

THE WORSHIP OF JOSS.

INTERIOR OF A CHINESE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY.

How the Joss Houses are Maintained. Prayers Must Be Short or Else Paid for. Joss Sticks—A Prayer Translated—The Luck Book.

There are two houses of worship here in New York. They are called Joss houses, though what gave rise to the word Joss is not known. It is not a Chinese word and is probably a birth of the pigeon English dialect.

To the maintenance of these Joss houses all the wealthy Chinese and many of the poorer subscribe with more or less liberality. Every one will take a flyer in fan tan or a lottery and pocket his gains or losses without scruple, and no one is bold by Occidental notions of chastity.

What the worshiper does is interesting, although it is so brief. Entering the Joss house without ceremony he distributes a quantity of Joss sticks which he has purchased outside.

A PRAYER TRANSLATED. All this is done quickly, as has been stated; but the ostentatious will remain reciting prayers from the books of the Chinese classics, bumping their foreheads on the ground and acting the Pharisee's part.

The house itself or room deserves description, and yet it would be hard to give one that would carry the picture to the reader's eye. Tinsel ornaments abound, and ornamentation is profuse, but little or nothing of real value is to be seen.

High Priest Ah Moy said to a pretty actress who visited his temple while studying New York: "You think that this is all irreverent, and that we should not pray and laugh and sing in the house of our God. Do you not believe in letting children enjoy themselves wherever they are?"

A Little Mountain Storm. Though the sky was perfectly clear at starting, we soon detected another of those peculiar little mountain storms coming tearing down a deep gorge ahead of us.

My observation of these and other mountain storms in the far northwest has led me to believe that much of our popular science regarding clouds and the formation of rain is sadly at fault.

The people of this section, some of whom are highly educated, and all of whom have acquired habits of the closest observation, invariably speak of these sudden deluges as "cloud bursts," and scientifically accurate or not, the term certainly describes the appearance of the phenomenon.

TRAVELING IN MOROCCO.

Crossing the Shou River—Arab Stupidity. Praying and Cursing.

For ages this spot has been the crossing place of all the caravans which come from the desert, and yet all the means of getting over is upon an abominable cross between a raft and a flatboat, with sides built up to keep fractious animals from jumping out during the passage.

The river, the praying and boats got the time came to embark them, and the men had to change from prayers to oaths, which seemed to have a better effect. The mules were unpacked, led to the boats and invited to jump in, which, of course, on the slippery bank of the river, was impossible.

It took just two hours to load ten mules into the boat, where they stood huddled together, with bruised legs and evil glances, watching for the moment to come when they could get over with the man who, going into the scrape, then came the fun of crossing, and as I contemplated the crowd of animals, looking as if at a moment's notice they might commence to kick and plunge at each other, I edged toward the bow and centered my affections on a pack saddle which contained charcoal, for the others had Moolay Indress to give them a life preserver if necessary, while I felt more drawn to something tangible, and so seated myself on the charcoal with a firm clutch at the ropes.

Where the Tourists Come From. Some pains have been taken of late years by statisticians and parties interested to ascertain approximately how many tourists annually enter Switzerland.

Some pains have been taken of late years by statisticians and parties interested to ascertain approximately how many tourists annually enter Switzerland. While the figures are found to vary somewhat from year to year, owing to financial depression, political uncertainties or the existence of temporary attractions, such as the French exposition, the Victoria jubilee, etc., elsewhere, yet it is pretty accurately determined that the yearly number of pilgrims to this Alpine Mecca averages about a quarter of a million.

About thirteen in every hundred are from the United States, which, considering the long journey across the Atlantic, is a large ratio as compared with the ten in every hundred sent by adjacent France. How steadily the percentage of American tourists traveling in Switzerland has grown of late years is evidenced by the fact that, in 1861, the United States was tenth on the list of countries represented; in 1871 the fifth; in 1881 the fourth, and now, as above stated, the third, and a close second; Germany and England being the only competitors in excess. It is also of interest to know that in every thousand summer tourists who pass through Switzerland, far off Australia is represented by ten, Africa by eight and Asia by six.

A French Banker's Yacht. A strange looking craft is visible on the Seine just at present. It is moored at the little island of the Vert-Galant, close to the Pont-Neuf, and in general appearance looks like one of the ordinary river lighters, or gabares, which carry goods through the waterways of France.

The boat is built of iron, is of about 300 tons burden, and can be navigated on most of the French rivers. The cost of the craft was £2,400. Its owner, a M. Bareton, disdains railways and ordinary means of locomotion. He merely uses his horses and carriages for traveling in cities and other places where his big "junk" cannot go.

Maid to order—A servant girl.

ABOUT OLD WINES.

ONE OF THE DELUSIONS OF MODERN GASTRONOMIC ART.

The Mistaken Notion That Age Enriches Wine Illimitably—A Test Case—Wines of the Ancients—Pompeii's Wine Jar. Flavoring and Drugging.

There is probably no greater delusion in the modern gastronomic art than the notion that age enriches wine illimitably. If a three or five year wine is better than the crude juice, the process must go on forever, and wine of 500 years must be the veritable nectar of the gods.

Now, what are the real facts about wines as old as the above? After fermentation, which is a process of decay, wine will deteriorate unless preventive measures are taken, such as keeping the wine in a cool or even temperature, the addition of alcohol, boiling (the vinum cottum of the Romans and the vino cotto of modern Italians) and the complete exclusion of the ordinary atmosphere by good corks, or by sealing wax or by oil.

In 1871 Mr. Rabello, the Brazilian consul at Oporto, made me a present of several bottles of port wine of the vintage of 1793. Mr. Rabello had heard of the breaking up of an old Portuguese family where, from father to son, a certain number of bottles of famous vintage had been handed down. I sent the vintage of these aged wines to the late William Cullen Bryant, remarking that the bottle of 1793 was, according to the encyclopedia, of his own age; but the poet, in acknowledging the receipt of the wine, stated that it was his senior, and that he should look up to it with reverence.

The ancients, having no distilled spirits, were wanting in one of the great remedies which prevent wines from decaying, or turning to vinegar. Homer represents old Nestor, in the "Odyssey," drinking ten-year-old wine. Athenæus incidentally mentions a wine kept sixteen years; but, in the days of the empire, connoisseurs considered Greek wine as perfect when six years old.

Courtesies of Olden Time. Father Alcott had a happy saying that politeness is such an easy virtue that every one could afford to have it in abundance. Yet there is a general complaint of the deadness of fine manners. The trouble seems to be that manners change more rapidly than in olden time.

The Japanese Hanging Picture. There are now on view at a London gallery a splendid collection of 1,300 Japanese kakemonos or hanging pictures. The hanging picture is the Japanese equivalent for the ordinary oil and water color pictures, but are unlike them in this particular, that they are not placed on the walls of a room and retained there all the year round, but are only on view at certain seasons and festivals, each kakemono being supposed to convey some meaning in respect to the various times and events. For instance, when a marriage takes place the subjects exhibited are chiefly a representation of the god "Juroujin," signifying a desire that the couple may spend a long and happy future; also sets of three kakemonos, depicting first, pine tree; secondly, bamboo; third, prunus, pine, in addition, figures of takasago (an old couple gathering fir cones), a stork and a tortoise, each and all of these having reference to long life.—Home Journal.

MY LADY OF DREAMS.

Last Sabbath morn I listen'd in the church: The organ whisper'd music, soft and low, Pierced through with half hushed wailings, till it seem'd, I heard silk draperies lightly near me sweep Or felt the breath of some one standing by.

Then joined and gathered in a winsome form So near, it seem'd the living likeness stole To nestle in my arm, against my heart, The dear, old fashion that I know so well, Pulling with tender trust, shy, pure and warm.

Exhibition of Live Ants.

The feature of the meeting of the British Royal society last week was an exhibition by Mr. Henry Burns of a class of nests of live ants. These were so arranged that all the elaborate internal economy of the insects could be fully observed.

Notes on the Abyssinians.

The expedition made a few notes on the Abyssinians, which may or may not be of value to the ethnologist. They noted that all the people go bareheaded, even the Negroes and the great chiefs. The men all wear the "shama," a red striped garment, and the women long red crosses on the back and front of their dresses.

How a Horse Sleeps.

It is a fact not generally known that at least four out of every ten horses do not lie down to sleep. The horse that sleeps in a standing position rests one leg at a time, depending on the other three to sustain the weight of his body. The habit is a very dangerous one, for the equine as well as the human somnambulist. Only last week a fine horse in the stables of a big manufacturing concern in this city went to sleep while standing in his stall and fell heavily to the floor, breaking one of his legs.

The Commercial Travelers.

The commercial travelers of this country now number over 250,000, and reach in their journeyings every town and hamlet in this country; they are the greatest distributors of goods, shipping about 300,000,000 tons out of 400,000,000 tons now carried yearly by the railroads, and they spend over \$1,750,000,000 per day, or about \$383,000,000 per traveling year of nine months, which is distributed among the carriers, hotels, shopkeepers and producers.—Public Opinion.

A Very Serious Omission.

Little Gotham Maid (reading)—And the fairy prince and Blue Eyes were married and lived happily ever after. Little Boston Maid—Where did they live? Little Gotham Maid (consulting the last page carefully)—It doesn't tell. Little Boston Maid—That was a serious omission on the author's part. As we do not know where the prince and Blue Eyes lived we have no way of establishing their social status.—Town Topics.

Died in Distilled Water.

Dr. N. A. Randolph, an English physician, mentions that minnows which thrive in brook water and remained alive in it without food for many days, died in a few hours when placed in distilled water properly aerated. He holds that one of the chief dietetic advantages of salads and uncooked vegetables in general is that the mineral elements have not been removed out of them.—New York Graphic.

Growth of Kansas City.

A visitor from the east recently gave a Kansas City reporter an interesting illustration of the way the town has grown. In 1854, only thirty-four years ago, Kansas City consisted of a steamboat landing and half a dozen insignificant huts, while Indians prowled along the river banks and occasionally made a raid on the settlement.—New York Evening World.

A Summer Vacation.

Minister's Wife—I am so glad that you are going to Europe for the summer, Jasper. I think it was so noble of the church to give you this delightful trip. Of course I should like to go too, but that is out of the question. Minister—Oh, yes. Wife—What is your sermon for today? Minister—"The poor ye have always with you."—The Epoch.

Death Rate of Doctors.

Among the policy holders of a German life insurance company the death rate of medical men in 1877 was 11.53 per cent. above the total average. This was due to diseases of the respiratory organs, consumption and infectious diseases. There was only one case of post mortem poisoning out of 1,652 deaths.—Arkansas Traveler.

Hadn't Got to the Meat.

Husband—What is that you are reading, my dear? Wife—It is a letter from mother. Husband—Is there anything important in it? Wife—I don't know yet, dear. I haven't got to the postscript.—Boston Courier.

Married a Tartar.

De Wiggs—Old fellow, I am truly sorry for you. You seem to have married a tartar. De Biggs—It is true. But, then, she's beautiful and wealthy. De Wiggs—Ah! a sort of cream of tartars.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Victoria's Reign.

Victoria has reigned longer than any of her predecessors excepting Henry III, who reigned fifty-six years, and George III, who was on the throne for sixty years.

Lightning can be seen by reflection a distance of 300 miles.

The Plattsmouth Herald

Is enjoying a Boom in both its

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