

A CHAIR IN CHINESE.

THE MYSTERIOUS GIFT TO COLUMBIA TO FOUND A "DEAN LUNG" PROFESSORSHIP."

The establishment of a Chinese department in Columbia University may be looked for in the near future. In his annual report to the trustees of the institution President Seth Low said that \$112,000 had already been placed at the disposal of the trustees for that purpose by anonymous promoters of the plan. Mr. Low also made public an anonymous letter which he received on June 8, 1901, in which the writer says:

For fifty years and more I have been saving something from whiskey and tobacco bills which with fair interest would amount perhaps to about the sum of the inclosed check, which I have pleasure to send you toward the founding of a department of Chinese languages, literature, religion and law, to be known as the Dean Lung professorship of Chinese. The gift is without condition, except that it is anonymous; but I should like to reserve the right hereafter to increase the sum, and also the privilege of conferring with you as to changes of plan, if any should be desired. Some delay in organization, also, may be thought necessary or convenient, but this will best be determined by the authorities of the university.

In making choice of the object to which the money should be applied, I am guided mainly by an appreciation of its importance, and partly, perhaps, by a fancy that nobody else at this time would be likely to give for that or a like purpose.

The check referred to was for \$100,000, and this amount was immediately transmitted to the treasurer with a copy of the letter of gift.

On July 2 Mr. Low received this letter, signed "Dean Lung, a Chinese person": "I send you herewith a deposit check for \$12,000 as a contribution to the fund for Chinese learning in your university." The letter did not come to Mr. Low direct, but under cover of another letter from the founder of the professorship, which contained the information that the donor of the \$12,000 was a man of "modest means." The founder also hinted in his letter to Mr. Low that any public statement as to the gift should be limited to a bare statement that an additional sum of \$12,000 had been received. "It might be of value generally," said the writer, "as a suggestion to others who are able and willing to give." He thought, also, that in order to make the Chinese department what it should be there should be a fixed endowment of at least \$300,000, or possibly \$500,000.

It was not until after the second gift had been received that even the name "Dean Lung" was made known, and when the generous man consented to the publication of this name he asked that no vote of thanks to him should be passed by the trustees, as he found in the pleasure of making the gift sufficient reward. Notwithstanding this request, Mr. Low thought it would be appropriate to thank "Dean Lung" for the exceptional gift, and in recommending such action said that he doubted if there was another instance in the history of education where a Chinaman had made a similar gift, without conditions, to a university of Western learning. "Such a gift," he said, "is certainly auspicious as an indication of the spirit in which this department will be welcomed by the Chinese themselves, and it ought to be an inspiration to other Americans to make it the complete and comprehensive department which its founder wished it to be." In keeping with Mr. Low's suggestion, resolutions thanking the anonymous giver of the \$100,000 and Dean Lung for the additional \$12,000 were adopted at a meeting of the board of trustees, and the subject of a Chinese department was referred to the committee on education.

The giver of the \$100,000 sent a note to Mr. Low with his gift in which he praised the Chinese for their religious spirit and for their devotion to their country and family. He speaks of "their devotion to family and almost superstitious love of home, holding to their purpose with the conservatism of Englishmen and the tenacity of Israel." He refers to the Chinese as a "scholarly people, with an abundant literature no less valuable than those we call classical." The Chinese, according to the donor, had acquired governmental systems "long before the makers of our common law had come out from their savagery." Because of the trade which has already sprung up between China and the United States, he speaks of the Pacific as the "Chinese-American sea," and predicts a Chinese trade amounting to billions of dollars yearly. "Considering this," he says, "would it not be a reproach to this university not to have taken a first step in this direction, to promote a better understanding, a larger comity and more hospitable relations?"

Despite the efforts of Mr. Low and his associates in the management of Columbia University to keep the name of the donor from the public, the fact became known that it was Horace W. Carpentier. Mr. Carpentier's home is in Thirty-seventh-st., this city, but at present he is in California. "Dean Lung," who sent \$12,000 to the fund, is Mr. Carpentier's body servant and has been in the employ of the family more than twenty years. He was sixteen years old when Mr. Carpentier engaged him at San Francisco to do light work about the house, and he has been in his employ constantly since that time. "Dean," as he is called in the Carpentier family, is married and has three children. He has undoubtedly laid aside money, but it is believed that the gift of \$12,000 had no effect on his capital and that the amount

was given by Mr. Carpentier in the name of his faithful servant.

A BIG STRETCH OF CABLE.

ELECTRIC POWER WIRES FOUR-FIFTHS OF A MILE LONG.

What is at present the most remarkable electric power transmission line in the world is that which starts at the headwaters of the Yuba, in California, and supplies Oakland with current for lighting and railway purposes. This line, which is owned as well as operated by the Bay Counties Company, is 142 miles long, while an extension southward to San José, belonging to another corporation, calls for transmission for a distance of 184 miles. Electricity is now sent over the wires of these two systems at a pressure of 40,000 volts, but provision has been made for raising the voltage to 60,000.

Although the plant and line have already been somewhat fully described in The Tribune, no mention has thus far been made in these columns of one unique feature, concerning which "Engineering News" supplies details. When ap-

JAPAN'S GREATEST ACTOR.

ICHIKAWA DANJURO AND HIS THEATRICAL ANCESTRY—THE STAGE IN JAPAN.

[FROM A STAFF CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

Tokio, September 15.

The Jefferson family of actors, which for nearly one hundred and fifty years has been known both in England and the United States, has its counterpart in this country in the Kikugoros and Danjuros. Onoyo Kikugoro is the fifth of that name, the founder of the family having gone on the stage in 1735. Ichikawa Danjuro, considered the greatest living actor of Japan, can boast of a line of theatrical ancestors that reaches back two hundred and twenty years.

Horikoshi Ebizo, the first of the Danjuros, was born in 1660 of "poor but respectable parents." At the age of fourteen he assumed the stage name of Ichikawa Danjuro, and soon afterward was acknowledged the leading actor of Yedo,

has for its subject the revenge of their chief-tain's death by forty-seven retainers, and which to this day remains a stock play, sure to draw full houses when all others have failed. Danjuro has played the part no less than seventy-eight times, a fact which may not impress an American public, accustomed to hundred night runs, but which, here in Japan, where audiences still demand variety and would resent machine made performances, is considered a remarkable record.

The class spirit, which is so essential a feature of Japanese civilization, dominates even the actor's profession. There is a theatrical aristocracy which no one may enter who has not had the good fortune of inheriting a great name. The members of this aristocracy are called "nadai." They are entitled to advertise their names on the playboards over the entrance to their theatre. As there are only five actors in Tokio, including Danjuro and Kikugoro, who enjoy this privilege, it will be seen that it is a by no means common one. All these matters are regulated by the Actors' Guild, which, until a few years ago, is said to have been a very exclusive affair.

Among the middle class of actors there are frequently found men of considerable talent. In only rare instances, however, can they hope to become nadai upon their own merits. An actor without family antecedents can surmount these class barriers only by being adopted into some aristocratic family of Thespians. The "supes" form the lowest class. The laws of their guild do not permit them to play at two or more theatres on the same day, a privilege enjoyed by their more distinguished associates. Their lot, indeed, may be said to be a hard one.

Like revolving bookcases and many other meritorious things, the idea of "continuous performances" probably came from Japan. Formerly a theatre was open from dawn till close upon midnight, and even now a performance in Tokio never lasts less than eight hours. In the country the confirmed playgoer still insists upon getting all his money's worth, and grumbles if the performance takes less than fifteen hours. To go to the play, therefore, is really hard work. A whole day's performance, however, is rarely taken up by a single play. There are generally parts of two or three different plays run on the stage on the same day. The usual course pursued is to have first an historical, or o-ye, play. The former deals with warlike and unsettled times, the favorite subjects being those connected with the events immediately preceding the establishment of the Shogunate, in the early part of the twelfth century. The latter treats, as a rule, of the frequent attempts made in the times of the Tokugawa dynasty to supplant the rightful heirs of noble houses. Next comes a domestic drama, which pictures the life of the common people, their quarrels, troubles and tribulations. The whole concludes with a scene in which dancing forms the chief feature. In short, the taste of every one seems to be consulted. "We study to please" might well be the motto of the Japanese theatre management, as it is that of the "drygoods emporium" at home.

The conservatism of the Japanese finds an apt illustration in the fact that women do not, as a rule, perform on the stage with men. The two sexes act in separate theatres. Recent attempts to bring them together have been only partly successful. The public doesn't seem to like it. In all the great theatres only men are to be seen. Many of them make a specialty of women's roles. In feudal times such actors affected in private life the attire and manners of women. The Restoration of 1868 put a stop to the custom by prohibiting the wearing of clothes of the opposite sex. Actors here are in the habit of declaiming on the stage in a voice of a peculiar register, which makes it easier for them to mimic a woman's voice than if they talked naturally, and for that reason they frequently show remarkable skill in impersonating women. The foreigner, certainly, has great difficulty in such cases to determine whether it is a man or a woman who is performing the part.

The social status of the actor in Japan has undergone a great improvement within the last century. In feudal times he probably was considered no better than his European colleague. Indeed, from the first theatre in Kyoto being built on the river side, he was dubbed a "river-side beggar." He may not hope for many years to come to occupy the position which in England to-day is occupied by Sir Henry Irving, but he is no less the idol of the Japanese "matinee girl"—the type existing even here—than is a Hackett or a Faversham at home.

M. G. S.

TORTURE IN RUSSIAN PRISONS.

St. Petersburg correspondence of The Pall Mall Gazette.

A correspondent of the "Novosti" has boldly raised the question: Does torture prevail in Russian prisons? In order, as far as possible, to get at the truth of the matter, barristers who have had charge of the defence of political prisoners, and have had frequent intercourse with their clients in the period preceding their trial, have been interviewed. None could give a certain answer. All were clear that nothing of the kind takes place before trial, but none would answer for what occurs once the portals of the convict establishment have closed upon the condemned agitator. Only one had any direct evidence to offer. He was a barrister who defended Solovioff, who, in 1877, fired at the Emperor Alexander II. This gentleman states that by chance he met the car on which Solovioff was being conveyed to the gallows: "His fingers," said the lawyer with a shudder, "had to me all the appearances of having been crushed," and he added significantly, "I think my eyes did not deceive me."



ICHIKAWA DANJURO.

The greatest actor in Japan.

proaching Oakland from the north, the line crosses an arm of San Francisco Bay, known as Carquinez Straits, which is half a mile or more wide. There it was necessary to carry the cables either under the water or well above it, and the latter course was finally adopted. "Engineering News" believes that the span of cable at this point is the longest in the world.

Along most of the route between the three power houses which generate the current and Oakland the wires are carried on poles 132 feet apart. In a few instances—perhaps not over half a dozen—the interval is one thousand feet. The crossing at Sacramento River is one of these. But the distance between the supporting towers on either shore of Carquinez Straits is 4,427 feet, or more than four-fifths of a mile. The towers of the Brooklyn Bridge are only 1,600 feet apart. Multiply these figures by three and you will have a span but little larger than that in the vicinity of Oakland.

Over a good part of the line aluminum is employed to convey the current, but near the sea-coast copper is used, because aluminum corrodes under the influence of damp salt air. The cables over Carquinez Straits are made from still another metal, steel. It was necessary that they should be stout enough to carry their own weight as well as to transmit the electric current. The material selected is called "plough steel," and possesses a remarkably high tensile strength, 192,000 pounds to the square inch. As the cables are seven-eighths of an inch in diameter, it would take a strain of 96,000 pounds to break one. There are four such cables, and at the lowest part they are 208 feet above the water. This is about fifty feet more clearance than that of the Brooklyn Bridge.

as Tokio was then called. He was murdered on the stage in 1704 by a fellow player, with whom he had remonstrated on his licentious life. His son, Kuzo, who was born in 1688, succeeded to the stage name, which he maintained in high repute until his death, in 1758. Kuzo made a journey in his youth to the shrines of Narita, some forty miles east of Yedo, where he invoked the god to aid him in his art; and when he afterward became a famous actor, he took in gratitude the name Narita-ya as his trade name. Every actor in Japan has since then had three separate names—his private name, which seldom becomes public; his stage name, by which he is always known, and his trade name, which distinguishes his branch from others of the same professional family.

The second bearer of the Danjuro name, being childless, adopted a son, to whom he gave his own name. The young man died before him, and he thereupon adopted another, the fourth Danjuro (1711-88), who was succeeded by his son, the fifth of that name (1741-1806). The sixth (1788-99), also dying before his father, whose name had been transmitted to him in 1790, his nephew (1790-95) inherited the coveted name. He is said to have been the ablest of the Danjuros. His son (1823-54) committed suicide to save his father from reproach, and the name remained in abeyance for nineteen years, until it was assumed, in 1873, by his half-brother, who was born in 1838. The present Danjuro, the ninth of his name, is, therefore, sixty-three years old, and, notwithstanding his age, worthily upholds the traditions of his family. One of his favorite parts is that of the hero in "The Chushingura," a play written in 1744 by Takeda Izumo, which