

their heads, especially when there has been a slump!

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NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Tuesday, November 17, 1908.

Imperial Deaths in China.

The wonderful old Empress Dowager of China (p. 708). Tsu-hsi, often called Tsi An, is dead. Her death was officially announced as having taken place on the 15th. The death of her nephew, the Emperor Kuang-hsu, was officially announced to have occurred two days earlier, on the 13th. There are rumors of foul play, poisonings and suicide; but the deaths do not need especial accounting for as the Emperor had been failing for ten years, and had been very ill for a year, and the Empress was nearly seventy-four years old. Prince Chun becomes Regent, and his little three-year-old son, Prince Pu-Yi, becomes Emperor. So long has the old Empress dominated China, as wife, mother and aunt of emperors, building up her machine, and destroying factions which opposed her, that China seems stunned at her passing. The death of an Emperor who only filled the position of a figurehead is a matter of minor importance. Of her reign the Chicago Record-Herald says:

In this reign the Empress Dowager had to deal with the French war, the war with Japan, the Boxer uprising, the loss of Kiau Chau, Wei-hai-wei and Port Arthur. These disasters might really be accredited to the Empress Dowager, who really was in control of affairs. She ruled the Emperor and his advisers with a rod of iron, and death or banishment has been the fate of many who dared oppose her. She never hesitated to cut off a head, if it was her wish. She chose a wife for the Emperor from her own family, and distributed her favors in such a manner as to build up the most marvelous political machine ever known in the world. For nearly fifty years Tsi An played fast and loose with the Chinese throne. She successfully schemed, plotted and intrigued in a hotbed of intriguers and plotters. Her diplomacy has been pronounced matchless by great statesmen, and it was as merciless as it was matchless. Her reign, in fact, was one long fight, first and always with the native Chinese, and next with the opposition party of her own people, the Manchus.

One effort was made by Kuang-hsu to fill his function of Emperor. In 1898 (see Public, vol. i, no. 18, p. 10; no. 25, p. 9; no. 26, p. 7; no. 27, pp. 7 and 11; vol. vi, p. 281), after having been a

nominal ruler since his accession in 1875, he threatened to abdicate if not given full power. This was in the days just after the seizure of Kiao-Chau by Germany. For four months his personality was felt in the development of China, a Westernizing tendency being manifest, and various reform edicts being issued from the palace. The Emperor was during this period under the influence of the reformer, Kang Yu-wei. But in September of that year, 1898, the Dowager took charge once more, shut the Emperor up as an irresponsible, and executed six of his reform advisers, Kang Yu-wei only saving his life by flight. In the following January she forced from the unhappy Emperor his signature to his own abdication, and since that time she has reigned alone, fiercely, but with a well-calculated slight yielding to the advance of modernism.

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Ministerial Responsibility Demanded in Germany.

From the newspapers to the Reichstag went the question of the accountability of the Kaiser to the German people for his indiscreet interview in the London Daily Telegraph (p. 783). In a dramatic debate on the 10th, which it is believed will become a prominent landmark in the development of German constitutionalism, Chancellor Von Buelow defended the Kaiser, and assumed the responsibility for the publication of the celebrated interview, at the same time contradicting or modifying its statements; and closing with the announcement of his conviction that the Kaiser would recognize the need of ministerial dominance in expressions of policy, and asserting that if he should fail to make such recognition no minister could undertake to serve him. This portion of the Chancellor's speech ran as follows:

The recognition by his Majesty of the unjustified misunderstanding of his utterances with reference to Great Britain, and the excitement and regret aroused thereby in Germany, will, I am convinced, lead the Emperor in future private conversations to exercise that reserve which in the interest of a uniform policy and the authority of the crown, is indispensable. If this proves not to be so, neither I nor any one of my successors could take the responsibility. I accepted the blame for the publication of the article in the Daily Telegraph and offered my resignation, and it was the most difficult task in my political life to resolve to remain in office. How long I will continue here I do not know, but I consider it my duty at this difficult period to continue to serve the Emperor and the nation.

Von Buelow's explanations were received in icy silence. The Conservatives, largely representing the landed nobility, are reported as showing themselves almost as relentless as the Socialists, the Radicals and the National Liberals. Though the debate lasted three days, the Reichstag failed to formulate definite demands upon the Kaiser. But