

TAKE TO WASHING.

WHY THE CHINESE LIKE THAT BUSINESS IN THIS COUNTRY.

It Is So Much Easier Here Than at Home
In China—Washing In Ice Covered Ponds
and Beating Out the Dirt With Stones
For Very Small Pay.

Among the thousands of Chinamen in this city few, besides the store and restaurant keepers on Race street, follow any other calling than that of laundryman. Consequently many Americans believe that the majority of China's millions are laundrymen, who, when not squirming water through their teeth upon shirts and linens, spend their time eating rats and puppies or indulging in the questionable enjoyments of the "flower boats." The truth is that the Celestial Kingdom's 450,000,000 of tea drinkers do a smaller percentage of washing than any other large country. What little washable clothing they wear is cleaned in the paddy fields near the wearer's home, and only the Europeans and richer class of natives require the assistance of a washman.

That important item of expense, the wash bill, is reduced to a minimum in China, where the European's clothing is eagerly sought by young and old male natives, who are glad to do up in first class order white shirts, white waistcoats or anything at all for 75 cents per hundred. This will partly explain why our Chinese residents prefer to do our laundry work to waiting on our tables or sweating on a farm, as the money received for ironing and finishing a single white shirt will support him two days in his native country. Another reason is that when at work behind his ironing board, breathing the close air of his little shop, he appreciates the one hundred and one conveniences that he could not afford in China. Tubs, hot water, self acting soaps and washboards have not yet been introduced in his native home and have never been thought of by the poor beggars doing up shirts at three-quarters of a cent apiece. There they stand on the low shores of a paddy field, ankle deep in the mud and ooze, and after soaking the clothes slap them against the smooth stones put there for this purpose until the dirt becomes loosened and can be rubbed out with the hands.

Within the limits of the American settlement of the treaty port of Shang-hai are several ponds filled with from two to four feet of rainwater. In summer these ponds are used by the washmen and for irrigating neighboring paddy and rice fields, while in winter the ice accumulating is carefully preserved.

The Chinese themselves do not use ice for any purpose, the most refreshing drink to them in the hot spells being boiling hot tea without milk or sugar. Since the advent of the foreigner the Chinaman has found that it pays to preserve the scanty ice of Shanghai during the short winters. The icehouses surrounding the ponds are low structures formed of wood, mud and thick layers of salt hay, with the floors raised slightly above the level of the water.

Adhering to his general rule of doing everything directly opposite to us "barbarians," John Chinaman does not believe in allowing the ice to form three or more inches, but as soon as a thin skin has formed he breaks it up and pushes it all through the narrow openings of the storerooms. The breaking of this thin ice makes it necessary for the poor natives to wade up to the hips in the water of the ponds and with rakes and hooks manage the ice so that it can reach the storerooms.

But to return to the workmen, who must work and live in winter as well as in summer. Not having hot water boilers and other luxuries, he must resort to the dirty ponds no matter how cold the weather. The ice, broken in the center of the pond, is allowed to get quite thick along the edges, making it necessary very often for the washman to cut through it before he can immerse his washing. The stiffened linen is then slammed up against the smooth stone, which soon turns into a small mound of ice as layer after layer of water is thrown upon it. The native keeps his feet incased in a covering of old clothing, rags and hay, while around his body are wrapped one or more blankets. As he goes through this cheerless as well as seapless operation he is gradually covered by the ice, which forms as soon as the water reaches his clothing. Taking into consideration all the trouble, hardship and inconvenience the laundryman of the Flower Kingdom is compelled to endure while rendering white the foreign devil's linen, he does it much better than his more fortunate brother in this country, who returns our laundry in such a careless and independent fashion, and who receives, after deducting rent and all expenses, eight times more pay in return.—Philadelphia Times.

Telegraph Lines.

A German expert, after a careful estimate, has announced that the total length of telegraph lines in the world is 1,062,700 miles, of which America has 545,600 miles; Europe, 380,700; Asia, 67,400; Africa, 21,500, and Australia, 47,500 miles. The United States has a greater length than any other country, 403,900 miles, and Russia has only 81,000 miles. The other countries follow in this order: Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, British India, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Turkey, the Argentine Republic, Spain and Chile. In point of proportion, however, Belgium leads, with 409 miles of wire for every 1,000 square miles of territory; Germany comes next with 350 miles; Holland is only slightly behind Germany, and the United Kingdom has 280 miles of telegraph for every 1,000 miles of country.

"The Barber of Seville."

"The Barber of Seville," the famous opera of Rossini, was produced for the first time on Feb. 16, 1816. According to the Italian law, which fixes the duration of the right of ownership for dramatic works at 80 years, Rossini's masterpiece would have become public property a few weeks ago. But in Italy no opera is more popular than "The Barber," and the revenues from its production constitute almost the whole income of the musical academy at Pescaro, Italy, the residuary legatee of the composer. Owing to this fact, the government has issued a decree prolonging the right of proprietorship two years in order to save the institution financially.

A PROFESSIONAL MENDICANT.

His Income From Begging Reached \$200 a Day.

"I have just walked from the Riggs House to this hotel," said Thomas Crofton of New York at the National, "and have only been approached by one tramp—a poor, wretched, shivering devil, whose poverty needed no argument. I had just finished a hearty dinner, an excellent cigar, and my humor was good enough to make me feel for the whole world of suffering, so I struck him to a bed and supper. As I'm not a philanthropist, I don't care whether he used it for the purpose of lodging and food or bought some of the fleeting pleasure that a few drinks of whisky brings.

"Tonight you cannot pass a yard on Broadway without being importuned by a beggar. Do you know that the greatest professional mendicant in the metropolis was created through accident? He formerly had a position as bookkeeper in some mercantile establishment, paying \$75 a month. One night he found himself way down town, far from his home in Harlem, without a cent of car fare. In changing his clothes he had neglected to bring his purse along. Without any hesitation he approached a gentleman and explained his situation. The bookkeeper was entirely respectable and had none of the earmarks of a practiced beggar, which, indeed, he was not. He got the car fare without difficulty. That one incident set him thinking and developed the latent streak of indolence he possessed. Every Sunday when he was not engaged balancing accounts the bookkeeper tried the scheme to test its ability as a money maker.

"The result was astonishingly successful. Here was a man, well dressed, apparently respectable, placed in a position that in many cases had been the situation of the very men he asked for the loan of a nickel. A great majority of them obliged him. The sequel is short. He threw up his position and became a hypocrite and fraud. He has actually gotten dimes from detectives and policemen before they discovered his game. A central office man told me that the fellow has collected some told me that the fellow has collected some \$200. At any rate, he is making money enough to build several houses and an income much greater than that of his honest days. He has been arrested several times. Upon one occasion they found on him a great quantity of small change and in an inside pocket a great roll of bank notes. He is one of the characters that only a large city can make possible."—Washington News.

Her Ideal Shattered.

Miss Clara Louise Kellogg tells the following story of her introduction to one of the British aristocracy. She was very young at the time of her first trip abroad. A gentleman who fell an interest in the talented young American took her to call on the dowager Duchess of Somersett. Miss Kellogg says that she had never before seen a duchess, and that she fully expected the lady to come into the room attired in velvet and ermine and wearing a coronet on her head. She was quite bereft of speech when a very ordinary looking person, wearing a black bombazine gown and prunella shoes, appeared on the scene. The gentleman who had brought Miss Kellogg told the duchess that she would be glad to sing for her, to which her grace responded:

"But I have no piano."

This was the finishing touch to the young singer's childish ideals regarding persons of high degree. A duchess who wore prunella shoes and did not own a piano!

Later a musicalie was given by her grace at which Miss Kellogg sang—to the accompaniment of a hired pianist—choosing for one of her songs an arrangement of Tennyson's "Tears, Idle Tears." The verses were quite new to the duchess, who had "heard of Tennyson, but had never read anything that he had written." The next day the gentleman who had introduced Miss Kellogg, and who, by the way, was an American, bought a copy of the poems and sent it to her grace.

He Had Heard Her Say So.

That it is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous is well illustrated by the following amusing incident that happened a few Sabbaths ago in a well known church, and caused no little merriment among the teachers. The superintendent was telling the young folks of the custom in certain countries of chaining the prisoners' hands and feet together. "And," she asked, "don't you suppose that if some one came and released them they would be very happy and grateful?"

It was unanimously agreed that they would.

"And," continued the superintendent, coming to her point, "Jesus was sent to the world to release people from their sins. Are any of you here bound with the chains of sin?" "No," piped the year-old offspring of the minister, "I'm not, but my grandmother is."—Louisville Post.

Ventilated Gloves for Officers.

There are very few novelties in military goods, but some gloves recently put on sale by a dealer are novelties. They are for officers who have to wear white leather gloves according to regulations. The new gloves are of wash leather and have ten holes in the palm of each hand, while the space between the fingers is cut away toward the palm. The object of the holes is to keep the hands from perspiring. From behind, when the hand is closed, the holes do not show. The gloves are successful in their object.—Photographic Times.

What He Could See.

"What is there to see at the theaters tonight?" asked the man from the country. His city friend sighed. "A large hall, with four ostrich feathers, an enamelled buckle, a cluster of roses and several jeweled hats," he said. "Be sure and take your opera glasses, for then you can distinguish the minor details of the trimming."—New York Tribune.

College Athletics.

"Any emphasis given to academic gymnastics that goes beyond the point of developing a man's animalism for any other purpose than to give the best possible support to his enlargement as a rational and moral possibility is a perversion of the purpose of human discipline, and to that degree blocks the wheels of all proper college intention," writes Dr. Parkhurst in the Ladies' Home Journal. "Nevertheless the real animus of the athletic tendency is a wholesome anguish of a better breed of men."

Many Wires Have Observed This.

"When you say I do not love you as much as I did," explained the young husband, "you do me an injustice. You must remember, my dear, that the amount of love I used to confide into a once a week visit now is not to do for the whole seven days."—Indianapolis Journal.

Lilies of the valley in France are called

"virgin's tears" and are said to have sprung up on the road between Calvary and Jerusalem during the night following the crucifixion.

HE BURIED HIMSELF.

The Unique Suicide of a Mexican Indian in California.

Disheartened by an Accident Which Unfit Him for Active Life, Jose Mendez Resolved to End His Existence Without Causing His Friends Trouble.

Jose Mendez was a Mexican Indian who killed himself in 1862 in San Jose, Cal. At the time of his death Jose was 36 years of age. He had all his life been an exceedingly active man.

Among the daring characters then residing in San Jose none could excel him as a rider of wild horses. He was also very ingenious and could not only make the finest kinds of lariats, but could also use them in many original ways.

One day the daring rider came to grief. By some means he was thrown from a wild mustang, and, being stunned and made helpless by the fall, he was dragged for some distance in the stirrups. When finally rescued, he was in a condition that would have been sure and almost instant death to any but a man of wonderful nerve and temerity.

Injured and helpless, he rec'd sufficient to realize that he could never engage in active pursuits again, and he became very moody and despondent. A life in which he was precluded from daring riding on untrained mustangs had no charms for him, and in the midst of his sufferings from internal injuries he made frequent threats of suicide.

"Oh, I'm not going to give you a lecture on your evil ways. In fact, I may say that I am willing to accept your theory of life temporarily."

"Well, shell out, then."

"Certainly, certainly, anything I have. But I am to understand that you insist upon operating upon that theory?"

The highwayman nodded, and the victim deposited a bunch of keys, an old silver watch and two nickels on the fencepost beside which he was standing.

"That's all I have," he said.

The highwayman gave an exclamation of disgust and pushed all the articles off on to the sidewalk.

"I supposed so. That's usually the way with men of your class, but you argue from false premises. You try to justify your actions!"

"Shut up!"

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