

Pitiful Appeals Sent from China

Incredible Scenes of Hardship Disease Adds Its Horror to that of Hunger—Many Months of Suffering and Death Ahead America Appealed to for Aid.



The Kingdom of China—The Shaded Portion of the Map Indicates the Territory Stricken by Famine.

Frightful famine has its clutches on two lands. Owing to the drought and the failure of the crops in South Central Russia, 30,000,000 Russians in 27 provinces have seen their means of subsistence swept away. Men, women and children, huddled in their miserable villages on the steppes of the Volga and the Caspian sea, are face to face with starvation. It is feared that ten per cent. may die before new crops can be gathered.

The flooding of 40,000 square miles of lowlands in northeastern China has rendered 15,000,000 homeless. It is believed that fully 4,000,000 of these may perish.

So pitiful are these calamities that the voices of the starving peasants have been heard around the world. America has been among the first and most generous in appreciating the dire need and in giving of her prosperity. But all that has been given as yet has scarcely touched the fringe of the famine-stricken districts.

New York.—The climax of the great Chinese famine is at hand. In the seaboard provinces 4,000,000 men, women and children are starving—more than the population of Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Richmond. According to the latest reports, the situation is much more serious than that described in these columns a few weeks ago by a correspondent in Shanghai. Since early in the winter the 4,000,000 refugees have been homeless and destitute. According to the vicerey of Kiangsu, it is ten times worse than any famine known in China in the last 40 years. In point of mortality, it is the worst calamity that has befallen mankind since the beginning of the new century.

The end is not yet. As the Chinese winter reaches its height, more and more people must succumb to hunger and exposure. It is not a question of surviving, but of how many thousands must die. That the famine will last for months to come is a certainty. With all the generosity of other civilized nations, the relief is inadequate.

40,000 Square Miles Flooded.
The messages received from China last December told of the beginnings of the famine. For 40 days and nights it rained constantly. The great canal, extending 700 miles from Tientsin to Hang Chan, close to the sea-coast in the provinces of Chekiang, Kiangsu, and Shan Tung, burst its banks and 40,000 square miles of low plains were flooded. Fifteen millions of people in five provinces were more or less affected. Of these, 8,000,000 lost their property, including their buildings and food supplies. Four millions were left absolutely destitute.

To these beginnings, nearly three months of unspeakable misery have since been added. The intermediate stages were, in some respects, peculiar to China. The dwellings and farm buildings had mud walls and roofs of thatch. The walls melted like paper as the water leaked through them. The peasants were forced to abandon them and wade through water up to their armpits to reach dry land.

Stores of Grain Lost.
These Chinese farmers were a feudal people living on millet, rice, pea-

nuts, sweet potatoes, maize, and wheat. At the beginning of the winter their store of grain was swept away. The horses, cattle, and even the dogs that survived were sold. Hunger reduced thousands to a diet of gruel made of beans, when they could be found, and sweet potato leaves.

Then came reports of pitiful episodes peculiarly oriental in their nature. So intense did the suffering become that many sought death. Parents killed their children by throwing them into the water, then took their own lives. Aged people are being drowned, or poisoned with opium, to prevent their slow death by hunger.

The vicerey in one of the flooded provinces tells of a family consisting of a father, mother, and two children, all of whom perished in a single day. The mother left the house in search of food. In her absence the father drowned the children. When the mother returned, she asked where the little ones were. Her husband replied that he could not bear to see them starve to death, and as there was no chance of feeding them, he had thrown them into the water. The distraught woman followed her children. The father, in utter despair, took his own life.

Sell Their Children.
In some parts of the provinces of Honan, Kiangsu, and Anhui parents are selling their offspring, the girls for three dollars and the boys for two dollars—Mexican, which means about one-half those amounts in American money. A correspondent declares that in the Szechow and Petchow districts the starving people have been reduced to eating human flesh, and that it is being sold secretly among the famine sufferers.

Early in the new year, the famine situation changed. The starving peasants flocked to the nearest cities in their quest for food. They are living in great camps, where the pitiful conditions are intensified a hundredfold. There are now fully 800,000 refugees at nine cities—Tsingkiangpu, Husian, Yanchow, Yaowan, Hsuehoun, Suchien, Hsien, Chinkiang, and Nanking.

One of the largest gatherings is at Tsingkiangpu, on the edge of the famine district. Here there are five camps

each with at least 10,000 refugees, or three times as many at one point as there were Cuban reconcentrados in 1898. The flour and bean shops of the city have been closed. There are no foodstuffs available. All are dependent on charity.

In a large camp at Antung the destitute peasants are also facing death. The Chinese officials acknowledge their helplessness, and say that the only feasible course is to let one-half the people die and endeavor to obtain seed and scanty food for those who remain.

In Suchien, 20 per cent of the people have been living on gruel for weeks. All the cattle have been sold and the donkeys, sheep, hogs, and even the dogs have been eaten.

Pitiful Scenes in Refugees' Camps.
In these camps the starving people find shelter in flimsy huts of matted grass and strip the bark from trees, devouring them ravenously to allay the pangs of their hunger. In the better camps the people are fortunate if they receive a scanty tea cup of rice a day.

This is usually supplied at the kitchens established by the relief committees. Some of the most pitiful scenes in the camps are enacted as the crowds of refugees, emaciated, diseased, and in rags, besiege the kitchens for the dole of food which means their lives.

J. L. Rogers, American consul of the district, who is acting as the special Red Cross representative among the famine sufferers, visited refugee camps at Chinkiang and Nanking recently. He was told that these were infinitely better than the other camps along the canal, yet he found the wretchedness, misery, and appalling horror of the sight almost indescribable.

There is no attempt at sanitation, he says. The mat huts are crowded together, and each contains many men, women, and children, who are clothed in rags and are diseveled beyond description. To make matters worse, smallpox and other diseases have appeared among them.

Widespread Measures for Relief.

The famine will continue for five more months, or until the crop of spring wheat is harvested. Each sufferer needs little yet in the aggregate the requirements for their relief are formidable. It is said that ten cents a day will save a family, and \$100 will relieve a small community. Assuming that the total number of destitute is 4,000,000, the relief fund must be \$20,000 a day for five months, or at least \$2,000,000. The relief thus far has been trifling in comparison with the need.

In all parts of America purse strings have been loosened by men, women and even little children to save their kind from the pangs of hunger and death. The contributions range from five cents to \$1,000 or more. Nearly every State is represented.

Fund for Sufferers.

A fund, started by contributions of \$100 each from President Roosevelt and Secretary Root, is being raised by the Christian Herald of this city. From this fund \$35,000 has been sent to China through the state department at Washington. The newspaper has promised to raise \$50,000 a month additional for February, March, April and May.

The Red Cross Society has raised about \$60,000. Of this \$45,000 has been sent to China. Several weeks ago 300 tons of foodstuffs were shipped from America to the famine districts. The California Red Cross society was also instrumental in sending 2,500 bushels of seed wheat from San Francisco two weeks ago on the Siberia, free transportation having been offered by the Pacific Mail Steamship company. Five thousand bushels of seed wheat have been given to the Red Cross at Portland, Ore., and it is being gathered at Seattle for shipment.

There are two relief committees in China. One is composed of Chinese, Europeans and Americans, at Shanghai. The other comprises missionaries exclusively. They are sending food into the districts where the greatest suffering prevails, but have been unable to do more than relieve the starving peasants that are near at hand, owing to the lack of funds.

As early as possible in the famine the American Missionary society loaded 3,500 bags of millet and rice on boats and sent them up to the great canal to the starving peasants. Another consignment of 20,000 bags followed soon after. Thus far fully 16,500 more bags of grain have been distributed, making 40,000 in all.

The Chinese officials realize that the crisis is at hand, and have taken extraordinary measures to aid their starving fellows. Taxes in the affected provinces have been abated. Many officials have had their salaries reduced, the saving being devoted to relief. The mints are running overtime to coin cash. The acute sufferers in some of the districts are receiving three cash (a sixth of a cent) a day for a month. It is also proposed to re-open old canals and rebuild old roads, and thus afford the starving an opportunity to earn a living.

They landed in a boat which was smashed by a wave of their trying to relaunch her, and they were kept on the bare rocky island without food.

Fortunately there was a spring on the island, but nothing in the way of sea gulls, which they could catch, and nothing with which to make a fire as a distress signal. There were not even any shell fish, as there was no beach, and the pair had to subsist for ten days on cold, raw seaweed washed up by the tide.

The best known and most useful of starvation diets for wrecked castaway people, however, is that of barnacles. Three Englishmen and a crew of Leacars who had been forced to abandon the sailing vessel North Star a few months ago kept themselves going for more than a week on barnacles.

The worst of this diet is that the barnacles give one internal cramps and cause an insufferable thirst, but they do nourish the frame. You have to reach under the vessel's side and pull them off, taking care not to leave the best half of them sticking to the plate.

HOME VS. THE CITY

THAT IS WHAT THE HOME-TRADE PROBLEM AMOUNTS TO.

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

If You Are Sending Your Dollars to the Mail-Order Houses You Are Battling Against the Home Town.

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A far seeing, provident business man will not pursue a policy which is subversive of his best interests. He will not destroy his own home, neither will he jeopardize his business. He will observe the golden rule, not only in theory, but in practice, and its practical observation was never more needed than at the present time. Men dream about the "Golden Age" and yet, oftentimes pursue a policy which renders the dawn of that age an impossibility.

Within the horizon of every country resident there exists an evil which is yearly assuming greater proportions. We refer to the mail order business which last year amounted in money sent to Chicago alone to \$200,000,000. Two hundred million dollars diverted from its legitimate channel. Two hundred million dollars sent out to enrich those who were not needed, while those at home sorely in need of support were passed by coldly; the local trade was impoverished just to that extent. This golden trade reviving stream should have remained within its own channel, thus enriching its own soil, and causing desert places to bloom and blossom.

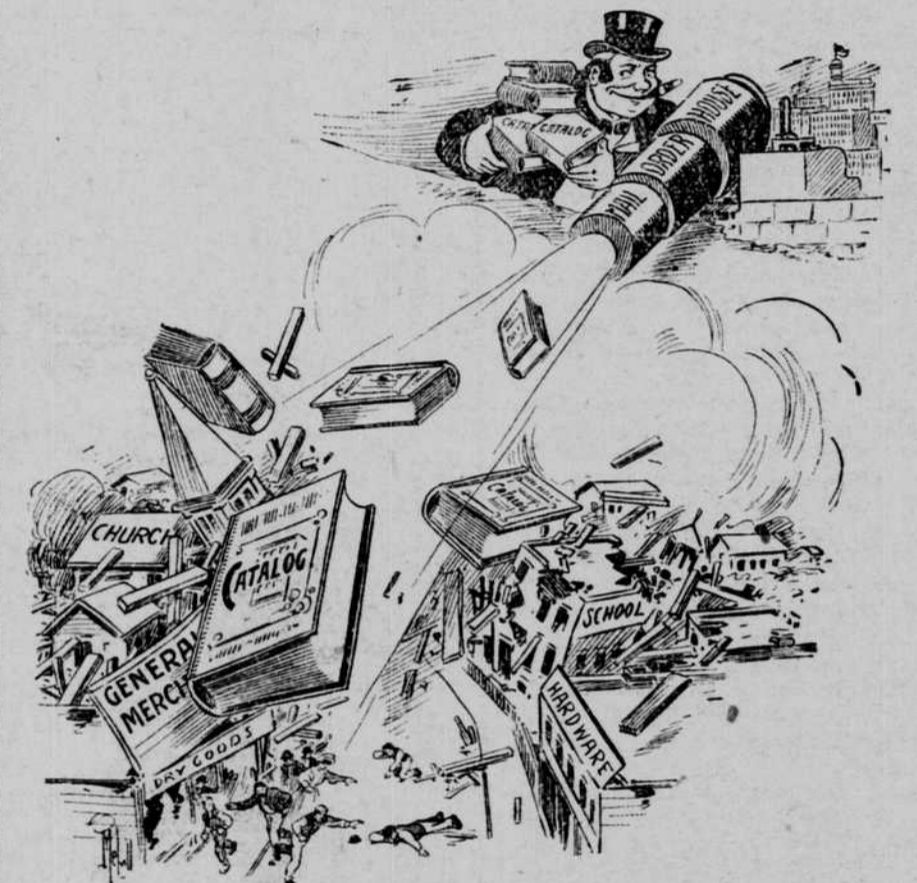
Many unemployed would have been engaged at living wages, households

country is the feeder of the city. This is only partially true. That doctrine has been preached till the text is threadbare. It would be much wiser for men to get a new text and talk and work the country up, then allow the city, including its mail order Octopus, to work its own problems awhile. This, instead of being selfishness, would be the finest order of common sense. A more marked feeling of brotherhood interest is sadly needed in the country on this particular point.

The rural population complain of lack of facilities and conveniences; in order to obviate this, let \$200,000,000 this coming year be disbursed among country merchants, among the humbler storekeepers, then observe what will follow. The improvements would be marked. Social conditions would be greatly ameliorated. A new order would maintain in the home and over the broad acres of the farm and best of all, the social spirit of brotherhood would be felt as never before.

Listen to these thoughtful words from Gov. Folk, of Missouri: "We are proud of our splendid cities, and we want to increase in wealth and population, and we also want our country towns to grow. We wish the city merchants to build up, but also desire the country merchants to prosper. I do NOT BELIEVE in the mail order citizen. If a place is good enough for a man to live in and to make his money in, it is good enough for a man to SPEND HIS MONEY in. Patronize your own town papers, build them up, and they will build your town up in increased trade and greater opportunities."

These are the words of wisdom and foresight from a prudent, patriotic man. As it is to-day, these words are expressive of the opposite of what should be in many a country district. The mail order citizen may think he is gaining; the truth is he is losing



The batteries of the catalogue houses are carrying destruction to the smaller cities and towns. Are you helping in this work of hurrying destruction at the local schools, churches and industries? Are you assisting in the distribution of mail-order literature and sending ammunition in the way of home dollars with which they will continue the campaign?

would have been cheered and hearts warmed; but no, it went to swell the dividends of surfeited, boastful city concerns.

The live and let live doctrine was overlooked; its old-fashioned wholesomeness was utterly disregarded. The country merchant would have been engaged in his daily struggle, instead of battling at long odds against ostracism, adversity, big bills and meager receipts.

Think of \$200,000,000, yet who cause the catalogue houses to flourish as the cedars of Lebanon, and the green bay tree; remember that their prosperity is at the expense of your brother, the local merchant, and local progress. Then ask this pertinent question: Can we afford to play the game longer; can we longer stultify local interests? "This great evil affects every farmer, teacher and work hand, every home, every school, every church in every country community. It also touches the interests of the physician, preacher and pedagogue. It really robs the country merchant before his eyes, in a heartless way. He sees the freight yard crowded with consignments to individuals from great catalogue houses, and sadly does he look at his country store with its stock accumulating, for want of trade, and thus decreasing in value every day. Sadly too does he look at the refuge of bankruptcy hourly being hastened because his townsmen prefer the catalogue houses with its ubiquitous circulars. Those train loads of goods bought with money that should have found its way into the honest hand of your local merchant, who has the good of your locality at heart, and who is expected to contribute liberally and continuously to very moral and benevolent institution in your midst. Then likewise remember this, that of all the millions thus sent to swell the coffers of houses in great cities, not one cent will ever return to bless your community; to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry or to educate the ignorant!

This is certainly a misguided, ill-advised policy; if self preservation is the first law of nature, the fact just stated should cause lovers of this country to think. Continue this policy and what follows? The value of real estate decreases, local improvements cease, material progress stops, the whole country suffers.

The money of a community represents in a business sense just so much possibility, and every honest occupation is injured in proportion as that is withheld or sent elsewhere. In a certain rural community, this official order and warning was issued: "Unless bad roads are fixed there will be no rural delivery at all." It is impossible to put roads in repair without money. This lack of means cannot be traced to poor crops, for the harvest just gathered in has been superabundant. Men cannot support and build up business concerns in distant cities without sacrificing the local good. Is it fair to establish the city by depriving the country of its just support?

Many hold forth the idea that the

off the limb upon which he sits. Disaster only can follow. The mail order citizen makes his money locally and scatters it abroad in a field where it is not needed; this is unfair to both the town and to its merchants. This shortsighted citizen complains of the size and character of his town paper, at the same time he pursues a policy which tends to destroy both. Then publishers ought to be careful how they exploit and give publicity to the mail order houses; even if they are paid well for the space, it reacts disastrously on the town's best prospects.

Let men stand by the local merchant, let them protect his interests, for they thus further their own. The town that made the man should be made by the man. This is fair to all. Let men ponder well this truth, that we are all interdependent; that the vein of brotherhood underlies the entire social and commercial fabric. That together we stand or fall; that the good of the country demands loyalty and practical cooperation.

ARTHUR M. PROWSEN.

Father's Fond Hopes Dashed.
"Times are changed," said Mark Twain, speaking of Washington. "I doubt if nowadays a man of Washington's unswerving integrity would be able to get on."

"A rich lawyer after dinner the other night went into his den for a smoke. He took down from his pipe rack a superb meerschaum, a Christmas present from his wife, but, alas, as he started to fill the pipe it came apart in his hands. The bowl had been broken in two and then carelessly stuck together.

"With loud growls of rage the lawyer rushed from his den and demanded to know who had broken his new meerschaum. His only son, a boy of 11, spoke up bravely.

"Father," he said, "I can not tell a lie. I did it."

"The lawyer praised the lad's Washingtonian veracity, but that night on his pillow he groaned and went on terribly about the incident.

"Eaven help me," he said, "it had been my life's dearest wish to rear up my son to my own profession, but now—alas—alas—"

Fortunate Men of Prominence.

Admirers of great, rich or famous people often bestow their wealth upon the objects of their regard. The German emperor heads the list of lucky ones so favored. His receipts in money and real estate during the last ten years would, it is said, make a millionaire envious. Following precedent, a Hamburg merchant prince left more than \$1,000,000 to the emperor's chancellor, whom Kaiser William immediately created "Prince" Buelow. William Jennings Bryan recently came by wealth in the same way. In England Lord Allerton has received \$100,000 from an admirer of his public career and Dr. Jameson inherits a sum one-fifth larger under the will of Mr. Beit. Queen Victoria was very fortunate in her admirers, of whom the wealthiest was Nield, who bequeathed to her the sum of \$1,250,000.

Washington Day by Day

News Gathered Here and There at the National Capital

SHORT SESSION SETS NEW APPROPRIATION MARK

WASHINGTON.—More money was appropriated during the short session of the fifty-ninth congress, which recently passed into history, than during any previous session. The amount approximates about \$1,000,000,000. Two big battleships were authorized for the navy. The artillery corps of the army was reorganized and enlarged. A general service pension was granted to veterans of the Mexican and civil wars, and like provisions were made for army nurses. For river and harbor improvements the appropriation aggregated \$83,000,000.

Increased salaries were given cabinet ministers, the vice president, senators, the speaker of the house of representatives and its members, ambassadors, ministers, and consuls, post-office clerks and letter carriers.

The public made more inquiries for information from the document rooms of congress regarding the ship subsidy bill, the currency measure, and the bill regulating the hours of serv-



ice of railroad employes than any other pending legislation. Ship subsidy died hard in the last hours. The other two measures became laws as the session closed.

The immigration bill, one of the measures brought over from the long session, was completed under the spur of President Roosevelt that he might meet the California-Japanese situation by giving the administration control of coolie importation through passports. The bill further restricts the admission of aliens to the country.

A bill was passed for the establishment of an agricultural bank in the Philippine islands. The free alcohol law of last session was modified that farmers may distill the waste products of the farm to be denatured and used in the arts and sciences.

The right of appeal in criminal cases was granted the government, a measure intended to strengthen the anti-trust legislation by affording a means whereby the supreme court may pass on the constitutionality and construction of such laws.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SHUN "HOODOO DESKS"

A SERIES of misfortunes involving dismissals, resignations and deaths in the great executive departments in Washington often develops what is known as the "hoodoo desk." A desk comes under suspicion after a dismissal or two from the service or after several transfers or resignations, and if there should occur several deaths among the occupants of the desk in the course of a year or two it is designated as the hoodooed desk and no one in that room cares to do clerical work at it. In a room filled with clerks, the hoodoo desk is easily recognized, for it is most generally occupied with the surplus books and general litter of the daily routine work.

The desk may remain unoccupied sometimes for months, until some new clerk comes into the room and is assigned to it, provided there is no other vacant desk in the room. Bureau officials generally avoid assigning a new clerk to the hoodoo desk, if it can be done. In fact the desk is apt to remain without an occupant

until radical changes in the personnel of the office cause its reputation to be forgotten.

Perhaps the most conspicuous case of a hoodoo desk in any one of the Washington executive departments was that in which a succession of misfortunes came to private secretaries of one of the assistant secretaries. Several deaths and other misfortunes made the place dreaded.

But there are other hoodoos in Washington. Some years ago a door-keeper's post in the war department building came under the ban and was a source of considerable annoyance to officials.

At this particular door the first misfortune was death, the second dismissal; the third holder of the post lost his wife by death and finally fell and broke a limb, and the fourth appointee in succession lost a child and then resigned. This resignation kept the place vacant for a time, as no one could be induced to take it. The place had to be filled by calling on the civil service commission for some one from the outside.

ART STRICTLY BARRED IN GOVERNMENT PRINTSHOP

If there are those in the government printing office who are vain, or those who have been leaning toward the artistic, they must confine their admiration of what their mirrors portray to the sacred confines of their homes—or the corner bar. Also no more will they be permitted to cover up patches of somberness on the walls of the government printing office with decorative pictures or calendars.

Even the pictures of President Roosevelt are not exempt from the attacks of the art censor, although a likeness of the executive stayed lonesomely on the walls of the bindery for three days while the censor considered the propriety of including it within the category of "pictures" or "decorations."

Maj. Sylvester recently asked a police regulation permitting him to prohibit the display of all pictures on the billboards in the district. Close investigation developed the fact that it was not because of any aversion to art on the part of the head of the police department, but because he wished to rid himself of the onerous responsibility of saying what should and what should not go on the billboards.

Under the present regulations he is the court of last appeal for those who



object and those who do not to the pictures that get on display. Maj. Sylvester found it so hard to steer clear of trouble between the multiplicity of opinions that he would lose the whole responsibility.

What motive may have actuated the move in the government printing office is unknown, but the fact remains that recently the order was promulgated, and a man went through the department removing pictures, mirrors and all other attempts at decorations from the walls.

In the course of his work came a large picture of the president, and the men in the room, who had watched his leonastic progress with displeasure, waited eagerly to see what he would do. The man paused, and some one asked if he intended to remove the picture. He replied that he didn't think he would at that particular time, and passed on, gathering up a truck load of other articles.

The picture of the president rested in solitary glory for three days, while in some place about the building there were held councils of war to decide if it should come down.

The eyes won the conference, and the destroyer of amateur attempts at decorative art came and took it down, carrying it away to oblivion.

NEW PALACES OF RICH IN FASHIONABLE CIRCLE

Hampshire avenue site occasioned little surprise in this city. Both she and Mr. Vanderbilt are reported to have consulted architects on their prospective residences.

It is expected Mrs. Field will build a mansion that will rival, if not eclipse, the Leiter, Walsh, Townsend, Lars Anderson and other fine homes that have been erected in recent years, the Leiter house on Dupont circle being the first of the big residential show places to go up.

Mr. Vanderbilt is spending his first winter in Washington, but is residing in a rented house. It has been known for some time that he intended building a fine residence in this city.

Perry Belmont of New York is building his half-million-dollar residence just a square to the south of the ground sold the agent for Mrs. Field and Mr. Vanderbilt. Mr. Belmont paid nearly \$100,000 for the site. Other handsome residences in this section are those of Representatives Dalzell and John Moore and the Huldekooper and McKim houses.

The wear and tear of rust is faster than the wear and tear of work.—S. Smiles.

QUEER FOODS GLADLY MADE USE OF BY SHIPWRECKED

Shipwrecked persons have been kept alive on the most repugnant and unwholesome of foods. Probably the hardest fare that six strong men and a boy of 15 ever kept alive on was the daily menu of the Windover's survivors, who were cast up on the Irish coast near Kilsgeer not long ago. They lived 16 days on stewed rope yarn.

When they took the ship's small boat they had water enough for a month, but only a small amount of provisions. These lasted only four days. After having nothing at all to eat for the following two days they tried boiling lengths of tarred hemp rope into pulp and swallowing it.

They had a keg of paraffin wax, which they boiled to add to the nourishment. The sickness they experienced as a result of the diet, says

What-to-Eat, was only temporary and they landed in comparatively good health.

Capt. Maboly of the foundered steamer Gwallor and his second officer created a record less than two years ago by living for 17 days on boot leather and a pint of water a day each.

Of course no teeth can tear cowhide boots; they have to be cut up and shredded with a knife and the shreds chewed and swallowed. Boiling, even when possible, it is said, does no good, but takes from the nourishment of the boots.

A diet of boots and shoes is one of the commonest of last resource foods, and though it is hard for a well-fed person to imagine that anyone could masticate and digest the leather, a pair of long sea boots will keep a man alive for a fortnight if he has a little water.

Two men who went to a small island off the Irish coast not long ago kept themselves going for ten days on a diet of probably worse than this.