

HOW THEY DINE.

If It's Your First Japanese Meal You'll Have a Trying Time.

If it's your first Japanese dinner you're having a dreadfully hard time. In the first place, you must sit on the floor, for they don't have any chairs in Japan. You kneel down, and then you turn your toes in till one laps over the other, and then you sit back between your heels. At first you are quite proud to find how well you do it, and you don't think it's so very uncomfortable. But pretty soon you get cramped, and your legs ache as if you had a toothache in them. You don't say anything, because you think that if the Japanese can sit this way all day long, you ought to be able to stand it a few minutes. Finally both your feet go to sleep, and then you have to get up and stamp round the room to drive the prickles out of your feet, and all the little dancing girls giggle at you. This isn't your only trouble, either. All you have to eat with is a pair of chop-sticks, and you're in terror lest you spill something on the dainty white matting floor. Now the floor of a Japanese house isn't just the floor; it's the chairs and sofas and tables and beds as well. At home it would be mortifying enough to go out to dinner and spill something on the floor; but in Japan, where people sit and sleep on the floor, it seems even worse. So you are unhappy till your little nesan (who is the waitress, and almost as prettily dressed as the dancing girls, but not quite) comes laughing to your aid, and shows you how to hold your chop-sticks. After that you manage nicely the rice and the omelet, but the fish and the chicken you can't contrive to shred apart without dropping your chop-sticks all the time. So, between dances, the maiko—little girls about twelve years old—kneel down beside you and help you. They can't keep from giggling at your awkwardness; but you don't mind—you just giggle, too; and everybody giggles and has a lovely time.—St Nicholas

Passing of the Walnut.

The rich tones of the black walnut, so commonly used in furniture twenty or thirty years ago, now seldom meet the eye, except in some old-fashioned or discarded piece. This fact is due to the practical disappearance of walnut wood from the market. So scarce has it become that it is said to be difficult to procure it even in small pieces for the making of gun stocks. Yet black walnut is a tree which grows readily in our soil, and the International Society of Arboriculture suggests that many farmers in the Northern and Eastern states would leave a valuable legacy for their descendants and confer a public boon by planting little walnut forests on their waste lands.—You're Companion

Rented Babies of Paris.

The written law provides for every child in France that the government supplement the home education, and when necessary replace it entirely, but as a matter of fact there are scores of children in Paris, especially, who have shaken free of their parents, or been cast off by them, and who live a vagabond existence, playing hide-and-seek with the officers of the law. Among this band the commonest offense is begging, though generally there is some older person back of the whining specimen one meets with on the streets. The fruitful incomes in this profession are obtained only through children. During the nights between Christmas and New Years a baby in long clothes, especially if it be delicate looking, rents for as high as \$5 or \$6. His brothers and sisters from one to five years old bring \$2, while those still older are worth \$1 on the coldest days.—Harper's Magazine

Two Kinds of Reading.

If we make the pages of our books merely a sort of pleasant maze in which to set our minds to wandering during idle hours, we in reading shall have acquired a pastime that is usually harmless. But there is a vast difference between such a way of spending our time, and the reading that teaches us to think as the greatest and wisest men and women have thought. Words stand in our minds for certain ideas or images. From what we read we learn to make these plain or hazy, clearly drawn pictures or carelessly sketched ones, and thus our powers of thinking are directly trained by our method of reading.—St Nicholas

Coal in London.

"Every winter day 5,000,000 tons of smoke are poured out of London's chimneys." This is the age of statistics; but, familiar as we are with appalling figures quoted from an important London daily paper, these take the breath away, says the London Chronicle. The fact of the matter is that "only" 15,000,000 tons of coal enter London in a year, and that supplies the houses within a radius of fifteen miles of Charing Cross. There are only some 600,000 houses, with 1,700,000 fireplaces. Where do the 5,000,000 tons of smoke come from? If all the air that passes up the chimneys during the process of combustion every day is regarded as smoke, there may be a possible answer, but for such a calculation a Lord Kelvin is needed.

Of about thirty recognized stations in the Pacific, Great Britain owns at least twelve and the United States six.

CHINESE IDEAS ABOUT PAPER.

Importance Attached to its Uses in Their Various Dealings.

Paper figures largely in the many curious superstitions of the Chinese. Every Chinese household has a great respect for paper having characters upon it, and every scrap of it found is kept and solemnly burned. For this they believe much credit will be given in the other world, as well as this. In China the benevolent societies employ an old man with a pair of big chop sticks to pick up scraps of paper from the roadsides and out of crevices, etc., and burn them. His calling is considered a most honorable one. When a Chinaman takes a voyage he throws aboard quantities of gilt paper money, made in the shops in Canton, to propitiate the god of the sea. From these paper shops come also the blue and white paper used in mourning, and the perforated paper thrown out at funerals, that the devils may crawl through it, and so lose track of the soul of the departed ones. Here in these shops are printed and sold long letters of supplication from the sick to be burned before the joss, who may thereby grant the petitioners health. Other things made in paper are the marriage dolls, without which no wedding, according to the Chinese, will be a happy or fruitful one.

In San Francisco, also, there are many of these paper factories, the one end of which is to aid the Chinese in providing them with something to burn in the celebration of many feasts and religious ceremonies. Perhaps there is no other feature entering so largely into the superstition and religious belief of the Chinese as the burning, at various seasons, of it would seem almost every object under the sun. Among the simpler of the things made in paper are figures cut out by hand, as American children do paper dolls, all to be burned for the edification and appeasing of the great joss. Oftenest they are burned by the eldest son of a Chinese household, who believes that unless he burns, at the feast of the worship of the tombs, representations in paper of the things his father uses and needs in this life, his father, when he reaches the other world, will find himself reduced to beggary and without these things.

A Look Backward By "A Failure."

To look back upon the past year and see how little we have striven, and to what small purpose, and how often we have been cowardly and hung back, or temerarious and rushed unwisely in, and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness, it may seem a paradox, but in the bitterness of these discoveries a certain consolation resides. Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is—so that to see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner call when he is hungry, fills him with surprising joys this world is yet for him no abiding city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails him; year after year he must "humb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go there need be few illusions left about himself. Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much; surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed. Nor will he complain at the summons which calls a defeated soldier from the field; defeated, ay, if he were Paul or Marcus Aurelius—but there is still one inch of fight in his old spirit, undishonored. The faith which sustained him in his life-long blindness and life-long disappointment will scarce even be required in this last formality of laying down his arms. Give him a march with his old bones, there, out of the glorious sun-colored earth, out of the day, and the dust, and the ecstasy—there goes another Faithful Failure!—Robert Louis Stevenson

Utilizing Niagara's Powers.

We know of nothing more gratifying in its progressiveness than the utilization of the waters of the Niagara River by corporations formed in the United States and in Canada. A Canadian company has recently installed two turbine wheels of 10,000-horse power each, and ten companies now utilize what is said to be ten per cent of the great power. The conversion of this transient amusement into electric light and power, which illuminates and vivifies a hundred cities and towns within a radius of a hundred miles, is one of the greatest feats of sane progress, of which we can furnish any illustration.—Trenton (N. J.) True American.

High Fare Below Stairs.

Most London servants are served with food no less than seven times a day, says Health and Home. They partake of tea, like their masters, on awakening. Breakfast, in "the room" for the upper functionaries, in the servants' hall for the lesser, is a substantial meat meal. At 11 o'clock, beer or milk and light refreshments are set forth, and bridge the time till a heavy repast at 2 o'clock or so. Tea and then an elaborate dinner, and refreshments or light supper about 10 o'clock bring the number of meals up to seven.

DESTROYING MOSQUITO LARVAE.

A New Mixture That is Practically Harmless.

A. H. Doty reports on the results of a series of experimental tests undertaken to determine the questions (involved in the destruction of the mosquito.) It was found that a solution containing one pound of sulphate of copper and one pound of unslacked rock lime (calcium oxide) in ten gallons of water was promptly effectual in causing the death of mosquito larvae when added in the proportions of one gallon of solution to fifty gallons of the infected water. Solutions of copper and lime alone were less satisfactory. The result is not due to a toxic action of either of the chemicals, but to the fact that a precipitate is formed which rapidly removes from the water the organic matter upon which the larvae depend for nourishment and life. This method is applicable only in collections of stagnant and offensive water where it not only destroys the larvae, but also deodorizes the fluid; in swamps or bodes of water covering large areas other measures are preferable. As a deodorant, the mixture of copper and lime in the proportions stated is the most valuable and practical agent we possess for the purpose. Its action is rapid and permanent, it is practically harmless, is cheap and easily made, and can be employed equally well for deodorizing solids or fluids. The experiments on the germicidal properties of copper sulphate show that it has possibilities as a disinfectant, but no definite statements can as yet be made.—Medical Record.

Singing into a Gramophone.

Part of the terror inspired by gramophones—not by all gramophones whatsoever, of course—is probably due to the distress of the vocalists who sing for them. Few people can have any idea of this. Mr. J. B. Oswald, who yesterday recovered fees from a manufacturing company in Glasgow said that he sang to the accompaniment of a piano on either side of him, and a piano rattling away for all the pianist was worth. He sang each song seven or eight times to produce a master record. As the voice varied in pitch and intensity, he had to read nearer or draw back; and he sang until the perspiration dropped from his forehead. First the diapason gave way—the one in the instrument—and then a wax cylinder much too hard was used. Mr. Oswald had bound himself, however, to produce twelve master records. He would seem to have done it, in the Glasgow sheriff's opinion, or at all events to have done enough, and he states that the task was quite the well believe it. Some of the very mysterious sounds which emerge from gramophones may now be systematically heaviest he has undertaken. One can easily interpret.—Pall Mall Gazette.

Old Jug Repaired a Church.

A churchwarden of West Malling (Kent) parish church discovered in a lumber room some time ago a peculiarly shaped jug, which was subsequently identified as a rare old Elizabethan stoup. An offer of £50 for it was refused, and the church authorities decided to send it to Christie's where it was sold for 1,100 guineas. With the proceeds the authorities have just completed several improvements in the fine old church. Parts of the fabric have been restored, a new porch has been erected, and the seating accommodation has been greatly improved.—London Tit-Bits.

Where Bridge Helps Charity.

The Russians are the greatest card players in the world. Last year they spent over 2,000,000 rubles (£200,700) on cards. Card making is a government monopoly, and the proceeds of the sales are going to support the Red Cross society. The profits last year was 1,700,000 rubles, as the most of the manufacture was only 300,000. The cards used by the imperial family—the czar is a capital whist player—are made of the finest linen rags with a water mark of the imperial eagle and crown. The czar and court used 1,200 packs last year, which cost 11,000 rubles.—London Tatler.

Demand For Horses.

There is a great and growing demand for good horses possessed of proper breeding and conformation, for both domestic use and export. The automobile has had no appreciable effect on horse values. The world's production of horses has not kept pace with the growing demands of increasing populations.

But really, at times it seems as if the twentieth century could usefully employ itself in just utilizing the discoveries of the nineteenth.

Steam heat, gas ranges, elevators, bathtubs, and other nice things are in the world. Why not make them available for everybody?

Then there is the land. That has always been in the world. Why not make that available for everybody?

The nineteenth century discovered the kindergarten.

The twentieth could usefully make it available for all children.

It discovered the Roentgen ray. But lots of people can't afford to pay for just plain, ordinary sunlight in their houses.

The inventors are a very wonderful class of gentlemen—ladies, too, nowadays—but it really seems as if the twentieth century didn't need them so much as some plain, practical people to utilize what they've done already.

TEMPERANCE AMONG WOMEN.

Rational Course Adopted by England to Cure This Curse.

Lady Henry Somerset's Industrial Farm Colony for Inebriate Women has been so successful in redeeming them that the English government has established several homes on the same lines. This famous philanthropist considers that drunkenness is on the increase among the women of London and considers it one of the most serious social problems that must be faced. By eleven o'clock in the morning the public houses are filled with a throng of women already more or less under the influence of liquor. The love of society and sociability develops the habit, and the desire for drink with the women as well as the men is so strong that in order to gratify it they will part with anything they possess to obtain it.

Lady Somerset has the same idea of the cure of this curse which is believed by most of the physicians of the day, that is, that it should be treated as a disease, not a crime. At one time the only thing to be done with a woman addicted to intemperance was to put her in prison. This did not reform her—quite the contrary—and probably when she was released the first thing she did was to become hopelessly intoxicated again. But at the Industrial Farm Colony the aim is for a moral and physical cure. There are a number of cottages, each of which has its group of women with an attendant nurse. They are set to work in the open air at some occupation which is entirely new to them—farming, gardening, care of poultry, bees and other healthful work.

Antipathies of Animals.

Smoking a clay pipe, the circus actor sat in the winter training quarters. Under his supervision a thin boy was learning to ride erect on a quiet horse with a broad, flat back. "In some towns they won't let us show," said the man, "unless we have no camels with us. Camels are a serious drawback to shows. Horses are so much afraid of them that lots of towns won't let a camel enter their gates."

"A horse won't go near a piece of ground a camel has stood on. The very smell of a camel in the air will make a horse tremble and sweat. And this fear isn't only found occasionally in a horse here and there. It is found in every horse all over the world. Queer, isn't it? I often wonder why it is. Cattle hate dogs in the same way, and cats hate dogs so too. Here, though, we can account for the hatred. Dogs in primitive times fed on cattle, no doubt, and even today, here and there, they kill and feed on kittens.

"Horses love dogs. I'm sure I don't know why. Dogs fear no animals but pumas and leopards. You can take a dog up to a lion or a tiger's cage, and he will show no fear; but take him up to the cage of a puma or a leopard and he will tremble and moan and slink away out of sight. "All very puzzling, isn't it?"—Philadelphia Bulletin

Arizona Forever.

The inherent brains and resources of Arizona are forcing to the front. In every capacity she is asserting her superiority and knocking the persistence. Our Arizona cowboys, like all other Arizona institutions, are strictly in the lead. They may not have that quality of stove polish on them that distinguishes Eastern society, but they simply have the "stuff" in them to "get there."

You can not shut Arizona off. She has the copper, she has the gold, the silver, the lead, the stock, the captivating climate and the brains, the vigor and originality, the self-reliance, and she is irrepresable. All eyes are upon her, a million hopes are staked upon her resources, her sunshine and her wild, free magnificence, and they will all be realized. The rich man comes here to grow richer, the plain man is here to better his circumstances, the invalid comes here for health and strength, the disconsolate comes to Arizona for the comfort and cheer our salubrious climate and hospitable society affords.—Tombstone Epitaph.

Things Wrongly Named.

Titmouse is a bird. Catgut is a sheegut. Sealing wax has no wax. Blind worms have eyes and can see. Irish stew is unknown in Ireland. Rice paper is not made of rice of the rice plant. Kid gloves are not made of kid. German silver is not silver nor of German manufacture, it having been made in China for centuries.—Chicago Post.

Important and True.

New Jersey applejack reaches the limit of its strength and beauty when seven years old. Experts declare that there is no improvement after the seventh birthday.

At a recent conference of the trade in Leicester the president of the Institute of Carriage Builders said that practically the whole of the wheel-making industry of England had been captured by America.

Be glad you are living; for it is better to be a live dog than a dead lion.

Like jokes, there is nothing new in epigrams under the sun. The most one can do is to put them in new dresses.

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