad Chinamen about me. Flanked on either side by one of these gayly dressed Chinamen, I marched out and found a litter carried by four sturdy natives. The litter was covered with a canopy upholstered in the richest of Chinese silk. On either side stood a swarthy Celestial, flaming torch in hand. As I approached the men bearing the litter sank to their knees, so that I might step aboard. When I was comfortably seated the curtains were drawn, the men rose, and the procession wended its way slowly to the house of Li Hung Chang. There was no crowding about by the common people, as there is in America, for the common people of China are subdued and disciplined like an army of soldiers. There is no gaping mob there. "I had heard that the palace was a very beautiful building, but I was not prepared for the sight that met my gaze.

It was ablaze with light, and there certainly must have been several thousand lanterns, for candle power is the only light used in China. It may seem incredible that a nation of 400,000,000, so much older than ours, and with such vast natural resources, should in the Nineteenth century be practically without railroads, without a telegraph, without a telephone, without any postal service and without any governmental mint. But it is still more incredible that they should be without anything in the way of light at night other than candle power. But the effect of this is certainly as pleasing as anything I have seen either in America or in Europe. The light of every candle shone through some gayly colored lantern, and over the whole scene there was that soft radiance which neither gas nor electricity can produce.

"However we of America may attempt to belittle the Chinaman, there is little justification for it. True it is he is far behind us in many ways, but he has abilities peculiarly his own, and whatever he does attempt he succeeds in. There is a great deal of what we call red tape in this country in everything official in China. You can get some idea of the formality of things when I tell you that before I reached the august presence of Li Hung Chang I was presented in turn to seven different officials, each higher than the one who presented me. Finally I reached the prime minister. By that time I was very much worked up, and scarcely able to make a good presentation of my case through the interpreter. But my nervousness that I may have felt was doubtless overcome by the rich presents I brought, and which were placed at Li Hung Chang's feet with great ceremony.

"My instructions had been to walk up to the foot of the throne, bend my knee and bow low. I did this and remained there until commanded to rise. Standing before the prime minister I stated my case with all the eloquence of which I was capable, and the fact that I was finally successful justifies me in part in saying that eloquence won the day. Before I left Li Hung Chang had promised me all I asked for, and more. Returning from China I brought with me official grants of concessions more valuable perhaps than any one had ever obtained. That they are not now being put to practical use is due only to the fact that English capital, through its American agents, has interfered and temporarily prostrated my plans. In the end, however, I am confident that American genius and enterprise and capital will win the day even against British gold and British cunning."

WALTER WELLMAN.

**"THE PICKLED WALNUTS."**

How an Iconoclast Satirized Some Suburban Fads.

[Special Correspondence.]

MONTCLAIR, N. J., Nov. 17.—Not long ago I took a jaunt out through upper Montclair in order to loosen my joints a bit. I was quite surprised to see such beautiful villas on every hand, and soon learned that this charming suburb is the spot for the man who delights in windmills, reindeer, black swans and peacocks.

"And I noticed also that every place had a name after the English fashion. Even houses standing on fifty foot lots were called Skyhurst, Cloudvale, the Cedars, etc. While musing upon the absurdity of a ridiculous fashion I met a man. As he had on a long checked suit and a single barreled eyeglass I concluded that he must belong in that region.

"Good morning," I said; "do you belong around here?"

"Yes," he replied, "I have belonged around here for something like six years, but I am not going to belong around here longer than the time it will require to get to the station after the moment my lease expires."

"Don't you like the place? It certainly seems very beautiful."

"It is beautiful," replied my friend. "It is altogether too beautiful for me. I want a lonely old fashioned place. You see these intensely English clothes and the eyeglass?"

"I do," I replied.

"Well," he continued, "I detest them, but I have to wear them to match the place in which I live. I also have to cut the horse's tail for the same reason, and I just long to get out of here to get into a homely suit of United States clothing once more, and give the horse's tail a chance to grow long enough to brush the flies off the small of his back."

"The thing I don't like about it," I replied, "is this ridiculous custom of naming the places. Now what sense is there in calling a \$5,000 house on a \$200 lot 'Cotswold'?"

"Do you know I antagonized every one about here by calling my place—now what do you think I called it?"

"Pine View?" I suggested.

"No; guess once more."

"Hazelhurst?" I ventured to reply.

"No; you are wrong again. I did not call it by any picturesque, misleading name; I called it the Pickled Walnuts. And I gave it this name to burlesque the system of naming small places at all."

"And you say your neighbors didn't like it?"

"They did not, because I painted the name on a stone at the gate. And then, to get even with them, I called the stable Blythedale Terrace, the dog house Nanticon Lodge, and the henry the Slippery Elms."

"And what did the people say?"

"I don't know what they did not say. I think they are talking yet. And if they are not they will be when they learn that I have called the ramshackle house in which my coachman lives Westminster hall. If you want to live out here you've got to be English from head to foot and wear a single beveled eyeglass and white duck uppers and play crickets. But I'll get out as soon as I can, and when I once more get into a ten dollar suit of clothes, and grow a tail on the horse, I'll apply for papers of American citizenship." Then he passed on, trembling with emotion.

B. K. MUNKITTICZ.

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