

### CLOSING THE PEKING GATES

Queer Ceremonies Observed for Many Centuries Still Mark End of Chinese Business Day.

To this day the great gates in the walls of Peking are closed every evening with the queer ceremonies that have been observed for centuries past. Says the Peking and Tientsin Times: "The daily performance is marked with a due ceremony which is quaint and full of interest to the intelligent onlooker, as the closing by no means signifies the mere bringing together of the heavy wooden doors and the barring of the emperor's highway against all comers. At the appointed hour a preliminary signal is given by a large gong or iron shield being struck with a big iron bar 50 times in such quick succession as almost defy calculation, and this is followed by 100 double strokes commencing slowly and dreamily for the first half, and gradually increasing to half hurricane rapidity; and this set of 100 blows is repeated in precisely the same fashion three times. When the third and last cycle of gong strokes is entered on, a number of old men, and at this season, very much bearded and muffled up in old Charles start a series of discordant yells to all and sundry to hasten or they will be shut out, and this combination of signals is followed by a jostling stream of people from both directions.

Presently the rush slackens until only a solitary pedestrian, or possibly a man on a donkey, full tilt, a belated rikisha or a heavily laden cart struggles through. Then a movement is made with the gates, yelling bursts out of each and another rush ensues, the gates being meanwhile half closed and occasionally opened a little way again, until the outgoers having meanwhile ceased, there is a final scrimmage to get into the city, and the process of closing, which has taken some half hour in all, is concluded.

Then, the huge iron-plated doors having clanged to, a monster iron pole is dragged up and pulled across them on iron supports, being retained in position by a padlock of enormous proportions and of the well-known Chinese type. There are in all in the city of Peking some 19 gates, and the same ceremony is observed at each, but at such thoroughfares as the Hatanen there is naturally more traffic and the process is probably proportionately longer."

### KNOW PIGS BY THEIR TAILS

Rather, the Lack of Tails Distinguishes Them from All Others of Their Kind.

Looking over brand registers the other day reminded me of an event which occurred at Fort Benton in 1866," said the Montana pioneer to a group of friends, according to the New York Sun. "The story serves to illustrate two things—first, the unerring accuracy of A. B. Hamilton's aim, and again the expedients that are resorted to in order to procure an original brand. "Hamilton was the first justice of the peace in northern Montana. His commission was issued by Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher, the leader of the famous civil war Irish brigade, who was then acting as governor of the territory of Montana. Hamilton had charge of the American Fur company's post at Fort Benson, and the feat to which I shall refer may have had something to do with his election as sheriff of Chouteau county in later years.

"The company by which Hamilton was employed had about 35 head of hogs that were continually getting mixed up with the porkers belonging to others, and he determined to put a brand upon his animals that would prevent any chance of mistaken identity.

"With some little difficulty Hamilton got all of the company's hogs in an inclosure, went to the office, secured his revolver and a supply of cartridges and seated himself on the fence surrounding the pigs.

"Without getting closer than ten feet to a single one of the animals, Hamilton in the course of perhaps 15 minutes had shot the tail from each. He did not waste more than half a dozen shots in doing it, nor was a single hog injured save that its tail had been clipped off clean. The feat gave him the title of champion shot of the territory."

### CHINESE AWAY FROM HOME

Best Place for the "Chink" Is in Orient, Say Observers of Effect of His Migration.

Most English-speaking persons think the best place for a Chinese is in China. He no sooner migrates to a country inhabited by users of English than they begin to tell him how unwelcome he is.

The history of Chinese immigration in the United States is familiar. Laborers were needed on the Pacific coast, and the Chinese came, or were brought, in large numbers to supply the demand. Then the white men began to protest against the competition of the Asiatics, and after a time Chinese laborers were forbidden to enter the country.

The situation in the gold-mining region of South Africa to-day is similar to that in California when the Chinese began to flock there. The mine owners have not been able to get white or black laborers enough to work their mines to their full capacity. A year ago the importation of Chinese coolies began, and now there are 45,000 of them in the district. They were admitted against the protest of the British colonies in the southern Pacific, and in spite of the objections of public men in Great Britain.

Already the question of discontinuing the policy has become a party issue in England. The liberals, who hope soon to come into power, declare that the condition of the Chinese is practically one of slavery. Moreover, they assert that the Chinese have made life unsafe in the mining district; that men are afraid to leave their families alone, and that it has become necessary to barricade the doors and windows of the houses at night and to sleep with firearms within reach.

All this is denied by the adherents of the government, who maintain that the situation is exaggerated or wholly misrepresented, and that the introduction of Chinese labor has made South Africa prosperous.

A most serious phase of the situation is that the three or four hundred million Chinese at home are beginning to take note of the treatment of the Chinese away from home, and are resorting to retaliatory measures against foreigners in China.

### STUDIES HAIR VARIATIONS.

Japanese Scientist Gives Reason for This—Certain Diseases Said to Be the Cause.

The variations in the thickness of the hair upon the same individual have been studied by the Japanese scientist Matsura and he makes some interesting observations. It is known that in certain diseases we find, among other differences of growth, very marked variations in the growth of the finger nails both in length and thickness. It is found that the hair is also influenced, and all the affections which act upon the general health bring about a diminution in the thickness of the hair. The medullary layer may even be interrupted and the hard layer which it contains may disappear. Observations made upon a hair will therefore show the variations in thickness according to certain maladies and the length of the affected part or thinner portion of the hair gives an idea of the duration of the malady, and even of slighter affections. The variations are naturally more strongly marked in the case of coarse-haired races than for others. Provided the hair had never been cut, the subject would have his pathologic history written, so to speak, in capillary terms.

### Personal Privilege.

Rudolph Dinkelheimer (to stranger who has stepped on his foot)—Mein frent, I know mine foots vas made to walk on, but dot privilege belongs to mineself.—Chicago Tribune.

### Troubles Like Horses.

"Yoh troubles," said Uncle Eben, "is like hosses. De minute you lets 'em see your's skait of 'em day's 'lible to run away wif you."—Washington Star.

### True Heroism.

Knieker—So Jones holds two hero medals; what was the second one for?

Bocker—Accepting the first.—N. Y. Sun.

### LEATHER OF SEA ANIMALS.

Marine Creatures Whose Hides Are Tanned for a Variety of Purposes—Value of Porpoise.

"It makes a fine leather, the hide of the porpoise," said a leather manufacturer; "soft, pliable and waterproof, and it retains these excellent qualities through long wear. It is rather a costly leather, worth, say, twice as much as calfskin.

"Porpoise leather is used for making shoes and shoe laces. It is used more in England than in this country. Here we run more to lighter weight shoes and wear rubbers when it rains.

"In England, with a moister climate, and need for more constant protection of the feet, they wear fewer rubbers and habitually more heavy and waterproof shoes. Incidentally I suppose if we should stand anywhere in the world where numbers of men pass and look only at their feet we could pick out the Englishmen among them by their shoes.

"Sharkskin is tanned into a leather that has various uses, mostly for more or less ornamental purposes, as for bags and purses. The skin of the shark is naturally rough surfaced, and fishermen dry it and prepare it and use it for sandpaper.

"Leather made from the hide of the seal is used to a considerable extent for bags and belts and purses and card cases and so on, including shoes.

"The alligator, to be sure, is an amphibious animal, not strictly aquatic; but it is aquatic enough to be included among the aquatic animals whose skins furnish material for leather. The uses of alligator leather are familiar.

"And then we have the walrus, from whose hide a valuable leather is made, that is used chiefly by manufacturing jewelers, cut into disks to serve as wheels for polishing jewelry.

"So you see we draw supplies of leather for various purposes not alone from the skins of many land animals, but also from those of quite a number of the creatures of the sea."

### WIVES DECEIVE IN COOKING

Delicatessen Store Rapidly Taking Place of Culinary Art Among Gotham Spouses.

It has come to the point where a man living in a large city does not know whether or not he is eating a home-cooked turkey. A New York correspondent avers that about half the population of the city ate a delicatessen turkey Christmas, and adds: "Wives who live in tabloid flats are growing wise. They tell their husbands that they do not wish to be bothered when they are cooking the bird, and advise them to take a run up Fifth avenue for an hour or so while they do the cooking. As soon as the husband disappears the gentle deceiver betakes herself to a near-by delicatessen store and buys a hot bird and a bunch of celery. Then she returns home and makes up like a cook. You may fix up a dressing and a mess of Yorkshire pudding and a few details like that just to give verisimilitude to the deception. The husband returns at the appointed time with a friend he has picked up on the telephone. When he tastes the turkey he calls his friend's attention to the fact that his wife is somewhat of a cook, etc., and the friend enters with great enthusiasm into the paean of praises. Then little wifey looks pleased and says modestly: 'Oh, well, Christmas comes only once a year, you know.' Whatever suspicion may lurk in the husband's mind is dispelled, or at least discounted, by the fact that Mr. Turkey is well done, and that the whole affair was up to his expectations. It's all the fault of the little sardine box ranges and the cracker box kitchen."

### Beginning Early.

Teacher—Henry, what is your excuse for being absent from school yesterday?

Schoolboy (in Washington)—Teacher, I was paired with Jimmy Kirkbride.—Chicago Tribune.

### Papa's Cruel Words.

Sapleigh—Is it—aw—really true that your father speaks highly of me?

Miss Uppson—Yes—when he wants to make mamma really angry.—Chicago Daily News.

### NAVAJOS LIKE TO GAMBLE.

Indians Are Great Gamblers; Their Relation to Horses and Dogs Is Still Unexplained.

According to the Southern Workman the Navajo is an inveterate gambler. Not only are the professionals who live entirely by the practice, but even the small boys are gamblers and adapt the pictorial Sunday school cards to gaming purposes. Their blankets illustrate gambling and even their account of the creation must have woven into it the story of a game. Thus a serious and apparently native vice of formidable proportions at once confronts the teacher and the missionary. The question of the best way to overcome it is still an open one. The prohibition of its practice does not go to the root of the matter and all our logic fails to convince the Indian that he has not as great a right to play for stakes as he has to breathe.

A curious trait of the Navajo, common, no doubt, to all Indians, is his relation to his horses and dogs. To our mind it is incomprehensible. Every man maintains many dogs and for what reason it is difficult to discover. They are ill-kept, starving, cowardly canines which bear a little resemblance to our own intelligent, devoted dogs as can be imagined. They are not for use, certainly not for beauty, and apparently they are no protection. I have never heard any reasonable explanation of the Indian's having so many; perhaps he considers that the more he can maintain the more important he is, relates a writer.

Toward his horses his attitude seems ever more singular. They are, of course, part of his wealth, but from our point of view he should have a favorite one among them all, to which he should give more care and devotion. From small boyhood he draws horses in the sands or on the rocks and as early learns to ride and rope the real animal. He spends most of his time on horseback till he dies. He celebrates his horse in his blankets and learns also the most difficult horsemanship, of which he is very proud.

But apparently one animal is the same as another to him. He will ride one to death and select its successor from the herd, to break it by the most cruel method or to starve it and beat it. Fear seems the only element developed in the beast. The bits used make one shudder to look upon and in buying a Navajo horse it is said that one must expect to find scars on the animal, indicating that it has been so severely handled in the breaking that its spirit has been broken.

I have seen horses whipped till the blood ran. This was done without anger, apparently, but indifferently, as if there were no other way. Our own little Navajo animal, which had been gentled by careful treatment, was finally resold to its original owner. The man was an intelligent person, who could speak English and who had considerable intercourse with the white man, but when I asked him earnestly to be good to the horse he had no more comprehension than if I were talking Sanscrit.

As I stood on the last mesa looking back upon the hot, silent, beautiful but unprofitable stretches of the Navajo land and down upon the gorgeous, painted desert, which seemed his rightful artistic background, I pondered earnestly upon the future of my Navajo friends. No race or family in this age can live always to itself, and some day to these people will come the inevitable collision with the forces of the outside world, and we have to do with the great question of preparing them for the impact.

### Vegetable Ivory.

For every ton of genuine ivory brought into Great Britain there are imported three tons of vegetable ivory. The latter comes chiefly from the Republic of Colombia, in South America. It is obtained from the seeds of the Ivory nut palm.

### Electrical Conductors.

Gold is the best conductor of heat, but stands second as a conductor of electricity. Copper is the best conductor of electricity, but stands only fourth as conductor of heat.

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