

SNIPPETS FROM TALKS.

Hiking Into An Unbelievable World

A Tour of a Chinese District With the Area of the South Island But 100 Times Its Population—Solving the World's Economic Troubles—How to Sunbathe—The Braemar Highland Games.

MRS. A. M. RICHARDS (3YA).

YOU people who spent the Christmas holidays or who plan to spend those still to come in hiking in our great New Zealand open spaces will probably think a hiking tour in such a long-settled and thickly-populated land as China a rather unhealthy business, and altogether a poor substitute for the real thing. But let me assure you that our hike, of just before Christmas a year ago, in Kwantung province, was anything but dull. The fact that Kwantung, with about the same area as the South Island of New Zealand, has just one hundred times its population only made things the more interesting—and difficult.

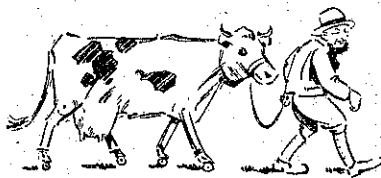
MY husband and I were both quite new to Chinese life and ways, we had only a missionary's rapid pencil sketch on a torn sheet of paper for a map, and literally not one word of Chinese between us. It was a strange, an amazing, an unbelievable world—that world of Chinese rural life—and we in it were far removed from interpreters, hotels, railways, intelligible street signs and shop prices, or even roads. We were there on our own resources to sink or swim.

LA TE one afternoon, as our journey was drawing to an end, we had penetrated into the hill country, sparsely populated by Chinese standards (except for graves). The only occupation seemed to be collecting pine-needles and tiny pine branches to send to the plains for firewood. They had to keep stripping those trees so well that they never grew beyond saplings. Here, of all remarkable things, we came out on a real road. We remembered then that a bus company had built a road from Canton to Chung Pa (our destination) or which to run its bus service. That is how roads are getting built in China. We stopped at Tai Ping Chuen to await the coming of the bus. At last it arrived—a dilapidated old six-seater, patched with wire and bits of benzine tins. Already there were fourteen aboard, with their luggage. Try as we could the driver could not fit us on until, extracting a small boy from inside, he wrapped him in a blanket and strapped him on the rear luggage carrier—and so off we went. Now who said hiking in China was without its interest and thrills?

DR. J. B. CONDLIFFE (ALL STATIONS).

WE are in the economically absurd position whereby some Governments pay heavy subsidies to encourage wheat production at three or four times the cost at which other Governments are paying subsidies to their farmers not to grow wheat. Nor is that the end of the story. With such a low price for wheat in the world market, farmers in the exporting coun-

tries turned their attention from agriculture to animal farming. The production of meat and butter increased rapidly, and as it increased was met with quotas and similar restrictions in the European countries, so that the world's surplus of these commodities was diverted more and more to Great Britain, with results that are only too well known to every dairy and sheep-



farmer in the Dominion. It is surely obvious that New Zealand, more than most countries, stands to lose heavily from the penalising of efficient, and the subsidising of inefficient, production.

OUR prosperity depends so much upon the ability of our farmers to sell their wool and butter and meat at competitive prices in a free world market that every narrowing and restriction of international trade is bound to react harmfully on the Dominion. The price of butter would not be as low as it is in New Zealand if it were not as high as it is in countries like Switzerland, France and Germany. There is much more that could be said about the extraordinary and often unexpected effects of this new device of quantitative trade restrictions. Unlike a tariff which spreads the increased cost smoothly over the whole range of competing and substitute products in the whole trading world, a quota may, and often does, have unexpected results. For example the British quota upon bacon imports produced a sharp rise in the price of bacon in England, but it also gave the Danes a higher return for a smaller quantity of bacon. The privilege of exporting bacon pigs to England under the quota became a marketable right—a kind of pig's passport—and this rose quickly to a substantial premium upon the Stock Exchange in Copenhagen.

THE economic and financial work of the League of Nations has been recognised from the first as among the most important of the technical sections. From the time of the Brussels Conference in 1920, when it was instrumental in checking the rot that had set in in the public finances of many European countries, and in putting an end to the wild inflations that had ruined many of them, it has worked with the steady support of the leading financial and economic experts of the principal countries.

WHEN the whole world is threatened with disaster it is sometimes necessary to call all hands to keep the ship afloat, postponing any attempts at repairs. The time comes, however, when it is possible to attempt something more constructive. The Financial and Economic Committees are both embarking cautiously upon preliminary discussions on measures that might be suggested to restore the international economic and financial system. I do not wish to be misunderstood upon this point. The League machinery cannot work except when the motive power is supplied by the pressure of public opinion upon national governments. For several years now we have been in a phase when public opinion has been fearful of international economic co-operation. The difficulty in fact is not expert or technical but political. There is little truth in the common jibe against experts that they never agree. The real difficulty lies in the political aspect of these great problems. It is very difficult indeed for the statesmen who must face public opinion at Home to accept the sacrifices of this interest or that, which the expert plan regards as necessary for the common welfare of all the peoples.

A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER (3YA).

THE most universal of holiday complaints is sunburn, and this, if severe and extensive, may be quite a serious illness. Try then to get "sun-browned," not sun-burned—"Hasten slowly" is the golden rule. Expose the body at first for a few minutes only, and that in the early morning or late afternoon rather than at midday. Indeed at first it is often better to go in for light and air bathing rather than sunbathing, and, paradoxically, to sunbathe in the shade (especially shade which is sun-chequered). It is really light and air on the skin which are beneficial rather than heat.

THE proper way to sunbathe is not to lie roasting in the sun, but to walk, play or work undressed in the sun. But if you still insist on basking naked in the sun, cover your head, the back of your neck, the upper part of your spine and your heart. Anoint your body generously with some cheap unguent such as olive oil, or even lard.

IF, despite this good advice, you do get sunburnt, what had you better do? This rather depends upon the severity of the burn. The best thing you can use for any burn is one of the preparations of tannic acid sold by chemists for the treatment of ordinary burns. Failing that, use picric acid solution—or wet some picric acid gauze and apply that. Olive oil, caron oil, cold cream, etc., are not so much use, especially when there are blisters, but they can be used in default of anything better. When there