

DIARY EXTRACT.

Book 2

This is a photocopy of the Diary
kept by

Engineer W.G.Robertson

of the

Victorian Naval Force

The diary was commenced whilst on

HMVS Cerberus

Where he volunteered and went to China in 1900

as a member of the Victorian Contingent

during the Boxer Rebellion

The 8 Fan-ti or Governor of Pao-tung-Fu is being tried by a Commission sitting in the Pung-li-Yamen, (all prisoners get a fair trial by a mixed tribunal of the Allied forces) I had not yet heard what his fate is to be but am afraid his head is shak'y. He was returning from the Yamen when I saw him, with a Sixth guard. He is a sleek well fed looking celestial and very richly clothed.

He is charged with not having been so active in suppressing the Boxer movement as he might have been, he in fact instigated the murder of the Europeans. He pleaded hard to be attended by his own servants, but the Court evidently decided that the executioner should not be cheated as his servants would have supplied him with poison. I also saw a Chinese General said to be over 80 years of age and villany. No doubt his head will come off tomorrow, but I felt sorry to see such an old sinner herded with

about 30 of the most repulsive looking
criminals - all Boxers - I have ever seen.
Among them was one who was almost
blind. This gentleman is in for sticking
knives into the bodies of murdered
Europeans, he'll be totally blind
tomorrow. Eight Boxers were shot
yesterday. The Victorians were offered the
honor of shooting them, but declined.
Anyone can shoot prisoners. The Germans
gave them their quarters. ^{the Bappers paid miners} The Germans
are busy mining under the Summer Temple
which is to be blown up. The Chinese
really believe that the Foreign Devils are
only hastening on their own destruction
by desecrating their temple. I understand
that the North, South, East and West
gates are to be blown up. You can form
some idea of the dimensions of the walls
when I tell you that we saw a number
of Indian military bell tents pitched on
top of them. A number of brass cannon are to
be distributed. Our contingent is going to catch

two back with it D.T. We are on the opposite side of the canal to Pao-tung-Fu and have to cross a stone bridge of Chinese construction to reach the city. An immense number of Chinese expose their wares for sale, and I think all the disease in the universe is congregated here. We saw sights that made us shudder—and we had almost seen enough to make us callous. There were lepers, in the last stages.

Men and women with small pox, in some cases confluent, men, women & children in the last stages of syphilis and cripples in a state of deformity that made one's flesh creep. It was a very sad sight, and one I shall always remember. We named that bridge "The bridge of Sighs".

We have seen all that is to be seen here have fulfilled our mission so far and preparing to leave for Tien-Fu but I think we are going to have some rough work before we reach there. There are nine Chinese war junkets to be captured and

eight or nine large villages to be burned down by the water column.

Saturday Oct. 27-00. Left Pao-tung-Fu at 8 a.m. for Tzu-Tzu. Shortly after we had left we heard a loud explosion. I suppose the Inner Temple of Pao-tung-Fu is like the ruins of Jerusalem by this time - not one stone left. Made as much headway as possible and tied up to the bank of the canal at night. - Sunday Oct. 28-00-

The Revueille rounded at day break and I arose, not feeling well today, suffering badly from dysentery. Went for a walk into a village not far distant with a number of men all well armed. Behind the village there is a walled town named Chung-Chin-Du. We met the mandarin who with his staff escorted us to a tea room, a dirty little room with a filthy table and a few forns scattered about. We had numerous cups of alleged tea, and were offered hard boiled eggs. The mandarin sent for his secretary who spoke a few words of English and accompanied us part of the way.

back to the junk, the mandarin sending presents of fowls and eggs with us.

On the way to the junk I indulged in some revolver practice on some Chinese crows on the other side of the canal, the shot was a long one and to my surprise and the dog's I brought it down, I regret to say it was the secretary's dog I had killed.

He declined to go any further probably thinking his turn would come next.

He was a handsome refined looking young fellow and I felt sorry I had offended him.

Remained tied up to the bank all day several parties went out for wild duck & geese. I am still amazed at the enormous flocks of wild duck & geese we see every where, but we have little chance of getting any as there are only two guns in the column.

We visited Chung-chu-fu today, it must be a town of great antiquity, it has been at one time a fine city, but fully one third of it is in ruins and its population seems scarcely wealthy enough to support the

9 very comfortable looking Mandarin and his
u staff consisting of about 20 rather handsome
and well dressed officials. When the
mandarin stepped from his richly
u upholstered sedan chair a servant followed
u holding a large red silk umbrella over
u him in true oriental style. This is about
u the only circumstance that fits in with
u my youthful visions of the Chinese. I once
u thought they knew how to make tea, but
u if the pretty girls in the Melbⁿ tea rooms
u knew as little about it as the Chinese their
u occupation would soon be gone. After a
u careful study of Chinese manners and
u customs I feel with the late Julian Thomas
u "and so one by one the illusions of our
u youth vanish". A number of French
u jeeps were going up with stores to
u Pao-ling-Tu and have just been fired on
u by the Boxers but only two were killed.
u If the Boxers had any knowledge of strategy
u they could kill us all, but seem quite satisfied
u to get a few shots in and run away.

Monday Oct. 29-00. Started down the canal at 7 a.m. Passed Tsinau-sha, the walled city I mentioned on the 18th inst.

I forgot to mention that two lady missionaries and the Rev. Green and family were sent from Sao-tung-Tsu in one of our junks. The Rev. Green looked as if his days were numbered he was very ill, both he and M^{rs} Green and Miss Gray had suffered the most frightful cruelties at the hands of the Boxers. They were in Tsinau-sha and were betrayed by some alleged friendly Chinese, they managed to escape and hid among the rushes for some days, finally being hidden in a cave by some friendly Chinese, they were again discovered and eventually sent to Sao-tung-Tsu where they especially the ladies were subjected to the most inhuman treatment. Behind the junk that conveyed M^{rs} Green & Miss Gray came a sampau with the body of M^{rs} G's little boy who died from the privations it had undergone. I think the poor little

thing saved its parents lives. The Boxers
took a liking to it - I believe it was such
a cheerful merry little thing. The
male missionaries were sleek overfed
looking creatures in great contrast to
the haggard careworn appearance of
the ladies. They dressed in Chinese
costume and wore pig tails that I
would have given a few dollars for.

The missionary man has been the
cause of a lot of trouble in China and
will probably cause more, he goes into the
interior of China with his eyes open, but
nothing can excuse the presence of lady
missionaries, they are not wanted and
the missionary man who takes his wife
to central China deserves to be flogged. A
number of single women find their way
inland but with them the missionary
business is a harmless form of insanity.

They cannot possibly do any good among
Chinese women and they are shocked (the
Chinese ladies) when they hear of European

for miles. After proceeding up a branch canal for about 3 hours could distinguish some tall spars which did not look like those of the ordinary Chinese junk. Upon closer inspection we discovered that they were the vessels we were in search of, and are wondering if they will have the pluck to fight. We now turned on as quickly and as silently as possible (the only way to keep silence in a Chinese junk is with a bamboo) We were well hidden by the rushes and our masts were lowered. A bend of the Canal brought us into open water in front of the village and we came on the alleged war junks so suddenly that they could absolutely offer no resistance. Boarded them and made prisoners of the crews and put guards on board and proceeded to land. The expeditions were well timed the land force arriving about the same time as we did. But again the wily Chm would not fight and it is impossible to tell who are Persians

and who are peaceful villagers. On the approach of any superior force they hide their weapons and indulge in their usual occupations, either tilling the soil or doing nothing - usually the latter. The peaceful people are afraid to assist us in getting the ringleaders as for us soon as we are gone everyone of them would be minus his head. This is another of our many bloodless victories. We have defiled the tombs of their ancestors, made improper remarks concerning the virtue of their lady friends, but we are greeted with nothing but smiles - they beat us every time.

Arrangements were made with the authorities of the village for the payment of a fine of 13,000 dollars, I don't think there was much more in the place. The money of the better class being invested in land, which we could not take with us. We took hostages with us for the payment of the fine tomorrow. We took a sampau full of very fine mus. While in the village I

borrowed a few trifles myself, and gave them to a Chinese Convert to take down to my boat, but it is scarcely necessary to say that Christianity had taken such a hold of him, that I never saw the Convert nor the trifles again. The Roman Catholic missionaries have made a lot of headway up here, if you meet half a dozen evil looking scoundrels and call them bad names they will all say "me Roman Catholic, all ee some Englishman". I shall probably make a few remarks about missionaries later on when I know more about them. I have met one or two who had no business to preach the gospel, but "one swallow does not make a summer".

We left Shuan-tau late in the afternoon taking the war junk with us arriving at the Peking-Nanking road about 9 p.m.
-Thursday 1st Nov-00- Started down the canal at 10 a.m. At 1 p.m. a party landed and burned down a large village, the inhabitants of which had given a great deal of trouble. They evidently had expected

to be dealt with as the majority had run away and only a few cripples and old women remained. When we had finished with this village we proceeded some distance down the Canal and burned down another village. When the Column left this morning two of the war junkies were sent back to collect the indemnity which it had been arranged the village should pay, an indemnity of I believe 13000 dollars. A letter arrived from a French missionary addressed to the Colonel and as the Colonel had taken the head of the column and was some miles off. I was asked to translate it and from the contents I gathered that the majority of the villagers of Chuan-tau were not in sympathy with the Boxer movement & expressing the hope that the indemnity would not be insisted on. He went on to say that 9000 dollars had been collected but that the villagers refused to pay any more. The letter was sent by a snake-trail to the Colonel but it necessarily took a

long time to reach him. We stopped for
the night after going until it was too
dark to see ahead and at daybreak the
next morning got away again. Nothing
of any importance happened, and at dark
stopped at the last bridge we shall have
to pass under before reaching Tzu-Tsin.
Victualled the land Column and waited
for some deck soldiers. - Friday 9 Nov. - 00.

Capt. Campbell arrived this morning from
Bhuau-lau. He had all the silver that could
be collected in the village, and fees enough
to account for the deficiency. He had
burned down two temples - a favorite
method of punishment - it may show
them the folly of believing in false gods.
On Campbell's arrival the Colonel - as
the strength of the letter I have alluded
to - ordered the silver and fees to be
returned to the village, which I have no
doubt would be promptly bagged by the
missionary. Capt. Campbell was so

hurt at the result of his mission that he asked to be relieved from returning with the junks. —

— Saturday 3rd Nov^r - 00

Are still awaiting the arrival of the sick from the land Column. Four sick arrived.

One had been wounded by spears and knives, another was suffering from terrible injuries to the face & head through an explosion of a mine.

The others are down with malarial fever which is very prevalent. Left at 3 p.m.

and kept on until it was too dark to proceed further when we tied up to the bank

of the canal. About half an hour after heard a heavy explosion. The land column

is evidently blowing something up. The Colonel told us that they were in touch with the

Boxers yesterday. Sunday 4th Nov^r - 00

continued down stream until we reached Tulin, when, during the time we were waiting

for the land Column, all the rubbish was cleared out of the captured junks. The

junks are divided into a number of small compartments which contain the clothing and all

The worldly effects of the crew. These compartments also contained canisters of black powder, percussion caps, fuses, projectiles all mixed up in the greatest confusion. The armament consisted of one $4\frac{3}{4}$ " brass muzzle loading gun, and they were actually loaded right up to the muzzle. If they had attempted to fire them, the result would have been worth looking at, but would not have been a pleasant sight. When they were cleaned out, the flags were placed in one heap, the muskets and rifles in another and a collection of miscellaneous rubbish in another. The powder was placed about 200 yards inland and sentries were placed on it. Each officer had the privilege of selecting a flag. The muskets, most of which were loaded, like the guns, right up to the muzzle, even destroyed. The swords &c were distributed among the land and water column. It was the intention of the Colonel to explode the powder &c but man proposes and God disposes. I had just got my flag and was walking up the gangway of our boat when two terrific explosions took place.

It appears that the Colleys thought that

some loot might be had from the heap the
sentries were guarding, and they evidently
recovered them. (the sutlies) Some one must
have stepped on a percussion cap or thrown a
lighted match among the powder.

I hope I shall never again see such a sight.
The bodies were blown about 60 feet high, and
those who did not get the full shock of the
explosion were a terrible sight the poor wretches
were simply balls of fire - their thick cotton
clothing being on fire - They ran for the
river, ~~and~~ ^{but} very few reached it, being burned
to a cinder. One unfortunate dropped at my feet
just a few yards from the river. A number of
bodies were thrown right over the banks into the
river, minus heads arms &c. I saw one body 500
yards from the scene of the explosion. I went
with the doctor and two Sixth, who were told off
to shoot those who were beyond recovery, in a
circumstance that shows the ^{demonializing} effect of war on a
man who at one time would have made scurrilous
remarks about anyone else who voluntarily performed
such a task. The sights I saw and the attitude of

The bodies that had been killed instantly, differed considerably from that of those who had lingered a few minutes; but enough of these. One case I must mention. A body which had been instantly killed had a dollar piece embedded a quarter of an inch in ~~the~~ its breast. The body was as black as carbon and the dollar as bright as silver. There is a circumstance connected with this dollar that reflects little credit on a member of our contingent.

The Indian doctors worked like slaves, they are a highly trained and very skillful body, and the work they performed on this occasion I'll never forget. If there were the slightest hope of recovery no man was shot - and a Chinese Coolie's life is not a high priced one. Those for whom there was no hope were put out of misery by a Sikh who placed the muzzle of a '303 rifle about a foot from his forehead, then as the Chinese say "finish". We were not able to ascertain how many were killed as the Chinese took numbers on board the junk with a view of burying them in Tien-Tsun, and a number of the victims also belonged to Tullien and the villagers took them away. We buried

about 50, of whom 3 were Mahomedans.

It does not take long to bury a Chinaman, but a Mahomedan burial is a serious matter.

A shallow trench is dug, the Chinaman is dropped into it like a dog, and the earth thrown over the body. A few hours sufficed to bury the Chinese, but it took the whole day to consign the 3 Mahomedans to their last resting place. A hole about 4 feet long, 4 feet deep and 2 feet wide is dug. About 2 feet from the bottom the sides are widened for about a foot. A little shelf is left on the bottom at one end for the head of the tenant to rest on. The grave digger makes the earth on the bottom and sides perfectly smooth, removing every twig or anything that would irritate a living body. He then lies down in the grave, and if the shelf on which the head reclines is not comfortable he raises or lowers it as necessary. Boards are next fitted over the part that has been widened, they are so nicely fitted that no dust can find its way into the recess for the body. When this is done to the satisfaction

of the Priest, (we had no Priest, a Babu does the duty) leaves are collected and any twig or hard substance carefully removed. They are then put in the grave about 6 inches deep.

The grave digger again lies down and arranges things to his satisfaction. While all this has been going on, the Babu has been sitting down reading from the Koran what I suppose are prayers for the dead. If there were many burials it would be a pretty constant job.

The body is now swan up in a white shroud, very carefully made. The name is written on it, also the name of his wife and the number of his children, if he is married. This is repeated three times. When he is clothed in his three shrouds he is carefully lowered into the grave, the boards placed over him the earth filled in and a number of sprigs of Accacia, if they can be procured planted in the form of a crescent at the head of the grave. It was a most impressive ceremony and one which in search of information, I carefully studied. A very pathetic case came under my notice when I went back

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to our boat. Lieut. Penford and I had been transferred to a snake boat in which we had more comfort and privacy. Our little Chinese servant had yesterday been visited by another boy, a bright merry little Chap. I was writing up my diary when he arrived, and our boy brought him along to see the wonderful operation.

I was using an indelible red pencil, and with it painted a moustache & on the little fellow, much to his delight. When I went on board ~~at~~ our boy was sitting as if his little heart would break. I could not speak course Chinese to find out what was wrong with him, but he hung his head on one side and placed his hand under it, in the attitude of one just having gone to sleep and said "finish". That is their way of letting you know someone is dead. I then tried to find out who his friend was, and the poor little fellow took my pencil and marked on his own face what I had done to his little mate.

I have a great liking for this boy and would like to take him back to Melbourne. He is a born

looter. For the last few days he has been trying to make us understand something. He holds his pistol in one hand and goes through the motions of sawing it off with the other.

Today I learned that he wants us to cut off his Bicudi and take him to our quarters for a servant. We have decided to take the boy but spare the fig tail.

After the burial an inquiry was held. We then left for Vien-Ton. arriving on the 4th November, without anything of much importance happening.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday in Barracks.
Sunday 11th Nov-00. Went to Church. The congregation was composed chiefly of officers, a few civilians being present. The church is a pretty little building, and the service differed little from what one is accustomed to. Monday - Nov 13th - 00 -

Still in barracks trying to make our rooms comfortable for the terrible Chinese winter that is just about to commence.

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Tuesday Nov 13-00. Employed testing
coal for the Commo and branch. Coal
is going to be a serious item this winter, &
is going to be issued very carefully. To keep
keep a room about 16 feet square to a
temperature of 65° Fahrenheit 2.48th pm
is required. - Wednesday Nov. 14. 00 -

Was transferred to the Royal Engineers
today. Took over the plans & specifications
of a number of buildings from Major
Jeffries R.E. The following is what I
have in hand for a start.

Stabling for 360 horses for the R.H. Artillery
Building " 190 Indian followers
" " 190 " Sweepers
" " 80 bullocks.

Papering and cleaning barracks for R.H. Artillery
Infection ward for a hospital.

ms
Numerous Indian Cook houses and latrines
and some work in connection with our
own contingent. These and other works are
necessary in consequence of the severity of
the winter in North China. It may seem

strange that although Peking is nearly the same Latitude as Naples viz. 39.54° North Long. 116.27° East, the thermometer often falls as low as 20° below zero.

Thursday 15th Nov^r 00 - Mr Wong and three Chinese Contractors met me at 9 a.m. and I proceeded to inspect their work.

Mr Wong - my interpreter - is a highly educated young China-man. Before the siege of Tien-Tsin he held a position in a Chinese University. He speaks English fluently is well up in the higher branches of mathematics and music, his knowledge of the two latter subjects astonished me. Harmonical progression and the Binominal Theorem are his delight.

The names of the Contractors are Wa-la-Chuan, Yang-Fa, and Fung-yung-Chiang. The first of the batch is a convert to Christianity, he has one wife and numerous children. He speaks a little English and informs me that he is a Wesleyan and asked me to go to the theatre in the native city next Sunday. I have made a note of Wa-la-Chuan's Christian proclivities, and expect to

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have occasion to inspect his work and accounts
pretty closely. Yang-Fa is a tall muscular
belustial, in the severe and yellow leaf. His face
has as much expression as a heap of wood

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This son is a student who wears immense
spectacles, and since his birth has done nothing
but compose flowery poems, fathoms long. His
general appearance leads me to believe that he
has never been washed since he was born. But
there is not much poetry in soap. I have seen
some European poets whose personal appearance
leads me to believe that there is no affinity
between poetry and soap. Yang-Fa does not
speak a word of English. I think I shall get on
well with him. I shall be able to call him bad
names without hurting his feelings.

Fung-ying Hsichang is a tall gentlemanly
looking Chinese and his manner is in keeping with
his appearance. He is a gentleman in reduced
circumstances, but maintains the traditions of
his class. It is a wet day. Fung-ying Hsichang has
an attendant holding an immense umbrella over him
and another carrying ^{a spare} ~~another~~ umbrella and a

dry pair of slippers. Mr. Morris informs me that the old gentleman is pleased to have the honor of serving me. I asked Mr. M. to inform him that I would have the honor of telling him what I thought of him when I inspected his work and looked over his bill for extras. I spent the remainder of the day in looking over the work and in spying out the land, as the different works to be built or in course of construction are some miles apart.

Friday 16th Nov^r 00 - Had a very busy day.

The news of the death of my dear friend Dr. Steel, the Staff Surgeon to the U.S.M. Contingent has cast a great gloom over us all. The poor Dr. repeatedly told me that he would not last through the campaign, but we all tried to cheer him up and assured him that he was the strongest man in the Contingent. He suffered from Insomnia and died from an overdose of Chloral. His remains are buried outside of the walls of the Imperial City, Peking. May he be happier in the other world than he has been in this. He deserves to be.

Saturday

~~Sunday~~ 23rd Nov. 00. Major Jeffries very anxious to get the R. H. A. horses under cover.

He fears a heavy frost that will kill a lot of them. Sunday is the same as any other day here.

Sunday 24th Oct. 00 - The Six Ho races took place yesterday. The 'Phoenix' cruiser is stationed there. Treacy and Dr Stewart went. No time for church today the Chinese are behind with their work. Cannot leave them.

Monday 25th Oct. 00. An order came out requesting every one to wear a beard during the winter months in order to protect the throat. I think I'll give my throat a chance. It has been very good to me up till now.

Tuesday 26th Oct. 00. Nothing worth recording -

Wednesday 27th Oct. 00. Still worrying the Chinese contractors. Got A. Vary & A. Revingsstone appointed inspectors of works. This has taken a lot of work off my hands.

Thursday 28th Oct. 00.

Still on the heels of the Heathen Chinese.

Friday Nov: 29-10, Sat 30th - Sunday 1st ^{Nov} Dec 10

Have been very busy. The R. N. A. are very anxious to get their horses under cover

Monday ^{Nov} Oct. 2-10. Still working for Chinese contractors. Am afraid I'm a bit rough on them.

Had an invitation from Fung-yung-tsoiang to dinner, and one from M. Wong to tiffin.

Declined both on the score of ill health I am not well. Have had a bad attack of fever & ague.

One's digestive organs must be made of cast iron to stand a Chinese dinner, the menu consists of 26 courses, among the dishes being boiled sheep's eyes, grasshopper fried in oil and other abominations.

The wines consist of "Sam chaw", a spirit distilled from rice. The Chinese drink it warm. It is a vile raw spirit. The smell of it would paralyse a Garrafaud orator

Tuesday - ~~Oct~~ 3rd 10 - Took a number of new contracts which have kept me busy.

Wednesday - Busy with building for various purposes. It commenced to snow tonight and kept on all night.

Thursday Decr. 6th - 00. Still snowing.

The snow this morning is about a foot deep.

It is a sight I shall not soon forget.

Friday, Dec. 7th 00. I witnessed a quaint and picturesque sight this morning, although a very mournful one. A Captⁿ in a Louave regiment stationed here died, and a large number of all the Allied Forces stationed in Tien-Tsin followed the remains to the grave. God's acre is a beautiful little spot behind an equally beautiful little Chapel. When the procession arrived and the funeral service commenced it was snowing heavily - what a strange weird sight. With the exception of the Clergyman's voice, everything was as still as the unfortunate officer to whose memory we were paying the last tribute of respect. A strange feeling came over me, and I almost wished for the time when men will turn their swords into ploughshares. But the time is not yet.

Saturday 8th Decr. 00 - It is terribly cold and when I went out at 9 a.m. to go my rounds with Mr Wong, I had to return and

get a muffler to put round my face, The air was so intensely keen that I was afraid of being frost bitten. The temperature at 8.30 a.m. was 8° above zero, or 22° of frost. The ponds and moats are all frozen and skating is going on merrily. It was very amusing to see the astonishment of some of the Indian soldiers and followers, who had never seen ice before. They watched the freezing process every day, and when they threw bricks on the ice and they did not sink they were quite mystified. They soon got used to it and started sliding & skating and used to get some awful falls, but they were good sports and soon became fairly proficient. Some of the native officers look to the ice like a duck to water.

Sunday Decr 9th 00. Had no time to go to church this morning. The weather is miserably cold. Monday to Thursday 13th Decr-00.

The usual round of inspection, the buildings are approaching completion by dint of being continually on the heels of the Contractors &

men. They are all very obliging. I made my friend ^{Fung}-yung-Hoang pull down the side of a house three times because it was out of plumb. He is come to the conclusion that it pay better to do his work well, as I stop his progress payments occasionally.

Mr Wong called on me during the evening and told me that the Germans had brought in a number of Boxers as prisoners and three Chinese gentlemen as witnesses, one of whom he informed me was a magistrate another a squire - or a landed proprietor and the other the keeper of a pawnshop. The pawnshop in China is a large strong building in which Chinese ladies & gentlemen deposit their furs and valuables for safe keeping & the proprietors of these establishments are highly respectable trustworthy men. The Boxers and gentlemen were all placed in the same ~~den~~ and naturally Mr Wong and his friend were very indignant at such treatment ~~dealt out to his~~ their friends. I went and had a look at them. The alleged

Boxes looked repulsive enough for anything and the gentlemen looked as if a warm bath would have improved their appearance.

They were in a cell in the quarters of the 90th Punjab Infantry and as I am well known to most of their officers had no difficulty in arranging for their comfort.

Friday. 14th Decr-00. - Nothing worth recording occurred today. The cold is intense 10° below Zero.

Saturday 15th Decr-00. Same as yesterday.

Sunday 16th. The usual Chinese Sunday. Worked all the morning. In the afternoon went to a Chinese theatre with Jung-yung-Hsiang who has asked me so often that to pacify the old rogue I accompanied him.

The theatre is in the native city. We took rickshaws and went through the British & French Concessions and through miles of ruins and eventually reached the native city. I never saw such a place. The streets wind like a maze, some are wide enough to allow two rickshaws to pass, most of them are only about 6 feet wide, they are crowded

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with rough stones and when the rickshaw man
trips along the exercise makes you tired. The
city is now densely populated and many an
evil look meets you as you pass along. After
a deal more exercise we reached the theatre
which is a large wooden building. The
stage instead of going back is brought out
into the hall and you can sit on three sides
of it. A balcony runs around three sides of
the hall. Wooden forms and tables adorn the
tray of the hall and balconies. Everyone was
consuming peanuts and drinking tea and at
intervals attendants came round with very
dirty serviettes soaked in dirty hot water.

These are to be applied to the head, but I
declined to defile my head with the abominable
things which I believe was very rude of me.
I remained as long as I could, and got away
without giving offence although I was pressed
to stay longer. A Chinese play goes on for ever.

I shall not attempt to describe the per-
formance. It was the most utterly indecent
obscene performance I had ever seen or heard

of and was immensely enjoyed by the audience. I was told the best was to come but I was quite satisfied with what I had seen. I intend to get Mr. Warr's views on the Chinese Drama.

Monday 17th Decr-00 - We are wondering if everyone in Melbourne has forgotten us. It is so long since we had a mail. Re. the mails. There are a number of services. The Chinese Imperial, The Indian Field Post, The Japanese Mail &c but the Japanese is far ahead of any of them.

Tuesday 18th Decr. 00-. The weather is very cold. Nothing but ice and snow to be seen for miles - as far as the eye can reach. The Pei-ho is a solid block of ice and the moats and canals are also solid. I saw some Chinese fishing in the moat that surrounds Tien-Tsin. They dig a hole in the ice with a crow bar and drop a net which is supported by a circular ring into the water under the ice and get some very fine fish.

Wednesday 19th Decr-00. The Capt. Biddlecombe & Treacy laid up.

Thursday 20th Decr. 00- Had to remain at the barracks myself today feeling very unwell.

Am afraid I'm in for malarial fever.

Friday 21st Dec. -00. Still very queer.

Saturday 22nd During the week I received several letters and presents of fruit and string drunk from the Chinese Contractors. One letter reads as under-

To W. Robertson Esq^r Chief Engineer.
Tsun-Tsun.

Sir

As you are going to merry Christmas and happy new year, may I have the honor to request your acceptance of a small mark as presents. The things which I hope you will accept are the following.
Half a dozen of beer.

2 Boxes of Cigars

20 apples

8 Cattles of grapes.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your Obedient Servant
Tsun-yung-Houang.

Another letter I received from my interpreter is as under. The poor fellow was suffering from dysentery.

Dear Sir,

With reference to my disease of purges, I have the honor to request that I may have one or two days leave.

I have the honor to be

Dear Sir,

Yours most obediently

Wong-chu-Kang-

I was sorry for poor Mr Wong as he was in love, and about to be married to a very charming young Chinese lady. He took me into his confidence about his love affairs some days ago, and asked me if I thought he was wise in getting married. I told him the blessed Apostle's answer to the same question viz. "they do well that marry and they do better that don't". Seeing that my friend Wong was inclined to let well alone I did not

press the views I then held on the matter upon him. His fiancée lived some miles outside the native city. Mr Wong was on the Boxers' "Index Expurgatorius", they having offered a heavy price for his head, so he could not venture outside the limits of the city, and asked me if I could get "some guides of three men" to escort her into Tien-Tsen, as he was afraid she would be molested by the Japs or Russians. Out of the respect I bore Wong I offered to take the job on myself, but Mr Wong thought that under the circumstances "some guides of three men" would meet the case, but said he would be very glad if I would do him the honor to accompany them.

Major Jeffries R. G. supplied an armed escort, and the "dainty little maiden" was, ^{as} carefully guarded as if she had been the Dowager Empress.

For Wong, may the illusions of your youth never vanish. His and the many little acts of kindness and courtesy extended to the educated Chinese here, by the British Officers, has done much to foster the very kindly feeling the

Chinese have for the British in this Heaven
forsaken country. - Sunday Decr. 23rd 00-

Was too busy today to go to church.

Monday 24th Decr. 00. A poor Xmas eve.

Felt horribly miserable today. My first
warning of the approach of Xmas. was
on being awakened by a number of our men
and some from the Indian regiments
singing Christmas Carols outside our
door. They sang some of the good old hymns
which reminded me of Xmas at home,
and for the time I almost wished I were
there.

Tuesday Decr. 25th 00. Xmas day
in North China. We spent the day very
quietly, and the night in an equally
sober manner. The rendezvous at night to
the British Club and things are after
fast and furious there. A favorite amuse-
ment consists in a number of officers
getting behind the bar and a number
in front of it and throwing new members
of the Club backwards and forwards over it,
very good exercise for all except the one

who provided it.

- Wednesday 26th Dec.

Boxing day. No sport of any kind. Some races had been arranged, but it has been snowing heavily and all fixtures had to be abandoned.

Thursday 27th Dec. 00. A large force of Cavalry, Royal Horse Artillery and a Tom Tom battery was ordered off to a place named Yang-Tsun to meet an alleged force of 40,000 Boers. It was a splendid sight to see them fall in and march off.

Friday 28th Dec. 00. The infantry for Yang-Tsun marched off this morning.

They were all native troops. It was a sight worth seeing. If they had been let loose in South Africa they would have made things busy for the Boers.

Went with Na-ta-chuan to another Chinese Opera. Arrived at 12.30 and left at 5 pm.

This theatre rather surprised me - not a bad building. The arrangements were much after the music hall style. The stage was a raised platform about 30 feet square, and

the orchestra were seated at the back of it.

The musical instruments consisted of a Chinese violin, two pairs of cymbals, a drum, a reed instrument which sounded like the bagpipes and a pair of wooden clappers.

The noise at times was simply deafening, but it was always safe to back the instruments although the vocalists struggled manfully to drown the orchestra. Small tables were placed all over the floor and one could order pea nuts, walnuts and some mysterious dishes and tea - such dreadful tea. I was glad when the time came for me to go, but out of respect for my host had to linger in agony until 5: p.m.

Decr. 29. 30. 31st 00. Have been very busy. I see the end of my work and I am very sorry, for there is no work so trying as that of Helling time which I am afraid will now be my lot until the ice melts and the rivers and canals are navigable.

Jan'y 1st 1901 - The General-General Ronne Campbell and the British officers in Tien-Tsin gave a dinner at the "Astor" house to celebrate the federation of

the Australian Colonies. It was a splendid affair. All the Colonial officers in Peking and Tien-Tsin were invited, and it was a very graceful compliment to the Colonies.

There were only two Foreign guests viz. Colonel Schistek, an officer on the Russian Staff and a German officer whose name I cannot recall. The former prided himself on never since he could remember, having been sober after 12 o'clock noon. I saw a good deal of the gentleman but never saw him so drunk that he did not know everything that was going on around him. My private opinion is that he is a most accomplished Russian intelligence officer, you can call it by a better of three words if you like. After dinner speeches were made, some of them were rather incoherent. One gentleman got on one of the tables to make an address and floundered up and down the table among cut glass and silver until he was removed he has not made his speech yet.

Gradually the Chinese servants managed to remove most of the glass ware and silver, but

became so frightened that they ran away. Some one managed to secure some blankets and a certain officer was tossed. Another who would have been similarly dealt with managed to escape and his grey hairs said another, who deserved it. An adjournment was then made to the Club. This has been a wild night.

Jan 1st to 12th - 01. Busy finishing my buildings. Got all the men and horses well housed. - Jan 13th - 01 - My birthday. Left for Peking at 8.30 a.m. by rail. It is a bitterly cold morning. Major Jeffries, Colonel Brooke Colles, some German Officers, Treacy and I occupied one compartment. ~~It was a bitterly cold morning, but~~ Major Jeffries R.E. had thoughtfully provided a Charcoal stove and I'm afraid we should have been almost frozen before we reached Peking without it. The country we passed through was most uninteresting, but has been the scene of some terrible struggles. All the bridges were blown up and the permanent way destroyed. The bridges and railway have

been temporarily repaired but a high rate of speed cannot be maintained. The railways have been handed over to the Germans who are running them fairly well, but until some permanent agreement is arrived at I think the Russians should have the management. They (the Russians) have a highly trained railway corps, men trained in every branch of railway work - traffic, signals, permanent way, locomotive repairs, drivers, guards, firemen and the hundred and one officials who go to make a railway service a success. All the officials are automatons. They have a certain task to perform and they perform it in spite of all difficulties; they have nothing higher to look forward to than the post they are now holding, their terrible severe training has killed all the ambition out of them and they simply live to obey orders. I cannot help admiring the dogged, persevering muscovite and cannot forget that it was the Russians who saved

Tsin-Tsun. The railway passes for about 15 miles through the Emperor's deer park.

We saw no deer and I'm afraid it will be a long time before they are seen again.

Arrived in Peking at 7 pm. The station is lighted by electricity and had quite an up to date appearance. After a wait of a few minutes we found the Peking cart that had been sent for us and proceeded to the Lama temple, which is to be our headquarters during our stay here.

We were not sorry to reach our destination, as we were terribly cold and quivering.

We were made most welcome by Lieut. Hixson, Black, Laymaster Tryme & Midshipman Bracegirdle, their kindness to us during our stay was greater than we had either expected or were entitled to. They look us everywhere, nothing was too much trouble. Peking consists of 4 cities, each of which is walled. The innermost is the Temple or Forbidden City the most sacred spot in China, it is the only place in

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It is strictly guarded by the Japanese and American armies. Here the Harem is quartered and it is swarming with eunuchs. Outside the walls of the Forbidden City is the Imperial City. Here those whose duties are connected with the court live, the attendants; the thousand and one high officials who conduct the affairs of the empire. In this city is the Carriage Park where the immense carriages which are drawn by elephants are kept. The magnificent building which was used to house the elephants is now full of commandeered silk etc. Here also are the guns which saved Ladysmith - Mr Shaw Bulwin and Long Tom. Without the walls of the Imperial City is the Tartar City which is also walled and at the base of it is the common or garden Chinese city. This city is a parallelogram tacked on to the Tartar City. Here the mercantile community moves lives and has its being. It is a dirty unsavoury city but it's sanitary.

arrangements are years ahead of the native City of Peking.

The railway enters the Chinese City, the station being just inside the gate, which were demolished to make room for the permanent way.

This has given great offence to the Chinese, and I cannot help thinking that a diplomat would not have run the iron horse so close to the Temple of Heaven and the Altar of the Sun, which are in a park on the right hand side of the railway, and the Temple of Agriculture on the left side. All the streets in Peking run due North & South, East and West, and if there were no obstructions one could see right through from the south gate of the Chinese City to the outside of the Tartar City on the North. A splendid paved road raised about 2' 6" high runs from the Chinese City through the Imperial & Tartar City and 12½ miles

beyond, to the Summer Palace.

During my stay I visited all the places of interest. I am staying at the Klama Temple. This temple contains some rare specimens of old Chinese Cloisonne work, the best examples I am too late to see, as they are securely packed up for presentation to Queen Victoria. There are a number of beautiful Cloisonne incense burners and some bronzes which in England would be worth their weight in gold. Here also is the torture wheel, some immense bronze idols and the celebrated Klama temple bells. These bells are made of silver bronze. There were three rows of 30 in each row. The tone of each bell differs slightly and the three rows are coupled. When it is desired to call the people to worship the bells are worked by a lever and the result is not much more irritating than the musical Chimes of the Melbourne Post Office Clock. The records of ~~the~~ hundreds of years are contained in

massive brass chests. These chests have been opened by some vandals, and papers - that may be for all I know priceless - are strewn about the floor of the temple and trodden on by visitors.

There is a "book" Godown in the Imperial City. There is an official (Chinese) in charge. This is a large building full of large brass chests which contain some of the records of the various dynasties.

During our stay we visited "Coal hill" a hill 600 feet high said to be built of coal.

It is alleged that a Chinese ruler after having perfected the defenses of Peking built this mountain of coal so that the city might have a plentiful supply in case of a prolonged siege. We saw no trace of coal, nothing but ice and snow, but one can readily understand how necessary a good stock of fuel would be ~~when~~ after an experience of a Chinese winter. The temperature often drops to 20° below zero, and when an east

wind sprung up it is impossible to go out of doors, the cold simply pierces to the bone.

Peking is on nearly the same parallel as Naples. Latitude $39^{\circ} 52''$ North and Longitude $116^{\circ} 24''$ East. The population is estimated at 1,000,000. A short distance from Coal Hill is the Great Pagoda, situated on a hill which overlooks the Forbidden City. In the Pagoda are some immense images all of which have been knocked off their pedestals by the foreign devil in search for hidden treasure. At the foot of the hill are a number of beautiful temples containing beautiful bronze gods & incense burners and large bronze vases which were used when sacrifices were being offered to the Gods. The work of exploration was extremely difficult, the hill is steep and is covered with ice, and we were almost broken up by the time we had reached the bottom.

On our way we visited the Dowager Empress's private palace and the marble bridge which spans the celebrated lotus pond. In this pond - or lake - is a small island where the

the young Emperor Kwang-su was confined for two years. The young ruler was inclined to be progressive to suit the views of the Dowager Empress. A certain section of the Court favored Western ideas, in the way of introducing railways, opening up the natural resources of the country &c. The other section saw that if reforms were permitted, their opportunities of plundering and squeezing would be considerably curtailed, and informed the Empress that certain members of the Court were plotting against her life. One night the young Kwang-su was secretly taken into captivity, and the heads of 13 high officials parted company with their bodies, and thus ended the reform movement in China.

Next day we visited the Temple of Heaven. This celebrated temple is in a large park on the right hand side of the ^{termination of the} Piu-Tsu-Peking railway line. It is a magnificent piece of architecture, circular in shape, and the construction of the dome and the manner in which it is supported increases - if possible a

my respect for the scientific attainments of
the Chinese engineers who designed the
stupendous engineering works one sees every-
where in this great city. The temple is
reached by three terraces of white marble
steps. ~~The entrance consists of three~~ There are
three entrances, the centre one is only used
by royalty, the others are for the use of the
Court. The Columns and hand rails are
wonderfully Carved, and the pavement
consists of immense blocks of white marble
Carved with the five Clawed dragon.

There is an immense altar in the centre
of the temple. The dome is decorated with
blue and gold and has a very rich appearance.
I am told that the manufacture of the
pigments is a lost art, some of the paint
was pointed out to me that had not been
touched for nearly three quarters of a Century,
it was as fresh as if it had been put on a
week ago. A short distance from the
temple is the Altar of the Dew. This is
also circular in shape and is also reached

by three terraces of white marble steps, with three entrances the same as described in the Temple of Heaven. When you reach the top of the last flight of steps, you find yourself on a circular marble floor, as near as I can remember about 200 feet in diameter. In the center is a circular stone about 3 feet in diameter. This is believed by the Chinese to be the "hub" of the universe. The whole universe is supposed to revolve around this sacred stone. Here the Emperor kneels to pray once a year, and only on that occasion is he second to the great "Shun-^{an}" whom he worships. When his devotions are over he is "Brother of the Sun" and I suppose Lord High everybody else. Around the Altar of the Sun are immense bronze urns in which sacrifice - in the shape of oxen - is offered to the hundred and one Gods who do duty on state occasions.

I went to my quarters and communed with myself. I have seen most of the modern show places in Great Britain and other Countries, but there is an air of repose and magnificence about all the

1 great temples and other architectural works,
2 ^{one} messes in other countries. One fails to see the
3 familiar foundation stone incised in deep
4 cut letters, gilt with cheap gold, advertising
5 the fact that "this stone was laid by Councillor
6 Tallow Fat, A. D. - 4^c." There is an air of superiority
7 even among the dirty, starving, ill clad Chinese
8 whose loyalty to their creed and country has
9 compelled them to hover around their temples,
10 which are dearer to them than life itself.

11 The unfortunate priest or attendant is never
12 rude or uncivil, but unvaryingly offers a
13 passive resistance to the intrusion of the
14 Foreign Devil into his sacred places.

15 The Temple of Agriculture is at
16 present occupied by the Americans. One
17 of the officers' messes is in a house lately
18 occupied by one of the native princes and
19 contains some rare specimens of Chinese carving
20 and very old cloisonne and bronze ornaments.

21 I went and saw the Regations which
22 present a very battered appearance. One building
23 especially having at some portion of the siege

been too hot to hold any one. It is a two-story house, and I don't think there a space two inches square that has not been struck by projectiles of some kind. The Chinese built ramps reaching to the top of the walls of the Imperial City and mounted guns on the walls, but it is said the fire did more damage to the Chinese on the other side of the Legations than to the besieged Europeans. The artillery officer was implored to discontinue the firing from the walls as he was not hitting the Legations, but killing the Boxers and Chinese soldiers by the score. It has been noticed right through the war that the reserves always suffered more than the attacking party. The Chinese Artillery man has an idea that the more elevation he can give his gun the more damage he will do.

It was fortunate that they knew so little of gunnery, ~~for~~ if they had been trained men, it would have been practically impossible to have made any headway in Peking. On the Legation walls sand bags were piled up and the residents defended themselves as well as they were able

from behind them. When they were terribly
hard pressed and it was thought impossible
to hold out much longer, some one wrote
in large letters on the wall "Rest we Forget".
When I saw the above quotation I could
understand the feelings of the despairing
proudful of people who had held out so long
against such terrible odds. In addition to
gun fire they had to contend with mines,
which had to be countermined. The Chinese
are very clever at mining, but they evidently
got out of their course with one that was
intended to blow up one of the principal
buildings; it was well into one of the compounds
and the site of the mine is railed in at present.
It (the mine) will probably be destroyed
later on. After thoroughly examining the legation
and signing our names in Sir C. Paton's visitor
book we compared notes and concluded that the
British Legation in time of peace is a most
desirable institution for anyone with a contemplative
turn of mind. There is not much society to speak of.
The College where the young European gentlemen
learn

the Official dialect is within the grounds, and there is an air of quiet independence and superiority about the place that even the Boxer myriads could not destroy.

After leaving the Legations we crossed the moat and entered ^{some of} the Japanese Military establishment which consists of a few rather superior houses and a piece of ground which was at first used as a parade ground. The work done by the little garrison will never be forgotten.

There was a force of 25 Japanese infantry and three British Blue Jackets, (I am writing on information supplied to me by the Major in charge - the Colonel was shot during the siege of the Legations) The fire became so hot that as soon as anyone attempted to cross the parade ground he was perforated ~~by~~ with projectiles - Ancient and modern and in unlimited quantities. The only source from which the Japanese could reinforce their little Garrison was from the Legations and in the attempt to cross the moat they had lost so heavily that it was absolutely

ud necessary to procure assistance at any cost.
The wily Jap sunk a shaft in one
of the buildings and ran a tunnel through
the moat into the Regations, and as the
men in the Japanese quarter fell out
cut they were replaced by the few that could
be spared by the little army on the opposite
side of the moat. The Japanese Major
showed me the ten lines of defence they
had when the siege commenced. They
consisted of brick walls which surrounded
the neighbouring buildings, any spaces had
the been filled in with earth and broken bricks.
ing The Boxers had forced their way ~~up~~ ^{up} to
the third line, and the Japanese Colonel
in his anxiety to offer the encourage the
few remaining men, placed himself in too
exposed a position, and was shot. This
gallant officer conducted the defence of the
Japanese quarter in a manner that won
the admiration of the Royal Engineers, who
are said to be the brains of the British Army.
D^r Morrison Correspondent of the London Times
was

standing under a tree, within a few feet of the unfortunate Colonel when he was shot.

D. Morrison was also wounded during the siege of the Legation. In spite of the terrible difficulties the Japanese had to contend with they managed to get a messenger sent to Tien-Tsin to let ~~the~~ Capt Bayley R.N. and Admiral Seymour know the terrible straits they were in. After the death of the Colonel the Boers pushed on in a delatory kind of way and succeeded in getting through all the walls except the one which separated them from the few remaining defenders. The defenders could hear the Boers trying to knock the bricks in and posted the Blue Jackets at the spots where the Boers were likely to open fire. As soon as a brick dropped out the tars opened up such a deadly fire that the invaders evidently thought that the whole British army was behind the wall and retired & contented themselves by firing their guns in the air and throwing bricks on the

walls. ~~into~~ The next day we visited Chang
Wang Fu, the headquarters of the N. E. W.
Contingent, this had been the palace of one of
the princes prior to the outbreak of the Boxer
movement and contained some magnificent
specimens of Chinese furniture and carvings.

The N. E. W. are split up into 3 sections, one
at Chang Wang Fu, another at the Lama temple
and the other located near the head quarters
staff. On our way back we lunched with
Capt. Connor & Co. at the German Club.

On the following morning we made a start
for the Summer Palace. It was a bitterly cold
morning and it took our ponies all their time
to keep on their feet, the ice was as smooth as
glass, so we had to go slowly. The Summer
residence is situated $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles N. W. of Peking.

We rode along the paved road. I have already
mentioned and I was amazed at the strange
and quaint architecture of the houses of the
nobility. I could not help hoping that Peking
architects will ~~never~~ always remain in blind
ignorance of European methods - they might

with advantage to the health of the Community study Sanitary Engineering, but European Architecture and Clothing would knock all the romance out of China. Chinese houses give one the impression that every man's hand is against his neighbour. The smallest mud hut is surrounded by a high mud wall; all the Palaces are surrounded by $\frac{1}{2}$ walls, and some of them by wide, deep moats. We passed innumerable arches. These arches are erected to celebrate great events. If General Washu - Washu won a battle, the Emperor - instead of issuing medals to the victorious warriors would cause a triumphal arch to be erected to commemorate the victory. We were soon outside the north gate of the Tartar City and on our way to the Summer Palace. We passed some beautiful residences - on our way - surrounded by splendidly built and ornamented brick walls, but all of them uninhabited. Loyalty to the Court and fear of the foreign devil caused the poor Celestials to leave their lovely homes and follow the Empress into exile. There were not many visitors when we arrived. The Palace and its numerous temples and

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residences of the high officials of the Court are built on the slope of a hill. At the foot of the hill is a lake which was frozen to a depth of 2 feet. At the entrance are some immense bronzes. I cannot attempt to describe the magnificence of the place, but could not help remarking that a fair percentage of the revenue must be spent by Royalty. One can realize the meaning of the term "Oriental wealth & splendor" after a visit to the Palace & temples of Peking. All the portable valuables were locked up in a large reception room, only those which are too heavy to carry being left in their original position. The Palace is guarded by the British & Italian. We explored the grounds under difficulties, the paths to some of the buildings being very steep and covered with ice. Some of the rooms of the different houses were panelled with the most artistic carvings and the furniture was equally beautiful, but everything had been pulled to pieces by visitors in search of examples of Chinese art. I got one or two myself. There is a beautiful walk through the grounds it is about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile long, it is about 5 feet

wide, the Columns are about 9 feet high and support a roof beautifully tiled with glazed tiles - yellow with the five clawed dragon in relief. The inside was painted with the Imperial blue & gold. The floor was also handsomely tiled. As I wandered along this walk, I pondered ~~of~~ over the unequal distribution of wealth & there is a walk - a small portion of the estate - which must have cost, what the foreigners would consider an immense fortune, and here is a poor devil walking along it with scarcely a dollar to jingle on a tombstone. I'm told that it is believed there is an immense amount of treasure belonging to the Court, buried here, and in the Forbidden City. There are a number of enterprising Australians here, who, if circumstances & opportunity permitted would prospect for the aforesaid buried treasure. The most serious obstacle in the way of a prospecting association is General Gaselee, who says to his troops, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods"; and if you covet them successfully he calls it looting. Now looting is punishable - in the case of a private - with death. If an officer is convicted he is cashiered. The General offers no encouragement

to the mining industry in Peking. On the side of the hill-among other buildings which are set apart for the high Court officials - is a small bronze temple containing a large bronze image and two incense burners; this bronze temple with its quaint architecture is one the sights of the Summer palace, it is genuine bronze, and is splendidly put together and like the grand-diguis houses will last till doomsday.

Before leaving we visited the celebrated "Marble barge". This wonderful structure is resting on the bed of the lake and is built of white marble and has 2 paddle wheels - altogether out of proportion - carved on its sides. The ends are square like those of a large junk but are very artistically carved. It has two decks the upper one having a permanent canopy.

It was at one time beautifully-furnished, but the fittings have either been looted or removed for safety. On leaving for Peking I could not help the extremes of wealth and poverty one sees here, the contrast is quite as marked as in any large city on the Continent of Europe.

At the foot of this magnificent Palace are numerous little mud huts tenanted by Chinese who from their appearance must be in abject poverty. After leaving the Summer Palace I could not help turning around several times to take another look at a sight I am certain I shall never have the privilege of seeing again. ~~It was quite~~.

On our way to Peking we called at the Emperor's boat shed and after some little difficulty succeeded in effecting an entrance. The Emperor's barge and the Emperor's steam yacht were frozen in. The Dowager's barge is a beautiful house boat, a perfect little picture. It and the Emperor's yacht had been beautifully furnished, but the furniture had been borrowed to furnish some of the military messes. The Emperor's yacht is driven by paddle wheels and the machinery judging from a casual look at it, should drive it at a fair rate of speed. The object of our visit in addition to sight seeing was to secure a trophy for

one of our hosts who had taken a great fancy to the mahogany & brass steering wheel. The axle and gearing was in an iron casing, and there were no tools on board, but with a fire bar for a hammer and a drill for a chisel succeeded after an hour's hard work in getting away with it.

By this time it was almost dark and we were a long way outside the walls of Peking. I felt rather uneasy as I knew little or nothing about riding and if I had parted company with the others in the dark I stood a good chance of being scuppered. However we arrived safely, but hungry, thirsty & tired, but Gibson & Co. soon cured all our ills & we went to bed, and although the temperature was 30° below the freezing point - that is 2° above zero - slept like logs.

We spent the following day in visiting the business quarters of Peking. A great deal of the business is done on the sides of the road.