

CHINA'S PRESS AND IDOLS.

People Are Awakening to Folly of Ancient Custom.

While the Chinese government is striving to coerce the editors and prevent them from interfering with local customs and usages, the native press in the south is attacking idolatry with word and deed.

There was a time when missionaries were blamed for venturing to say anything disrespectful against the idols of China, and when we have heard some of them preach we must say that, in the main, they have been very tactful in their dealings with these things.

Confucian classics are quoted as showing that when Confucius was leading the people into paths of righteousness and happiness, idols had not invaded China; foreigners are also held up as worthy of imitation, for at least only worship one God.

INDORSERD GOOD MAN'S PRAYER.

Years Even Added Strength to the Deacon's Explanation.

Franklin Whitcomb waxed reminiscences the other night, and favored a few cronies assembled in his cozy library with a story or two of his early life in that town where Denman Thompson has made all Whitcombs famous.

The senior deacon of the little white church in which Mr. Whitcomb first heard a sermon was an ardent advocate of good government and good laws. It was his custom, on the Sunday preceding the opening of the legislature, to pray that affairs might run smoothly in that august assemblage.

"Oh, Lord, bless the general court, and grant that the senators and representatives all hang together."

One Sunday, after the deacon had finished this stereotyped sentence, a young man who was kneeling in a nearby pew, and whose name Mr. Whitcomb, for sundry reasons, sees fit not to disclose, exclaimed: "Yes, Lord, do! It is the prayer of all good people."

The deacon was a little nettled, and replied: "Brethren, I fear my meaning and that of the young man do not correspond. I pray that they may all hang together in peace and concord."

"Mark Twain" indignantly. The writer at one time was associated with "Mrs. Partington" (H. P. Shillaber) in editing a church fair paper.

Through the solicitation of Mr. Shillaber—who had a wide acquaintance in literary circles—quite a number of articles were contributed by writers of prominence, among whom was Mark Twain, who sent the following characteristic reply:

"Friend Shillaber—Your pleasant note asking me to furnish you 'half a dozen lines' for the church fair paper you are editing came to hand, and I was about to lift with friendly alacrity, but when I looked at your note again and saw that it was half a dozen lines you wanted instead of half a dozen lines, I was disappointed and outraged. Now, I am going to a journalist any more for a little simple thing like that—no, I am not the people who write the 'Ladies' Home Journal' or the 'Partisan'."

William G. Shakespeare or some similar artist is the party who writes your friend, Mark Twain.

Talking From Stratas.

"Seems to me," said the girl, "that we are made up of different stratas, and that we talk sometimes from one strata and sometimes from another. The whole sum of our stratas—what we really are—is rarely ever expressed in speech. People who hear us talk from one of the lower stratas judge us to be in an elevated mood and talk from a higher strata; we are judged by that. No one can judge of us who hasn't heard us talk from all stratas—grave and gay, serious and thoughtful. The whole sum of us is not to be revealed by our partial moods and conversations. And therefore, it is that so many people misjudge us—either underestimate or overrate us, and the most we can do is to understand us at all."

To Encourage Sleep.

Many people suffer constantly from a state of over-fatigue which entirely prevents sleep at night. A hot bath before retiring is a capital anti-dote in some cases, but in others the best act is a stimulant rather than a narcotic, and prevents rather than induces sleep. One of the best means of obtaining rest is a cup of milk to which has been added a pinch of salt and a dash of pepper. Many people ignore the fact that sleeplessness is caused by the shut-out of the brain and a lack of fresh air.

SWALLOW'S FLIGHT IS RAPID.

Speed of 128 Miles An Hour Determined in an Experiment.

The French scientific weekly, Ciel et Terre, prints an interesting article about the speed of several birds, as observed by August Vershuerin of Antwerp. The rapidity of flight credited to the swallow (290 feet a second) seemed exaggerated to him and he undertook some experiments on his own book.

He sent several baskets of pigeons to Compeigne, France, and in a separate cage a swallow which had its nest under the eable roof of the railroad station at Antwerp. On November 7, at 7:30 in the morning, all the birds were liberated at Compeigne; the swallow took a northern direction as quick as lightning, while the pigeons made several spirals in the air before they started in the same direction. The swallow arrived at its nest in Antwerp at 8:23, a number of witnesses being present at its arrival.

The first pigeons only arrived at their destination at 11:30 of the same morning. The swallow had, therefore, covered the entire distance of 146 1/2 miles in one hour and 18 minutes, which is equal to a speed of 128 1/2 miles an hour, or about 189 feet a second, which is about double the speed of an express train.

The pigeons only reached a speed of 35 miles an hour, or 48 feet a second. It may be gathered from these figures how rapidly the migrations of the swallows take place, as with the speed given above it would require only half a day to fly from Belgium or Central Germany to northern Africa.

TRICKS OF PARIS BEGGARS.

All Stock Tales of the Trade Well Known to Fraternity.

This city is the happy hunting ground of the beggar, and especially at the New Year. He stops you at every corner of the street; he tries to hand you out of your carriage the moment you stop before shop or restaurant. It is partly the influence of the season, but it is an evil that is always with us more or less. Some have quite ingenious tricks to tempt the pity of the passerby.

One lady, who is well known, declares every evening at the Gare St. Lazare to any sympathetic looking stranger that she is a governess, and has lost her purse, and would the kind gentleman lend her 30 centimes. "And be pleased to give me your card," she adds, "so that I may return the money." The ruse generally succeeds, but the mendicant has never been known to take the omnibus, except at the close of a profitable evening, when she has probably victimized a dozen good natured persons. Another woman who piles her singular industry in the Place de la Concorde, addresses herself exclusively to her own sex. As a result, she obtains as much as five or ten francs from kindly matrons who are touched by her story.

At the New Year the usual crop of beggars is so immensely increased that one supposes that the comparatively well off must descend into the street to try their luck. No doubt it is a "metier" that has its fascinations, especially if it be but temporary.—Paris Correspondence Fall Mall Gazette.

Literary Fame.

"Zangwill," said a magazine editor, "entered literature by the back stairs. Instead of submitting his first story to the magazine he had it printed in pamphlet form, and sold it on the news stands at a cent a copy. He made out of it \$150. Now had this story been submitted to me I should undoubtedly have rejected it."

"Zangwill has turned to plays because he doesn't think there is much in books. Once I heard him say bitterly: 'If you are blessed with talent, great industry and conceit it is possible, by dint of slaving day and night, for years, during the flower of your youth, to attain to fame infinitely less widespread than a prize fighter's.'"

With a Real Octopus.

Here is an octopus adventure. The crew of the Perle, a fishing boat sailing from Cancalle, France, between St. Malo and Mont St. Michael, were about to pull in a big net, when they encountered a sudden resistance. The net was simply crammed, not, however, with good mackerel, but with vast number of octopi, each provided with tentacles more than six feet in length. The slimy wretches swarmed upon one side of the craft, giving the fishers a frightful experience. The men had at last to cut the rope of the net, sacrificing it altogether, and then to free the side of the boat from the octopi which stuck to it.

Tobacco and Bad Tempers.

"Bad weather and bad tempers do our business good," said a tobaccoist. "What other business can you say that of?"

"You see, the more dismal the weather is, the more men seek the solace of tobacco. By consequence, the more money falls into the tobaccoist's till."

"Bad-tempered men are always the cigar dealer's best customers. The ill-natured man not only flies to his pipe or weed oftener than others, but he smokes twice as rapidly as his placid mid-tempered brother."

True Chivalry.

Knicker—Does he carry things for his wife?  
Bocker—Everything but the point.

ANTS AS HONEY-MAKERS.

Their Production Very Similar to That of the Bee.

The ant honey has an aromatic flavor suggestive of bee honey, and is agreeable to the taste, says H. C. McCook, in Harper's for June. An analysis made by a competent chemist of the product of the Mexican species showed a nearly pure solution of the sugar of fruits, differing from grape-sugar in not crystallizing. The Mexicans and Indians have, or had at the period of these studies, several uses for the ant honey. They eat it freely. The late Prof. Cope, when in New Mexico, had a plate of round loaves offered him as a dainty relish. Dr. Loew reported that the Mexicans press the insects and use the honey at their meals. They were also said to prepare from it by fermentation an alcoholic drink. Another naturalist learned that the natives apply it to bruises and swollen limbs. It has been suggested seriously that these ants might by culture attain the rank of bees as honey producers. The difficulty of farming the colonies, and the limited quantity of the product, would prevent a profitable industry. The average amount of honey in a single rotund was by weight about 40 (0.3942) grams, a little over eight times (8.2) that of the ant's body. But counting the number of rotunds in a nest at 600—utmost the observation would justify—the entire product would be only two-thirds of a pound Troy, collected at the cost of all the honey-bearers' lives. Such results disbar those insects from the field of human industry.

PICRIC ACID FOR BURNS.

Scientist Claims It Will at Once Banish All Pain.

Put your finger in the fire and it need not burn. Chance led to the discovery of a remedy which instantly will cause burns to cease from being painful and also causes injured flesh to heal with miraculous speed.

Dr. Thierry, a physician in the Paris Charity hospital, was in the habit of using picric acid as an antiseptic, so that his hands were impregnated with the solution. One day in lighting a cigarette he dropped a portion of the burning match in his hand, but instead of feeling it he noticed not the slightest pain.

A short time afterward while sealing a letter some of the burning wax stuck to his finger, and though it cauterized the skin, he felt nothing. He began a series of experiments in healing burns with a saturated solution of picric acid. All pain instantly was suppressed. After having bathed the wound in a solution of this acid blisters did not form and a cure was effected after four or five days.

The only inconvenience was that the acid colored the skin yellow. But this is rapidly remedied by washing with boric acid. The cheapness of picric acid and the ease with which a proper solution is prepared have induced many Parisian manufacturers to place jars within easy reach of their workmen.

Gaul's Terra Cotta Houses.

At the Paris academy of fine arts, Commandant Esperandien, director of excavations at Alesia, announced that recent finds had enabled the workers there to reconstruct a hut which had been inhabited by ancient Gauls.

These houses were neither of stone nor of thatch, but of terra-cotta. The Gauls had made this by placing a layer of brick clay on a network body and baking it in a double fire inside and outside simultaneously. Commandant Esperandien said that it was probable that the exterior of the hut was additionally protected by thatch.

Among the sculptures recovered are statues of a Gallic chief and a cavalier, and also bas-reliefs, picturing heads.—American Antiquarian.

International Electricity.

For the first time on record electricity appears as an article of import. The case has arisen between Italy and Switzerland, the Italian government conceding to that of Switzerland the privilege, on behalf of the town of Stabio, in the Ticino Canton, of drawing electrical power for industrial and illuminating purposes from water supplies on Italian territory, and principally from the Vizola torrent. The power will be distributed not only in the town of Etavio itself, but in a wide district around. The amount of water rent to be paid to Italy is not stated.

Perilous Food.

"When I was editor of the Virginia City Enterprise," said Mark Twain at a dinner in New York, "a fine turkey was one day left at the office. 'Turkeys were rare in that high altitude, and we all hankered after this bird. The proprietor, though, claimed it for his own. He took it home and had it served for dinner. The next morning, as he was expatiating on the turkey's richness and tenderness, a letter was handed to him. He opened it and read: 'Mr. Editor—Sir: Yesterday I sent you a turkey which has been the cause of much dispute among us. To settle a bet will you kindly ask your agricultural editor to state in tomorrow's issue what it died of?'"

Start for a Fine Collection.

"That Scroggby girl is very fond of animals."  
"Does she own many?"  
"I should say so. She has a canary bird, a stuffed crane and a Teddy bear."

WAS THIS MARK TWAIN?

Humor of Debtor's Answer Really Worthy of Master.

A prominent New York lawyer says that in his earlier professional days he was glad to expand his slender income by bill collecting, says Harper's Weekly. On one occasion he had a bill against a man who, incidentally, had since achieved a success which puts him beyond the necessity of such an indefinite statement as he made on that occasion. The young lawyer found him with his feet propped upon his desk, while he gazed dreamily at the ceiling through a cloud of tobacco smoke.

"But, really, sir, I must insist that you give me some definite idea as to when you will settle," the lawyer said, after having been gently rebuffed. The author consented to lower his eyes and to wave his pipe languidly.

"Why, certainly, sir—though there seems to me to be a rather unnecessary commotion about this trifle," he drawled. "I will pay the bill as soon as I think of it, after receiving the money which a publisher will pay me in case he accepts the novel which I will write and send him just as soon as I feel in an energetic mood after a really good idea for a plot has occurred to me!"

DENOUNCED BOON TO MANKIND.

Seventeenth Century Wisaecras Saw No Good in Spectacles.

A certain English vicar made himself notorious by the vigor with which in the seventeenth century, he inveighed against the use of the newly invented optic glasses, since they perverted vision and made all things appear in an unnatural and therefore a false light. Microscopes and telescopes, with their array of lenses, he declared to be impostors, since a man could not see so well with two pairs of spectacles as with one. Some asserted it to be sinful to assist the eyes, which were adapted by Providence to the capacity of the individual, whether good, bad or indifferent. It was argued that society at large would become demoralized by the use of spectacles; they would give one man an unfair advantage over his fellow, and every man an unfair advantage over every woman, who could not be expected on aesthetic and intellectual grounds to adopt the practice.

The Family Honor.

"Bobby," asked the teacher of the class in arithmetic, addressing the question to one of the younger pupils, "how many pints are there in a gallon?" "I've forgot it again, ma'am," said Bobby, who found it hard to commit to memory the tables of weights and measures.

Thinking that perhaps by turning from the abstract to the concrete she might succeed better in stimulating his power of recollection, the teacher tried another tack.

"Bobby," she said, "your father is a milkman, isn't he?" "Yes, ma'am."

"Well, now, think as hard as you can. He sometimes sells a gallon can full of milk, doesn't he? Just so. Well, when he does, how many pints of milk are there in that gallon can?" "It's all milk, ma'am!" indignantly exclaimed Bobby.

Not an Unmixed Evil.

August Anderson, a wealthy Minnesota farmer, brings his family into Duluth during the deer season. He holds that hundreds of prowling hunters, delirious with "buck fever" then make the country dangerous to human life.

"But every cloud has its silver lining," said Mr. Anderson in Duluth this year. "My family enjoys this yearly trip to the city and we manage to get a good deal of shopping done. 'So you see, our flight from the deer shooters has its advantages. It is like the case of the housewife who at the sound of a crash started suddenly from her chair and cried: 'There! Another of my best porcelain turquoise gone.' 'Never mind, dear,' said her husband. 'It has stopped the cook's slinging.'"

How Times Have Changed.

"The times are changing," said Ballif William Phillips. "You know they used to say that you could always look around and see a white horse whenever you spied a red-headed woman. Generally, too, it was true. It's different now. 'I was walking the Circle yesterday and saw a girl so red-headed that I'd be willing to take out fire insurance on her. I looked about for the proverbial white horse, and discovered nothing but six automobiles. Verily, the times are changing.'—Indianapolis News.

Ghost and the Hidden Will.

Hidden among the beams of the roof of a farmhouse on the Thorney estate, near Peterborough, England, belonging to the duke of Bedford, the will has been discovered of a farmer named Cave, who died at the place a century ago, leaving property worth £10,000.

The house has long been reputed to be haunted by a lady in a red chintz dress, who always beckoned toward the ceiling of a certain bedroom.

Spoke a Different Tongue.

We have a neighbor who talks very rapidly, says an exchange. The other day my little niece asked: "Auntie, is Mrs. S— an American?" "Why, certainly," I replied. "Well," she said, "I thought she was some different species."

WAS TOO EAGER TO CONFESS.

Case Where Investigation Should Have Preceded Explanation.

A story is being told of a pickpocket who, when accused of theft, was touched on hearing that the watch purloined had belonged to his victim's mother, and caused it to be restored. If we were all arrested when appearances are against us many would risk being charged with pocket-picking, says the London Standard. Lord Russell of Killowen certainly would not have escaped—did not, in fact. As a young man he went to a theater, where he was wedged in the crowded pit, to hear a cry raised, "My watch is gone!" The man who complained declared that the thief was Russell or one or two men between whom he was standing. Russell suggested that they should go to the box office and be searched. As he led the way it occurred to him that if the man behind were guilty he would try to thrust the watch into his (Russell's) pocket, so he drew the tails of his coat tightly around him. To his horror he felt that the watch was already there!

Luckily, as they approached the box office a detective recognized the man behind Russell as an old thief, and took him into custody. The other two received apologies and were permitted to depart. But the watch burned in Russell's pocket. He could not let an innocent man suffer. He walked slowly back to the office and confessed that, although he was not the thief, he really had the watch. He put his hand into his pocket to produce the hateful thing, and drew out—a forgot ten snuff box.

WHEN DUTTON CAME BACK.

Explanations Were Neither Offered Nor Seemingly Wanted.

It is said that 50 years ago a man named Dutton lived on the present Squire Smith place near the bridge crossing Sugar creek, on the route to Bean lake. One morning Mrs. Dutton had bread to bake and sent Dutton out after an armful of oven wood, as they call it over there—heavy wood to produce a lasting fire. Dutton was something of a slow poke, and as he went out his wife, who was something of a shrew, said to him: "Now, don't be gone five years."

The husband did not return with the wood, and his disappearance caused a big sensation. Some said he had been foully dealt with, others said that he had eloped with a woman. But exactly five years later he walked into the house with an armful of oven wood, which he threw into the wood box of the kitchen stove. His wife displayed no astonishment, whatever her feelings might have been. "Now," she said, "carry the slop out to the pigs."

Dutton carried the slop out to the pigs, as directed, and resumed his old place in the household without comment or explanation.—Atholton Globe.

Business Women of a Maine Town.

If Norway ever should have a mayor the chances are ten to one a woman would hold the office. This Oxford county village of 1,500 inhabitants has more than a score of women managing progressive lines of business. A woman physician is a woman. A woman is justice of the peace. A woman manages a dry goods store. Another is photographer, a fifth is bank cashier, a sixth is an undertaker, and still a seventh is an insurance agent. Until her recent resignation Rev. Caroline E. Angell was, for 18 years, pastor of the Universalist Church of Norway. Mrs. F. W. Sanborn is responsible for the appearance of the Norway Advertiser, the local weekly. This by no means completes the list of the successful business women of Norway.—Lewiston Journal.

First Born Children Are Ablest.

According to some curious investigations conducted by English scientists, eldest sons tend to be criminals and youngest sons paupers. A great many thousand school children and many family histories have been examined to yield these results. First born children were found to be, as a rule, taller and heavier, with greater ability and endurance than the others. This is in accordance with the popular feeling in many countries that the oldest child is superior to the others and deserving of special privileges. It is a well-established fact that among men of genius an undue proportion are eldest sons.

The Human Moulting.

"Mankind moults, like the horse or cat," said a hairdresser. "Don't be alarmed, sir. You have still a fair crop. However, if you insist, I shall stand in my own way. Yes, thank you—\$3 for the half pint size."

You are moulting now.

"You are moulting now. How can I tell? I can tell by the fact that it is only the long hairs that are falling out. You, like every other mortal, moult twice a year."

"The male moult, on account of the hair's shortness, is less perceptible than the female. Young ladies come to me in agony. Their hair is falling like the leaves in October. I calm their fears."

His Standing.

"That old fellow," said the summer boarder, "looks as if he might be your oldest inhabitant."

"Who, Uncle Elias? No," replied the native. "Why, he ain't skercely no more than our middle-agedest inhabitant."

A Real Prima Donna.

"You appear to be unusually happy to-day," said Clifton. "I am," replied Subbubs. "I've just succeeded in getting our leading lady to sign for another season."

"I didn't know you were in the theatrical business."

"I'm not. I refer to our cook."

USE OF BLOTTING PAPER.

Method of Cleaning Machinery in German Shops.

The use of blotting paper for cleaning machinery is a comparatively new idea—an idea that has been tried successfully in German workshops. Tow, woolen refuse sponge cloths and jute waste are the materials usually employed for the cleaning of machines and parts of engines that are soiled by dirt and lubricating substances.

The better varieties of cotton waste are very good for scouring purposes, but the cheaper grades are charged with dust, and in using them a sponge cloth, specially manufactured for the purpose, has to be resorted to.

In employing blotting paper for scouring purposes the use of cotton waste is decreased, and the sponge cloths are entirely dispensed with. On an average a German workman receives under the former system 250 grams of cotton waste, one new sponge cloth, and one or two renovated ones each week. Now he is supplied with 150 grams of cotton waste, and about eight or ten sheets of blotting paper, at a cost of two and a half cents, or one-third the cost of the cotton waste.

The paper is not only cheaper, but it does not soil the machinery with fibers and dust, as do the woolen refuse and the sponge cloths. It is also less combustible than other cleaning materials, and, if it should be caught in the machinery while engines in motion are being cleaned, it tears easily, and the workmen run no risk of having their hands drawn into the machinery.

Rather Old Calf.

Some years ago the writer attended a revival meeting held in Eagle Hall, Concord, under the direction of Elder John Hook, of blessed memory. He had as an assistant Elder Martin Van Buren Lutz, a converted gambler and drunkard.

Elder Lutz was of an extremely nervous disposition and much in earnest in his appeals to sinners to quit sinning, as he had been a chief of sinners and knew how it was himself. At times he would get so excited that he would jump up and down, like a mad boy, on the platform.

He was preaching a sermon in one of these revival meetings on "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." When he came to the account of the killing of the fatted calf, he endeavored to heighten the interest of his hearers by the following touch:

"Not a calf, my brethren, but THE calf, the old, familiar calf that had been for years and years in the family." The prodigal son must have had some tough veal set before him.—Boston Herald.

Her Mudguards.

She was a schoolgirl of the age that is wrongly called awkward, and should be called natural. She had joined a hockey club, and was arrayed for the first time in the school hockey costume. An admiring luncheon party stood around and inspected her before starting for the fray. There were brothers, uncles, friends, and they said the right thing about the serge blouse and the colored skirt and the Tam o' Shanter. But this was not enough for the heroine of the moment. Emboldened by success, she made a duck at the bottom hem of her skirt, which though short was not short enough for her purpose. "You have not seen the best thing of all!" she said, proudly, "look at my mudguards!"

As to Dreams.

"We all dream dreams," said Mr. Billtops, "and I suppose if we could look into our neighbor's heart, he that neighbor man or woman, we might find there cherished aspirations and fancies fantastically at variance with the said neighbor's conventional demeanor and orderly life."

"A man I know, energetic, capable, effective, successful and in all his life notably systematic, tells me that if he could do as he would like to do he would be a tramp. No less a person than Mrs. Billtops, paragon of domesticity and devotion, confides to me that she always wanted to be an actress. Let us be grateful that actually she chose to play her charming part on the Billtop household stage."

Death List Enormous.

During the 12 months ending June 30, 1905, 14 persons were killed and 40 injured in British steam plant accidents; in the United States 383 persons were killed and 585 injured. The number of steam boilers in the United States does not exceed by more than 50 per cent those in Great Britain, so that, in comparison, the actual percentage is ten times as great in the United States as in England.

Out of the Vision.

"In the olden times it is said that it was possible for a man to render himself invisible."  
"Pshaw! That's not at all remarkable! Men in this country are doing it every day."  
"You don't say so! How do they manage it?"  
"By marrying famous women!"—Smith's Weekly.