

CURIOUS SHOPS OF JAPAN

How Flowers, Meat, Shoes and Other Articles Are Sold in the Mikado's Land.

The shops and booths of Japan are of unfailing interest. Here the green grocer and fruiterer has arranged his wares till it seems as though one looked upon a great bouquet.

Two or three paces farther on one is confronted with a typical Japanese shoe store. The newcomer is at once startled at the immense quantity of this simple footwear and the many places where it is sold.

HIS MARKSMANSHIP IS GOOD

Night Watchman at the Ostrich Farm Thinks He Sees Burglars at the Window.

Sitting alone in the office of the Bentley ostrich farm at Melrose the other night, A. Walters, night watchman, looked up from his paper and was startled to see two faces peering at him through a window.

"Burglars!" he gasped, and drew his revolver. He sent two shots through the window, and then pursued two fleeing forms into the darkness outside, firing as he ran.

"I've just shot a burglar," he said. "Two of them tried to break into the office and I chased them. I killed one, and the other owes his life to the fact that I had no more bullets. Come quick. You may catch him before he gets away."

A posse surrounded the big farm. Triumphantly Walters led the sergeant to where a dark form lay huddled in a heap on the ground, a testimonial as to his marksmanship.

A policeman bent over the form. "Why, it's an ostrich!" he exclaimed. —San Francisco Chronicle.

Where Rural Schools Attract

It is as true as it is strange that in Iowa many rural schools are so attractive that city boys are sent out of the city to attend the rural school.

"Chicken roasts" is the latest school attraction that I have known. A teacher is making the schoolhouse the center of social life for the district.

The Universal Pet

Everybody must have a pet. If you haven't a baby, you must at least own a dog. If it isn't a dog, it may be a cat or a kitten.

The Oriental Way

In China when the subscriber rings up exchange the operator may be expected to ask:

"What number does the honorable person of the moon and stars desire?"

"Hohi, two-three."

Silence. Then the exchange resumes.

"Will the honorable person graciously forgive the inadequacy of the insignificant service and permit this humbled slave of the wire to inform him that the never-to-be-sufficiently-censured line is busy?"

A College Leader

"Old Man Bling has been bragging that his boy is sent to college is going to make a name in the world."

HER REASON FOR WEeping

Mrs. Ackroyd's Explanation Also Gives Her Husband Occasion for Some Sober Thinking.

Just when Mrs. Ackroyd had finished packing her trunks and after William had bought railway tickets for her and their two daughters little Bessie came down with a severe case of whooping cough.

"Isn't it a shame!" the distressed lady wailed. "Here we are with everything in our trunks and my husband has even bought our berths in the sleeper."

"It is unfortunate, but I don't know what you can do except sit down and wait for four or five days. It may be safe for you then to start away."

"When her husband got home that evening Mrs. Ackroyd was weeping. "Don't take it so hard, dear," he said. "It might be a good deal worse. Our little one is likely to get along all right."

"I know. He told me the same thing. But I feel that we'll never go, I never postponed anything yet that didn't turn out sadly. I once postponed a wedding and the marriage never took place."

Half an hour later William Ackroyd was still sitting in a corner, thinking it over.

JAPANESE AUCTION IS TAME

Even the Auctioneer Has Nothing to Say, and Bids Are Made in Writing.

An un-American Japanese auction is a kind of Oriental prayer meeting. People do not exactly wait for the spirit to move them before making a bid, but they go about as silently as if meditating in a Lenten retreat.

The wondrous vocabulary with which Occidental auctioneers proclaim the merits of their wares has no place in a Japanese auction room, the dramatic thrill of "going, going, gone" is never felt.

When the bids are all in the auctioneer coolly turns over the article to the clerk with the highest bidder's offer and takes up the next thing on the list.

Churchgoers Near Panic

An extraordinary panic occurred recently in St. Woolas church, Newport, Monmouthshire, England, when, during the rendering of a sacred cantata by the choir, the electric light suddenly failed and the building was plunged in darkness.

Word to Be Avoided

Recovery of a letter which had been sent to a little town in Germany and never delivered to the person addressed cured one writer of the custom of adding "Esquire" to a name on the superscription of mail matter.

No Dust, No Light

Diffusion of light through the atmosphere is due to thousands of millions of dust-atoms floating in it. The finest dust floats highest, and imparts the tint of blue to the heavens.

BUILT A KITCHEN CABINET

Handy Man Worked at It Sundays, but Forgot to Measure the Stairway.

He is the meat man in a street grocery. Besides being handy at trimming spare ribs with a safety razor he is also an adept with carpenter's tools.

The only time he had to give to the kitchen cabinet cause was on Sunday, as he had to work early and late during the week.

"Well, boys, let's hike upstairs with it," said Fritz, the cabinet constructor. The boys took hold, tilted it and started for the stairway.

The cabinet has departed this life via the furnace. It is unlikely that Fritz will build another.

DIPLOMACY IN THE HOTEL

Some People Might Call It Lying, but the Guest Was Quite Satisfied.

"Sometimes it is an awkward matter to get a temporary tenant out of a suite that has been promised for a certain day," a hotel manager said.

"A man from San Francisco came to us in the busy season and the only thing we could do for him was to detach a room with bath from a suite that was promised for the next day.

"Why was that?" he demanded, frowning. "We discovered that the ceiling was leaking."

"Good gracious! My clothes didn't get wet, did they?" he demanded.

"He was much relieved when I assured him that they didn't; so much so that he made no kick at all." —New York Sun.

Last Thought Was His Mother

To prevent his aged mother from being shocked by his terrible injuries sustained in an accident, John Grady of Belfast, when carried to his home the other day, began to sing with apparent light-heartedness.

Josh Billings

The quaint spelling that helped to make "Josh Billings" famous was natural to him. "Josh" was not an educated man in the academic sense, and was a poor speller to the last.

Wherefore "Terse"?

"Terse" is a word that has an understood meaning nowadays. Shadwell in the fourth act of "The Humourists" (1871) put this question into the mouth of one of his characters: "Must it stay by the strength of terse claret you have wet yourself into courage?"

ANCIENT QUARREL IS OVER

Two Old Sardinian Families Publicly End Feud That Had Lasted for Centuries.

A ceremony the like of which had not been seen for centuries has just taken place in Sardinia, the cradle of the Italian vendetta.

A dispute over a question of family honor between these widely ramified houses has led to countless acts of vengeance and those who shirked fighting had to take refuge abroad.

In 1844 a reconciliation committee was formed by the bishops of Tempio and Ozieri, the prefect and the commander of the carabinieri and many other notables of the island, but it effected nothing.

From all parts of the island came congratulatory messages. To break this peace would be in the eyes of the people an act of sacrilege.

HARD TIMES FOR DOCTORS

Their Fees Were Small in Babylon and Failure to Cure Meant Torture.

Babylonian surgeons four thousand years ago had not the easy time of their modern colleagues. The French archaeological commission has just discovered there a tablet containing some interesting facts about the Babylonian Bob Sawyer.

When an operation caused the death of a patient the unfortunate surgeon had both his hands cut off, and when he did not cure his patient in reasonably quick time, the tablet tells us that his fee was confiscated by the government.

Whatever our occupation or profession in life may be, it is most desirable to create for ourselves some other special interest.

Dust Disease

Now that we have the "typhoid fly" and the "malaria mosquito," science may soon order that not a few of those who experience a blue Monday be described as sufferers from "dust depression."

Dream of Wealth Dispelled

A sad but illuminating commentary on the futility of human hopes when applied to getting rich quick is furnished by an advertisement which recently appeared in one of the San Francisco daily newspapers.

On a Pinch

Rivers (erasing something he has written)—I want to speak of a bald-headed man and I don't want to use the billiard-ball comparison. Can't you think of something not quite so hackneyed?

Complex Accomplishment

"I understand you speak French like a native." "No," replied the student. "I've got the grammar and the accent down pretty fine. But it's hard to learn the gestures."

GREAT THRIFT IN BUYING

Instance of the Perilous Housewife's Economy in Purchasing Half a Dozen Eggs.

"Just to show you how the small economics practiced by thrifty housewives may sometimes be carried too far," began the driver of the pie wagon, "well, I see a lot of it along my route, but this happened down at the market house. My wife was scouting around among the neighbors and one of them told her that there was one selling fresh eggs for fifteen cents a dozen. So she hiked right down there.

"Your eggs are fifteen cents a dozen here?" she asked, just to make sure. "Yes, ma'am."

GREATEST MAN IN THE CITY

How Sherlock Holmes Knew Important Individual Was Brought Up in the Country.

"Hah!" exclaimed Sherlock Holmes. "Very well, Sheri," said Dr. Watson, "if you wish it I will hah! But what is the occasion for hahing?"

"Of course, I could not very well help doing so. He would attract attention anywhere."

"He was born in the country and spent his boyhood either on a farm or in a small town."

"What is his name?" "I don't know."

"If you don't know his name, how have you found out that he was once a country boy? There is no hayseed in his hair, and I can see nothing about him to indicate that he has not always been used to city ways."

"Of course you can't. There isn't anything of that kind about him. But didn't you hear that man who pointed him out a moment ago say he was the greatest man in this great city?"

"Ah, Sherlock, they can't beat you as a deducer. Since you explain it the whole thing is as plain as day."

Her Part in the Task

It is a wise child who never provides unwinding fun for his elders, but it is a rare child who never makes remarks that set these elders thinking.

"But Willie picked the berries," she was gently reminded. "You didn't help to pick them, did you, dear?"

"No," was the unexpected answer, "but I whistled while Willie did!"

Derivation of Word "Caucus"

As to the origin of the word "caucus" there is much diversity of opinion. It has been traced to a North American Indian word "kaw-kaw-kaas," meaning to talk, giving advice or instigating, whence came "caucous," a chief. More often, however, it is explained, as English, a corporation of "calkers' meeting" and here again there is a variety of choice.

Forgotten Foods

It is well to remember that many plants which once were used as vegetables have been allowed to drop out of our bills of fare. Our forefathers, for instance, sometimes dined off elder root and burdock root, and the early shoots of the hop were considered a great delicacy and were cooked and eaten as asparagus.

"I understand you speak French like a native."

"No," replied the student. "I've got the grammar and the accent down pretty fine. But it's hard to learn the gestures."

ART OF SMILING IMPORTANT

People Do Not Care to Associate with an Animated Vinegar Cruet, Says Writer.

Why is it that most people, as they walk along the streets or ride in the cars have such an unpleasant expression? If one will observe even casually the people he meets in a day he will be impressed with the pained, and sullen and disagreeable countenances. We live in a rush, and the average person is bent on some errand or business and is absorbed in that; we are all rushing to get something or somewhere. With this absorbing our attention we haven't time to attend to our facial expression.

No one wants to associate long with an animated vinegar cruet. A disposition is easily guessed from the angle of the corners of the mouth; a disposition is molded by compelling those angles to turn up or down.

RANGE OF RACHEL'S VOICE

In Speaking, the Famous French Actress Had a Compass of Two Full Octaves.

A Prussian prince, a cousin of the German Emperor William I., has left some curious notes upon Rachel, of whom he was a great admirer. These have been quoted in a lecture upon the famous actress. The prince studied her elocution from a musical standpoint and took down notes of her voice as she delivered some of her most effective speeches.

It would be curious to know—but the prince does not seem to have ascertained—whether this musical notation of Rachel's speaking voice is rigorous and invariable, and it would be worth a musician's while to apply the same study to some contemporary actors and actresses.

Natural Indignation

A cautious German, who keeps a pawnbroker's shop in Sydney, is in the habit of leaving his daughter in charge while he attends sales to pick up bargains. A Chinaman entered the store the other day to buy a watch.

The Sacred Czar

It is not only the Russian Court Journal which has a circuitous way of referring to the czar. Even in conversation Russians never call a czar a czar. It is not incorrect to use the terms czar, czaritsa and czarvitch, but in practice they are used only in the Liturgy of the Orthodox church and sometimes from the lips of people of revolutionary views.

Tall Australian Trees

Australian claims to have the tallest tree in the world. It has long been thought that to California belongs this distinction, but while California trees are of gigantic dimensions they do not come up to Australia's eucalyptus trees. The tallest tree in California yet discovered was found by actual measurement to be 340 feet high. Australia's record tree can beat this by 140 feet.