

ONWARD MARCH OF CHOP SUEY

NEW YORK DISCOVERING THE CHINESE COOK'S MERITS.

Caucasians at Dinner, Luncheon, Even Breakfast in Chinatown—They Still Have Much to Learn, Though—A Teutonic Missionary at Work There.

There is a story in Chinatown which one seems willing to stand sponsor for that years ago when Li Hung Chang was in New York he heard a great deal about the delectable qualities of China's national dish, chop suey, and expressed himself as rather desirous of tasting it.

His Honored Presence ate of it, demanded more, and from that time frequently during his stay was regaled with its savory succulence. In fact so fond of it did he become that, statisticians declare, it was from that period that the chop suey restaurants began to flourish and to lure to their teakwood midst the curious American, who is just as ready to take chances on his digestion as he is on anything else.

It was quite right to raise his Oriental brows in surprise when he heard his country's name taken in vain with reference to its national and proprietary rights

any means cover all the possibilities in this direction, and the prices range from 35 cents a portion in some of the more moderate priced restaurants to \$3 or \$4 a bowl where the Delmonico fashion of ignoring small change exists.

It has taken the American public a long time to swallow its chop suey, but every season a larger number of uptown patrons resort regularly to Chinatown to eat, and new chop suey restaurants are being opened without flourish of trumpets but with considerable gliding and decoration. Not only is Chinatown itself fairly well supplied at the present moment, but they are gradually spreading over the rest of the city.

The American is tenacious of his creed, even when it is wrong, and having made up his mind that a Chinese restaurant must be one and the same thing as a chop suey house, he is not content unless he sees faring signs to the effect that he can have chop suey for the asking. The Chinese proprietor, always bland and benevolent, is perfectly willing to place such signs wherever space permits, and he does display them until one gets tired of their presence, especially when one knows that they don't mean anything in particular.

But cunning as the Chinese restaurateur is, it takes a German or an American to go him one better, and that too on his native heath. Lately one of the Teutonic race with an experience in the business which embraces every class and kind of service

In place of the small stools, artistic and difficult, which the opulent Chinese restaurants afford their clientele and which give local color and backbones, there are comfortable seats, and the chop suey intervals of music blown vigorously by German musicians greet the waiting ears. The Chinese restaurant keeper has never quite dared to foist the real Chinese music on his patrons, but under this new Chinese-Teutonic regime none can forestall what he may decide. It is a transition period in Chinatown and it is well for the visitor to be prepared for the worst.

The German proprietor, however, seems to be perfectly satisfied on this point. "They would never dare," he says as one who knows. "Why, no one can stand Chinese music longer than two minutes, and in putting real music in here I am establishing a precedent which will, I trust, divert the most of the trade this way. The American loves music with his food, and chop suey with Beethoven or Grieg cannot fail to attract him."

Large signs between boxes of artificial flowers and busts of Bismarck denote to the thirsty that Mandarin cocktails are permissible. They bear a strong resemblance in flavor to the well known variety of Manhattan, and the toothpick which decorates their midst is stuck negligently into a golden lime, as no toothpick could possibly be made to stand in a mere olive or cherry.

The proprietor accepts compliments for his presence and tells as a great secret that cocktails have not flourished in China since the reign of Hing Stu, Jr., and in reviving what has really been an art, like that of the peach blow, he feels that he has more than compensated for his intrusion into the chop suey territory. He hopes that the American public will feel with him on this point.

The German's idea in this intrusion is rather big and does credit to his cosmopolitan training. He is more or less of a philanthropist. He does not say so right out, but he rather insinuates it between the cocktail and the yet to min, which isn't as bad as it sounds, being merely chicken soup with plain, common garden noodles within.

He has observed that the American public is even yet inclined to look upon chop suey as a suspicious mixture. The Chinese have perhaps rather fostered this suspicion, not consciously but with an ignorance of the prejudices of their patrons. For instance, there is no need for a Chinese dish to be placed conspicuously on a bill of fare when that dish happens to be chow bat, is there? There is a suggestion in the name that the eager American mind seizes and broods over, and if it is not explained that the mixture is nothing more harmful than fried meat, mushrooms, eggs, vegetables and rice who can predict the result?

A bill of fare of a chop suey restaurant that disregarded the very obvious claims of chow bat would of course alienate many of the Orientals who are accustomed to feed upon that delectable dish, but there are ways and places. One needn't rub the bat in, need one?

This is where the German proposes to get in his fine work. He is putting together a patchwork of food and environment that will begin by attracting, will go on by slow stages until Chinese cooking has ingratiated itself with the American and then little by little as prejudice dies he can become more and more Chinese in his menu.

"When I open a Chinese restaurant uptown," he says, "as I expect to do some day, it will be absolutely correct in every particular. There won't be one thing about it that isn't Chinese and it will be elegant and recherche at that. The reason you can do this because you don't have to inspire people with confidence up there. But down here there is a certain mysterious atmosphere. People have heard queer stories and the place reeks with opium and it looks queer and all that, and they've got to be taught, that's what's the matter. And I'm going to teach them."

He stops talking a moment, suggests that an omelette with bamboo shoots,



"BUSY AT THE OFFICE."

water chestnuts and ham might not go amiss, and calls attention to a couple of suburban women who have come in to luncheon and look relieved that there are other white people about. A sole musician pipes up the march from "Lohengrin." Of course the full orchestra only arrives at dinner time.

The suburbanites shudder through the Chinese bill of fare and ask timidly at length of the Chinese waiter if he has any



PREPARING CHOP SUEY.

water loaf. Water loaf sound very safe, but when he shakes his head they are again in a quandary. Finally the sign of the Mandarin cocktails catches their eyes; they look determined to go the distance, and order it with heads thrown back in the new Director's style.

When it arrives they sip it reflectively, with many comments as to whether they are quite satisfied with it. One of them

thinks it tastes all right, but she has her doubts as to its nourishing qualities, while the other thinks they should have had it first, as they would a soup.

"That's the kind of people that have got to be taught," the proprietor proceeds to say. "Probably they were ten or fifteen minutes outside before they dared to come up. They're from Jersey, I know, and are determined to have one real high old time. They'll think they've had it too. The Mandarin cocktail will help 'em think so. They'll come again and again, and some day they'll order a plate of chop suey. They'll tell their neighbors, and that's the way trade's built up, slow but sure."

"It isn't easy, but I feel that I've got a mission to perform, for I consider it a crying shame that all these wonderful Chinese dishes should be absolutely unknown to the mass of mankind."

Just as ice water is served free in every American restaurant, so is tea in the chop suey places. He serves both, and although the tea is poured from a bowl into the handleless cups by expert Oriental fingers it is accompanied when desired by sugar, cream or slices of lemon. The proprietor's artistic soul is simply rent by this lack of aesthetic unities, but he puts it up to you—what is he to do? You've got to catch your hare before you can cook it, and there are still Americans who don't care for tea à la Chinoise. He has no doubt that in some far off millennium Americans will drink their tea, as they should, unspiced by extraneous flavors, but till then should he insist on too violent a change—and perhaps incidentally lose their trade?

After a dessert of lichi nuts and rice cakes, with a sip of sake from a queer shaped green bottle covered with Chinese hieroglyphics and seals, courage being fortified, a trip is taken kitchenward. Here Chinese art reigns supreme over a big porcelain range of German manufacture. Like all restaurant kitchens in the better class of Chinese places, it is spick and span, the chef and his assistants in linen garments, with pigtail firmly fastened out of the way.

There is a row of big kettles with contents stewing and simmering, and the odor is very appetizing. Fresh vegetables are being washed in wicker baskets which take the place of the American strainers, and the big iron pots not in use decorate the walls. The chef explains that Melikan man make great mistake if he thinks that chop suey is old. It is made fresh every time, and the proprietor adds the information that rice is rarely an integral part of the far famed dish, but is always served with it, as rice is the Chinese bread. When he has got his public where he wants it people will prefer rice to bread as being more hygienic, as well as having a much greater percentage of nourishment.

While the chop suey establishments are

reaching out with new decorations, new dishes and a general air of prosperity to attract the wandering custom of novelty seekers, they have a well established clientele, which is numbered up in the thousands and can be absolutely relied upon. This patronage is composed first of the Chinese whose means and habits allow them the relaxation of the restaurant life.

Then nearly every night in the week Chinatown is invaded by the automobile sight seeing crowd, and there are various tours under the guidance of experts who come by street car and subway routes. It is for their delectation that the bland Chinese proprietor arranges a view in a neighboring building of some opium smokers—represented by some of his employees—and the summers sit down at the tables after scurried glances sure that there is nothing worse coming to them in this City of Dreadful Night. They usually talk Kipling and wonder why he should have gone so far afield for his horrors when right here.

Then there is the Brooklyn crowd on their way home from the theatres. If it wasn't for Brooklyn a great many of the Chinatown and Third avenue chop suey establishments might have to close their doors. One of the guides hanging around waiting to explain the difference between a joss house and a gambling den to any hayseed who might feel interrogatively inclined postively explained that Chinatown was really the gateway of Brooklyn, and likened it to one of these Oriental gateways through which caravans teem laden wended their winding way. It sounded very well, particularly as he stood with his back against a shop window artistically arranged with Cantonese ware, ivory carvings and bowls of cats' eyes,

one wander about in a real bit of the Orient transplanted to New York instead of the hybrid place that now exists. He expects the American fondness for Chinese cooking to bring this about.

Occasionally in wandering through the chop suey establishments you will see the clever American girl who has not had the searchlight of publicity veered her way but surely deserves a passing notice. She has discovered that there are less decorative backgrounds for her charms than a corner of an Oriental restaurant, but she does not come at night when the establishments are filled with noisy diners. Instead she chooses the luncheon hour, when the place is practically deserted and it is possible to find just the artistic mis-à-scène desired.

There she sits, waited on by a deft handed Chinese, with the perfume of sandalwood in the air, eating from a pearl inlaid teakwood table, under a painted dragon on a yellow silk pennant, while her escort is lost in wonder at her startling beauty, which never before impressed him as being so mysterious and compelling. He even pays the \$3 for the small boned duck stuffed with bird nest and the \$1.50 for tea and pink crystal cakes without waking up, and incidentally thanks her for coming downtown and meeting him half way.

Sunday night is the gala time of the chop suey places. Outside the streets are filled with pushcarts and vendors of vegetables, most of which come from the farms at Astoria, L. L., where Chinese vegetables are raised—the small Chinese mushrooms, bamboo sprouts, strange varieties of cabbages and herbs that the American housekeeper wots not of.

Besides the Long Island products one can buy boxes of birds' nests—the pre-



A SUNDAY NIGHT OFF.

pared seaweed which masquerades under that name—sharks' fins, which to the American taste are very colorless unless richly spiced and sauced; water chestnuts, dried fishes of many kinds, strings of green and red peppers, stringpeas, oranges and other fruits. It is on Sunday night that the Chinese merchant, householder and restaurateur buys his week's supplies, and the scene is lively and interesting.

Inside the tables are filled except the few reserved by special order, for the most conservative Oriental establishments have added the telephone to their conveniences. In one room you will find Chinese merchants, quiet and reserved, abstaining from discussing political affairs, eating with gusto and watching the Americans carefully. Near by the usual conglomerate crowd of Sunday diners out to chatter and jest, and in the Teutonic-Chinese establishment strains of the talker and Wagner occasionally drown the talker. The majority of diners are eating some variety of chop suey for there is no doubt that on this one day of the week at least it is a very popular dish indeed.

behind which were groups of Christmas shoppers getting appetites for their chop suey luncheons. For the holiday crowds are another considerable item.

Finally there are the regular Caucasian patrons of the restaurants. Many of them come alone, some with a single friend, a few bring parties regularly. These patrons grow in number all the time, and it is for their convenience that the chop suey places are beginning to be opened earlier in the day.

Business men from Park row, Wall street and lower Broadway go to the chop suey establishments regularly for luncheon, and a few even stop off for late breakfasts, the Chinese manner of cooking eggs appealing to their taste. This branch of the patronage is hardly large enough to be taken into account seriously, but that it exists at all shows a change in the public sentiment in this respect. It is in speaking of them that one of the frequenters of the district gives it as his opinion that in a comparatively short time all Chinatown will be rebuilt, the noisome places eliminated and beautiful and artistic buildings rise, where Chinese art will dominate architecture and one

mobiles, they will tell you at the society. They go to see in their own yachts, they travel in their own private cars, they go to fashionable finishing schools and take trips around the world. The queerest features of it all are that so many rich people want to adopt children and that so many of them want girls.

There are plots for a hundred novels in the records of the society. One of the most dramatic happened long before Mrs. Coville started on her career of establishing heiresses.

Nearly forty years ago the society placed a little girl in a small Western town. She grew up a village belle, the adopted daughter of one of the leading families of the place. But somewhere in the back of her brain survived a misty memory of other things; of a crowded home in a great city, of people who belonged to her.

When she reached years of sense she tried to find out something about her own people. Her adoptive parents could tell her nothing. She wrote to the agent who had placed her in the home. He professed himself unable to give her any information, but she did not believe him. When she married she asked that her wedding trip be to New York. There she went to the office of the society, a bride in the first flush of her youth and happiness, and found the agent who knew. He begged her to let the matter drop, but she was insistent that he was obliged to furnish her such information as he had.

She followed clue after clue, her husband helping her, and at last discovered one member of her family, her older sister. When her mother died her father had given the little girl away, but he kept the old one to his housework. He was a rough, hard drinking man; the girl had a hard life, she went down and out. The bride from the West found her sister a complete moral wreck. It was a Zolaesque situation, a shock to both the young wife and her husband. It changed her from a merry girl into a sober woman. When she recovered from the first horror of it it changed the whole course of her life.

It was impossible to reclaim the sister.

She was in the last clutches of morphine and died soon afterward. The Western girl always said solemnly, "It might just as well have been I." She has devoted her life to child rescue work and has been the means of finding scores of Western homes for children of New York slums.

WOMAN COACH AND REFEREE.

Washington School Teacher Omolates at Gridiron Contests and Trains Teams. From the Seattle Times.

As far as is known Miss Lillian Merrill a schoolteacher of Kalama, Wash., is the only woman who has the distinction of having refereed a football game or a basketball game played by men. Saturday high school teams representing Kalama and Castle Rock played in the former town and Miss Merrill was the referee. Her work was entirely satisfactory to both teams. More than this, Miss Merrill coaches basketball and football in the rules of both games and when in college was a star basketball player herself.

While refereeing a game she wears short skirts and is fast enough to be on hand to pass on any close play. Every one knows that the play shifts rapidly from one goal to another and it seems almost impossible that a woman would be equal to the task of acting as referee. But Miss Merrill declares that she has little difficulty seeing all the plays and that she has studied the rules until she knows them by rote.

Kingfish Surprised Campers. From the St. Petersburg Times.

A singular incident occurred one day last week at Johns Pass. Mr. and Mrs. Homer M. Mohr of Lealman and a friend were camping there. While Mr. Mohr was cooking dinner a big kingfish jumped out of the water on to the beach, nearly upsetting a jettie which was on the fire. All made a grab for it and took it up to a higher level by the beach to prevent its escape. The kingfish was four feet long and weighed a little over fifty pounds. There is no reason to doubt the story, for Mr. Mohr took the fish home and he and his friends were seen by their friends. Mr. Mohr's experience is unique in the fact that the kingfish might be said to have thrown itself at the campers.



MANDARIN COCKTAILS AND CHOP SUEY.

In the dish aforesaid. Chop suey as the American dreams it, namely as a reproduction of the dish with which ecstatic and fastidious Pekinites and Shanghaieses nightly regale themselves, is merely one of the many pipedreams that Chinatown is responsible for.

Enter an eating house in a Chinese city and ask for chop suey and you would probably be asked very courteously and in the very best manner what kind of chop suey the distinguished stranger would be pleased to regale himself with. Chop suey really means a mixture of small pieces. Chop suey without further description signifies merely a kind of stew or ragout.

The Chinese expert, or the American who has learned the ropes, asks for a gar law, a mo kw, a mandarin, a ngoro, a gai, a not ju or a mo kw gai if he speaks the chop suey language. If he does not he can specify as to whether he would like his order made of fried pork with celery, onions and sprouts; with mushrooms; with beef, chicken, green peppers, or with a combination of certain of these ingredients. These varieties do not by

from Little Hungary to Sherry's has opened a Chinese restaurant which outdrones everything in the line along Doyers, Pell and Mott streets. In the period of mourning for the late Dowager Empress and Emperor no one of the chop suey restaurants is more flamboyant in its purple, green and white, or are those the suffragette colors? Well, never mind. In fact, its mourning is so evident as to make the eyes ache.

But only on the outside. Within there is a cathedra of taste that is as unexpected as it is remarkable.

At one end is a picture which might have been in the French Salon, but never was. It was painted by a young Chinese and took him four weeks. The proprietor, as knowing in the matter of pictures as he is in keeping Chinese restaurants, explains that while it is more expensive and larger—it is about 20 feet by 10—he does not care for it nearly as much as he does for that by a Japanese at the other end of the room. The Jap, it may be added, did his work in four days and threw in the tip of Fujiyama without extra charge.



"THE CALL OF THE WILD."

HEIRESSSES NOW, WAIFS ONCE

THE GIRL BABIES FOR WHOM MRS. COVILLE FINDS HOMES.

Foundlings Who Have Been Adopted by Rich Families—Her Secret to Make Them Attractive—Plots for Novels Might Be Drawn From Her Work.

One day a few years ago a woman appeared in a little village in the Adirondacks. She had a baby with her and engaged board for a week in a workingman's family. When the week was up she said she must go, but that the mountain air and outdoor life were doing her baby so much good that she would like to leave her a while longer.

The baby was a merry little girl of 2, who played happily with the village woman's children. The mother paid a week's board in advance, so the village woman kept the little girl. For a few weeks the child's board money came regularly. Then it stopped. The village woman wrote. No answer. She made inquiries. The mother was not to be found. The baby was deserted.

The autumn winds began to whistle in the Adirondacks. The baby could not stay shut up in the little house, too small for its own brood.

The village woman was kind, but in no position to take another child in addition to her own. She went to the town authorities and said they must take the child off her hands. They said very well; it should go to the poorhouse.

The next day a woman who lives at 442 West Twenty-third street, New York city, received a letter from the little town in the mountains. It told her the story, and closed with: "I want the child before she goes to the poorhouse let me know immediately."

It so happened that the woman on Twenty-third street was just about to take a trip through the northern part of the State. She arranged to visit the

mountain village, and as a result she brought the baby away.

She kept her a year and all that year the baby had nothing to do but eat good food, wear pretty clothes and play jolly games with other babies as fortunate as herself. Naturally a pretty child, she developed under this treatment into a beauty. Nothing was ever heard of her mother, and nothing is known of her except that she was Canadian French. There came the second act.

An American girl had married a rich Englishman. They had a beautiful country home in England and everything to make life happy except children. One day the wife came back to visit her people. She happened to see the baby from the Adirondacks. She wanted it. She went back home and told her husband about the beautiful baby that she would like to have.

Then came money for a trained nurse to take the baby to England first class. The little half French baby has been adopted by the couple. She has her governess, her nurse and her riding pony like all the good little girls in the English novels. She escaped the poorhouse by a hair's breadth to become an heiress, just as in a play.

This is the star heiress of the Children's Aid Society. The society, which has been placing children in homes for the last fifty years, prints many stories of its successful boys—the two New York street waifs who became Governors in the Western country where it sent them and many others who have been a credit to their benefactors. But it doesn't dare to say a word about the girls. "Our heiresses" are often mentioned in the office, but not by name.

These heiresses have multiplied during the last ten years since Mrs. Coville took charge of the girl waifs who come into the hands of the society. Mrs. Coville was a lawyer's wife in Rochester. She raised four boys of her own and then took to raising other people's girls.

She has had four adopted daughters at different times, the last of whom is with her now. For many years she unofficially

found homes for poor children left orphans in her home city. Then being a widow, she accepted the task of doing the same thing for the society.

The first party of children given her to take out to homes secured for them made her indignant. One of them wore a pink calico dress and, although it was summer, a red flannel petticoat several inches longer. Some well meaning man agent had endeavored to get the child warm, comfortable clothing and had seen nothing amiss with her appearance.

The children's manners were somewhat worse than their looks. Nothing about them was calculated to attract admiration. Mrs. Coville came back with fire in her eye.

"I'm not going to take out such looking children," said she to Secretary C. C. Brace; "you needn't think it."

"Well, Mrs. Coville, will you dress the girls if we will give you the money?" said Mr. Brace gently. Mr. Brace is an adept at the soft answer.

"Will I?" said Mrs. Coville expressively. The next time she went out she conveyed five girls under a child's name. All were dressed in low necked, short sleeved white frocks, for it was hot weather, with dainty lingerie baby hats.

Every eye in the car was fixed on the quintet. To all who asked Mrs. Coville told frankly who they were and what society was sending them out. It was excellent advertising.

Through Mrs. Coville's methods it has come about that many of her girls have been adopted by rich families and that rich families all over the country when they want to adopt a child write to her. It is a singular fact that all over America, in every placid out society it is easier to find a home for a girl than a boy.

A woman who wants to adopt a baby almost always wants a girl. Only on a farm is a boy equally desirable, and then they want him old enough to work. So Mrs. Coville's task is complicated only by her determination to get her girls into well to do families. To that end she purposes to make them so pretty and well mannered that rich people will want

them the minute they see them.

To achieve this end she follows the prescription of the immortal Mr. Dick with regard to David Copperfield. First "wash him," then "feed him." To this Mrs. Coville adds: "Dress her in pretty clothes. Make her happy; teach her to dance."

The house in old Chelsea village where the children live until they find homes is a big, old fashioned New York house. There is not a sign outside to show that it is an orphan asylum, and half the neighbors do not know this fact. Inside it is like any pleasant home, with an open fire burning cheerily on winter evenings in the big back parlor.

There is a piano there and a bare floor, and there any evening some twenty girls, ranging from those just old enough to walk up to 12 or 14 years, may be found dancing gayly to the cheerful notes of the piano. It is like a children's party. All the girls wear light dresses and elaborate hair ribbons.

After dinner the cook comes up and joins the party. She is a college graduate who has taken her job from interest in the girls. Coville is always able to get helpers of that kind, and from the moment the girls enter the place they come in contact only with educated and well bred women.

They come in dirty and forlorn, frightened and miserable. Sometimes they have been badly treated. Sometimes they have never been well fed. Always they have lived in poverty. In about three days they begin to look like children from good families. In a few weeks no one could tell the difference. It is a marvelous example of the recuperative and adaptive power of childhood.

This kind of life makes them so happy and so pretty that rich people want them. One of them went away in a private car the other day. The car had come clear through from the Pacific coast to get the baby, and the owner of the car was so delighted with her when he saw her that he went immediately out and purchased ten pairs of tiny shoes. As her feet will outgrow them before she can possibly wear them out the ten pairs are largely

wasted, but it doesn't matter.

A few months ago an elegantly gowned, dark eyed woman came to 442 West Twenty-third. Her husband is a financier of Mexico, a friend of President Diaz. They are often in New York.

The woman said they had two sons, 12 and 14 years old. They had long wanted a little girl. But the whole family is very musical; the boys play the piano and violin. They wanted a very small girl and yet one who was musical.

Mrs. Coville sent upstairs for Rose. Rose was only 5, but she stood by the piano while the nurse played, and sang like a bird. The lady from Mexico was charmed. Her husband came and was charmed. So Rose, from a New York slum, has gone to live in a Spanish villa with a patio, a fountain and an orange grove.

The daughter of a railroad president out in Mr. Bryan's State came from 442 West Twenty-third street. She went away in a private car too, as was natural. Another is living to-day in one of the most expensive homes in New York. It is quite like a fairy tale.

Many of these children are too young to remember their past life. The little English heiress remembers nothing of the Adirondacks or New York. One day a rich woman came to Mrs. Coville and with tears in her eyes told her a remark of the girl she had adopted. The child looked up puzzled and said:

"Mamma, where were you? They told me you were dead."

There was little Antonia, an Italian girl of 6. Her parents died and the child was left quite alone in New York. She dropped in the summer heat and a deacon's wife in an up-State village took her as a fresh air visitor.

When the fresh air visit was over Antonia's velvet black eyes had so bewitched the deacon's wife that she could not give her up, although she had children of her own. So this child of an Italian immigrant will grow up as the deacon's daughter—as strange a transformation as any on the list.

"Our heiresses" ride in their own auto-