

FERTILE FORMOSA.

QUEER ISLAND JUST ACQUIRED BY JAPAN.

Oxen Used in Place of Horses—
"Skull Chambers" in the Houses—
Habits of the People—Chief
Source of Camphor Supply.

NAVAL officers and diplomats are especially interested in the effort which Japan is making to get possession of the island of Formosa as a part of the result of her victory over China. They consider it a very shrewd move and as showing how far seeing the statesmen and diplomats of that Nation of "Eastern Yankees" are. Formosa is the most southerly of a long range of islands stretching southward from Japan parallel with the coast of China. Gradually and very quietly Japan has

with Japanese steamers plying between Tokio, Japan, and Tamsui, Formosa, those Americans who want to enjoy the luxury of riding upon oxen, listening to singing fishes, making the acquaintance of monkeys in their native forests, sleeping in "skull chambers," to tone up their fighting qualities, or making their own supply of camphor gum, will find the visit to Formosa pleasant. As already indicated, ox riding is the popular method of traveling there, singing fishes are found in the rivers, as are also flying fishes, the making of camphor is an important industry, and the natives of the eastern part of the island all have their "skull chamber" attached to their houses, where they display the skulls of all the Chinese that they and their ancestors have killed, and in which their young men sleep in order to tone up their nerve and make them valiant in battle.

There has been for generations a constant hostility between the natives,

tracting the gum from cracks and fissures in the trunks and branches. In Japan and Formosa, however, it is produced by boiling the wood of the camphor tree and obtaining the gum by distillation.

THE CORACLE.

Most Ancient Form of Boat is Coming into Fashion Again.

It is rather curious that the most ancient form of boat known to us is now coming again into fashionable use. Most people will remember a vision of their school days when in some history book they learned with interest of the wood-eating Briton embarked in his rude boat of wickerwork, covered with the skin of some wild animal. This coracle, which our remote ancestors used of necessity, Englishmen of to-day are beginning to use of choice, and many a wealthy fisherman may be seen on our streams seated in one of these funny little boats, diligently whipping the water for trout or salmon.

It is a tribute to the merits of the coracle that it has never been allowed to disappear from our rivers; notably on the Dee, the Wye and the Severn it always has been and still is the favorite companion of the men who look to the river for a living. On the Dee, not only is it used for rod-fishing, but also for a special form of netting for salmon.

Curious, also, that in shape it still resembles the half of a walnut shell, which the early Britons seem to have taken for their type, and that the skin, which there are now no wild animals to supply, is only replaced by rough sack, thickly coated with tar.

The reason why the coracle has lived through so many hundred years is undoubtedly its portability. A fisherman lifts it out of his cottage corner and slings it, by a strap attached to the seat, across his shoulders, then he places his paddle across his back, so that the tail of the boat will not jog his legs, and he is ready



EASY TO CARRY.

—so light is the weight—for a good long walk to the stream he has selected to fish. Should fish not be plentiful there, it is not much trouble to carry his coracle to a more likely spot and embark again.

To a man who understands a coracle there is no safer boat, but to one who has not mastered its little ways it is a terrible "bucker" and will almost certainly part company with its occupant. The boat is so light and so flat-bottomed and takes such little water that it requires very careful getting in and out.

The manner of propulsion is one entirely peculiar to the coracle, and is best described as sea sculling reversed—the paddler sits facing his work and moves the paddle in semi-circles through the water in front of him, at the same time pulling the blade toward him. But it takes some little time to learn this peculiar stroke; a very slight extra pressure to right or left will set the little boat spinning round and round like a top. Nowadays many amateur fishermen are adopting the coracle, and a superior build of boat has been brought

into existence, in which the willow frame is replaced by one of light laths, and painted canvas takes the place of



EASY TO STEER WHEN YOU KNOW HOW.

the tarred canvas. Even such a luxurious boat costs very little to build. —Westminster Budget.

A Healthiest of Drinks.

The Journal of Hygiene says that lemonade is the healthiest of all drinks and should be used instead of alcoholic drinks, coffee or tea. Here is recipe for making hygienic lemonade: For a quart, take the juice of three lemons, using the rind of one of them. Carefully peel the rind very thin, getting just the yellow outside. This cut into pieces and put with the juice and powdered sugar, of which use two ounces to the quart, in a jug or jar with a cover. When the water is at boiling point, pour it over the lemon and sugar; cover at once and allow to cool.

"As Scarce as Gold Dollars."

A Chicago paper tells about a gentleman of that city who a short time ago wanted fifty gold dollars for some purpose. He applied to his bank for them, and was offered the amount in larger coins, but the dollars they did not have. He looked further, and soon found that there were no gold dollars to be had in Chicago, not even at the sub-treasury. He wrote to New York and Washington, but the dollars could not be found. Finally he learned that they could be had in San Francisco, but only on the payment of fifty per cent. premium. It is said that there has not been a gold dollar coined in forty years, and that altogether but 1,004,000 have been minted.

A Bicycle Prodigy.

Alton E. Porter, son of J. W. Porter, of Boston, Mass., is probably the youngest bicycle rider who races against time and "goes after" the



LITTLE ALTON E. PORTER.

records. Although less than five years old he has ridden one-third of a mile in one minute and five seconds and made twenty-five miles in three hours and five minutes. He is in great demand at athletic entertainments in Boston and vicinity and is a favorite with the bicycle public. On all his trips he is accompanied by his father, who superintends his training and takes proper care of him. The little fellow rides a bicycle said to weigh nine and one-half pounds.

BEST TYPE OF BEAUTY.



MISS EDITH GIFFIN, SELECTED AS PRIZE WINNER BY THE COMMITTEE OF JUDGES IN THE CALIFORNIA BEAUTY CONTEST.

DOINGS OF THE G. A. R.

TAYLOR'S TOMB.

Comrades Should Visit It While in Louisville in September.

In view of the fact that the next National Encampment will be held at Louisville, Ky., it may be of interest to the comrades, as well as others who attend, to know that Gen. Zachary Taylor's tomb and monument are located four miles east of that city. I was in Louisville the 1st of May, and concluded I would visit the grave of the hero at Buena Vista. I made inquiries of some of the old residents of the city about the locality and the facilities for getting there, and was very much astonished at the ignorance manifested by men who had lived in the city all their lives. They all seemed to know the General was buried east of the city, but were profoundly ignorant of the exact locality or the route. I finally got a young business man of the town to accompany me to a buggy. When we were ready to start I met an old comrade, a resident of the city. He said he could not give me the information I wanted, but if I would go to the City Hall the Chief of Police could give me all the information I needed, because he was a grandson of the General. However, he had become skeptical by this time, and our time was limited, and we thought it just possible the grandson had forgotten where his great ancestor was buried. So we drove out Main street to the suburb of Clifton, and when we came to the tollgate we inquired of the old lady who kept the road. She said we were on the Harrodsburg road; we would have to cross over the railroad to the Brownsboro road. Although she never saw the monument, she thought it was eight or nine miles out on that road. We thanked her and drove on as directed, and about three miles from the tollgate we came in sight of the monument a quarter of a mile from the Brownsboro pike, in family graveyard on the old Taylor farm. The monument stands about one rod south of the tomb, or vault, where the General is buried. The vault is closed with a very rusty iron door, on which is the simple inscription, "Zachary Taylor." The monument is of granite, and about 30 feet high, including the life-sized figure of the General, which stands at parade rest, in full uniform, with the left hand resting on the hilt of his sword, and the right thrust in his bosom. On the south side of the monument is the following inscription: "I am ready to die. My only regret is for the friends I leave behind me." And below this is: Major General Zachary Taylor, Twelfth President of the United States. Born Nov. 24, 1784; died July 25, 1850.

On the west side are the names of his battles in Mexico—De la Palma, Monterey, Buena Vista, Resaca, Palo Alto.

On the north side is the eagle and shield and muskets and two flags crossed.

On the east side of the monument is inscribed, "Fort Harrison, Black Hawk, Okechobee." —JAMES BROWN, Evans' Landing, Indiana.

KANSAS STATE HOME.

During the last session of the Kansas State Legislature it made an appropriation of \$104,000 for the maintenance of the State Soldiers' Home at Fort Dodge, for the years 1895-'96, the same thing considered quite liberal to run the institution and more than had been allowed in previous years.

At present Capt. D. L. Sweeney, architect and builder, has a competent corps of masons and carpenters busily engaged erecting cottages, several of which are in course of construction, and when finished families will be admitted. Several applications are on file with Commandant, but owing to a lack of quarters and funds they cannot be admitted. Some 30 cottages will be built within two years and with the facilities in view, it will be the means of relieving the distress of the most needy of the old soldiers and their families.

During the month of March last Enos Reed, Commandant of the Home resigned, and Maj. C. M. Cunningham received the appointment. The Major is full of energy and busily engaged at present, so that much improvement is being made in the Home. He is, during this short time made vast improvements in fencing, making streets and setting out trees; many of them he sent for at a distance; they are choice evergreens. The Major seems to be a pleasant gentleman, very plain and agreeable with all whom he comes in contact, and, as a rule, the inmates seem to like him very well.

There are at present over 300 men, women and children cared for at the home; they vary in age from one year up to 87—the oldest. The garden has all appearance of producing this season; it is irrigated by water pumped into reservoir. As for depending on any other production from the soil in this part of the State, it is only a mere chance, as the dry winds parch everything. We are proud of our Governor. He has said he would try and make the Home a comfortable resting place for the comrades, at least, during his Administration. We consider Comrade E. N. Merrill the friend of the old soldiers, and he has been known in the Congress and while Governor of Kansas. He can be relied upon at all times and under all circumstances. —THOMAS HOURS, State Soldiers' Home, Fort Dodge, Kan.

Apple Rust.

Who that has seen an cider-press in operation has not admired the deep, rich, golden-brown or golden-red color that the juice of the apples assume as it gathers in the receptacles? This characteristic hue of cider is almost as pleasing to the eye as the flavor of the fresh, sweet juice is to the sense of taste. It reminds one of the colors of the autumn landscapes amid which the apples have ripened. But science says that cider owes its beautiful color to the fact that it oxidizes or rusts.

A French chemist has recently shown that the apple contains an oxidizing ferment, a kind of diatase, which produces the brownish or reddish color of cider. The manner in which this substance produces oxidation can readily be observed by any one who cuts an apple open and leaves it exposed for a short time to the air. The cut surfaces gradually turn red, as the oxygen of the air unites with the juice, or in a word, the apple rusts.

This rusting of an apple may also be brought about by simply bruising the fruit without breaking the skin. Everybody knows that apples that have fallen violently to the ground show red or rusty spots underneath the bruised rind. In this case the oxygen is derived from the air contained in the ducts or interstices among the tissues of the fruit, and it becomes active through the breaking of the cells that inclose the oxidizing ferment.

If an apple is cooked before its skin is broken its tissues do not oxidize when exposed to the air. This is explained on the supposition that the oxidizing properties of the ferment are destroyed by heat.

But let the apple rust if it likes; the uncounted thousands who look upon it as the king of fruits will never regard their favorite the less fondly for that. And who knows how much of its deliciousness in the mouth may be due to the very element that causes it to oxidize when left wasting in the air?

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

The sequoia is the big tree of California.

A planter near Alpharetta, Ga., has a large field of red cotton.

In Hamburg, Germany, the authorities tax a dog according to its size.

The driest place in the world is that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile.

More than 1,000,000 horses and mules have been thrown out of a job in the United States by the trolley wires.

A first-water diamond, engraved with the figure of a two-headed bull, has been discovered by the excavators at Pompeii.

An unpublished letter of Columbus, addressed to two officers of the King of Arragon in 1493, was read at the last session of the Academy of Moral and Political Science in Paris.

R. M. Chattell of Chicago, has an Egyptian coin more than 2,000 years old. It is a silver piece of the time of Queen Berenice, wife of Ptolemy III, who reigned about 245 B. C.

Custom officers near Bagnade recently seized a lot of human bones consigned to a Vienna bone-boiling house. They had once belonged to Russian and Turkish soldiers who fell in the war of 1878.

Lewis Pierca of Batavia, N. Y., was wounded twice in the last war, and has been struck by lightning once, twice shipwrecked at sea, and smashed and crushed in several runaways. The other day a finger was crushed.

It is related of a Portland, England ship owner, who read of his vessel being reported that he took the latitude and longitude in which the vessel was said to have been seen, and found she was in the desert of Sahara.

Bank notes, or "flying money," was first issued in China 2697 B. C. These notes were printed in blue ink on paper from the fibre of the mulberry tree. One issued in 1399 B. C. is preserved in the Asiatic museum at St. Petersburg.

Among the Arabs a practice from time immemorial has prevailed of churning by placing the milk in leather skins, which are shaken or beaten until the butter comes. A bag of milk is tied to a short rope, the other end of which is fastened to a saddle, and the horse made to trot.

Puff-Balls Good to Eat.

Probably you have all noticed the little white puff-balls in spring, and "shot off" the same in autumn, when they are dry and full of dark powder. This is one of our choicest eatable mushrooms. One admirer says he cut a slice from a giant puff-ball, which grew near his home, every day for a week, and had so many fresh fritters; whereas, if he had cut it all down the first day, it would not have made nearly so many delicious meals. One giant puff-ball, when young and creamy, if well cooked, will satisfy the appetites of twelve people. In olden times slices of this mushroom were used to bind up cuts, and were said to insure their speedy healing. In the days of flint and steel, before matches were invented, the powder of the dried puff-balls was often used to catch and hold the sparks. Another strange use to which it was put was to burn it before a bee-hive. The fumes made the bees drowsy, and the honey could be removed without difficulty. —St. Nicholas.

Money Struck By Lightning.

Fragments of a two-dollar treasury note were presented at the Sub-Treasury for redemption recently by a resident in one of the counties of Maryland.

"This was struck by lightning," he said, as he exhibited two pieces of the note. The note had apparently been burned lengthwise through the middle leaving the top and bottom margins. The burned portion that was missing was from a half to one and a half inches wide. The edges of the remaining parts were charred.

The man said his home in the country was recently struck by lightning; that the note was in the cupboard at the time, and that the lightning entered the cupboard, burning the note as described.

The number and seal on the parts of the note were legible and genuine, and consequently the note was redeemed. —Burlington Sun.

Indefensible.

Mudge—A fellow called me a blamed idiot last night. Would you challenge him if you were I?

Yabsley—No. You couldn't be a blamed idiot, because an idiot is not blamable. Therefore his statement is not worth contending over. —Indianapolis Journal.



NATIVE FORMOSANS.

for years been extending her influence and ownership along this range of islands, which command the seacoast of her ancient enemy, China, and now she proposes to seize as a prize of war the most important of them all, Formosa. Controlling most of the northern part of this range of islands already, it will be easy for her, if she obtains this one, to gather in the remainder and thus command to a large degree the ocean front of China.

Formosa, although spoken of as an island, is as large as Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, and has about as large a population as they have. But it must be admitted that as a whole the people of Formosa are a little behind the latest developments in cultured New England. For instance, when a Formosan wants to make a trip to the neighboring village or to see his best girl or otherwise, he does not travel by railway or trolley or carriage, but quietly saddles and bridges his ox and makes the trip in a style that would be at least novel in this country. Horses are an almost unknown luxury in Formosa, especially in the eastern part of the island, where the natives still hold sway.

It is about 400 years since Euro-

peans became aware of the existence of Formosa, and those intrepid navigators, the Portuguese, gave it the name "Ilha Formosa," which is translated to mean "Beautiful Island." Since that time it has been called by the Chinese "Taiwan," which means "Terraced Harbor," by the natives "Kabonka" and "Gadiva," by Europeans "Formosa," and also is often spoken of as "the granary of China,"

wheat, corn, barley, millet, tea, sugar, indigo, peanuts, jute, hemp, and many other articles. So it has been peopled by Chinese who have come over from the quiet agricultural provinces of Pekin and Swatow, just across the channel on the mainland, and they have brought their customs and dress and style of houses and ways of living with them. They are Chinese in appearance, though some of them intermingle and intermarry with the natives, adopt some of their customs, while the people east of the mountains cling to their Malay habits and dress, in part, at least, wearing a scanty costume of blue cloth, staining their teeth red with the betel nut, burying their dead in the very spot where they expire, ornamenting their chambers with the skulls of their slaughtered enemies, but gradually giving way to the ideas of the Chinese, either by being killed off in war or with brandy and opium or by intermarrying with them and adopting in part their dress and methods.

The illustrations show the various classes of people now inhabiting Formosa. One is a group of the natives who have made little progress toward accepting Chinese ways; they dwell in bamboo cottages, raised on terraces, have no written language and live under a sort of tribal or patriarchal system, using lances, bows and arrows and a few guns in their wars. Another shows a group of Fokien people who have so largely populated the western part of the island. A third is a type of the Swatow people who have also added largely in making up the Chinese population in the island.

Formosa has been for years the chief source of camphor supply, though of late a good deal has been made in Japan. Outside of these the only supply of camphor in the world is that of Borneo and Sumatra, where it is obtained by splitting the trees and ex-



FOKIEN FORMOSANS.

because of its fertility and large production of wheat, corn, rice and many other articles of food, which it supplies to the mainland in enormous quantities, taking in exchange the manufactures of the people of China.



A SWATOW FORMOSAN.

Formosa may become, if Japan gets possession of it, an interesting spot to American tourists. Visits to Japan have become quite popular of late, and