

INDIAN FREEMASONRY.

A Secret Society Existing in the Cherokee Nation.

An Ancient Order That Has for Its Object the Preservation of Tribal Legends and Traditions.

Not many persons are aware that there exists among the Cherokees a secret society that is hundreds of years old, as old, in fact, as the tribe itself, and is to say stronger than it ever was, at least in numbers. This society is called the Katoowah, which, literally translated, means elder brother. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch says it is a sort of Indian Freemasonry and has its laws and rules of order as well as its officers and secret signs. So well are its secrets and its doings guarded that there are hundreds of people living in the Cherokee nation, and who have lived there for years, who are not even aware of the existence of a society every member of which is sworn to assist in the defense of their homes from the invasion of the pale-faced brother either by squatter or by soldier, or by squawmen and savages. Only full-bloods are eligible to membership, but so jealously is the Katoowah guarded that what else is necessary for membership is not known outside of the order. The society now has a membership of about a thousand full-bloods, each the head of a family, and thus the organization represents about five thousand persons. Formerly the Katoowah only comprised the chiefs and some few of the other men of the tribe. Then it was all-powerful and exercised full control over all tribal affairs; its mandate never issued was never questioned even by the most powerful chief. It dictated treaties, proclaimed war or peace, settled disputes and guided the welfare of the tribe in all matters, spiritual and temporal. Such was the Katoowah until within the past fifty years. When the white man's government was formed and the affairs of the people were taken from the hands of the few and administered by men elected by the people and the Indians saw their power and their bright star steadily passing away, their customs and language receding before the march of civilization, they realized that unless something was done to counteract these influences the Cherokee would soon pass from the face of the earth. To prevent this became at once the object of the Katoowah, and it was so enlarged as to include the heads of all full-blood families, so that from a privy council it became a powerful oath-bound organization.

No Cherokee whose blood has been tainted can become a member, and it is said that the penalty for disclosing the slightest secret is death. The chief aim of the Katoowah at the present day is to perpetuate the legends, customs and language of the Cherokees. The existence of this society accounts for something that has often puzzled inquiring persons who have found that it is very rarely that a full-blood Cherokee does not both read and write his own tongue fluently. They all have a classical Cherokee education, and as their language is not taught in the public school, and they have no schools of their own, when and where they learned to write it was a mystery. Every Katoowah is bound to teach it to his children, and there exists a pride among them so strong that the full-blood who has not acquired these accomplishments is in continual disgrace and is made to feel his ignorance most keenly and continually. Among its members are some of the ablest of the Cherokees, in those who have acquired thorough English education and who are lawyers, ministers and born leaders. It is natural to suppose that these are the leaders, but this is not known. Certain it is, the society exerts a powerful influence in the government by casting its entire vote as a man for or against certain measures. It is never heard of in politics, and yet it has often been noticed that at an election the full-bloods are sure to support the same ticket. There is no way for a candidate to approach the society to secure its support, for he does not know who its members are. They select their ticket and vote for it and there are no buttons. The members have a sign language by which they can converse intelligently among themselves wholly unobserved and employ this means of communication when others are near. Through the medium of their national paper, one-half of which is printed in Cherokee and is sent free to all citizens who do not read English, the full-blood is thoroughly posted upon all public matters and in fact much more conversant with affairs of state than his half-blood brother.

SAVINGS BANKS FOR STAMPS.

To be introduced into the Boston Public Schools a Very Shortly.

It is proposed to introduce "stamp savings banks" in the Boston public schools. From various offices colored stamps of six denominations and stamp cards will be obtained. To each person wishing to become a depositor the local treasurer gives him a stamp card and sells him as many stamps as he has money for. These stamps must be pasted on the card. The card, when full, will probably contain about five dollars.

As soon as the child has stamps for that sum the money is taken and deposited for him in some savings bank that he may designate. The five dollars once deposited he begins again, and the small sum grows to a larger one under his hands. If he wishes to withdraw he presents his card and draws all that is on it. Then if he has more money than he cares to use he calls for another card and redeposits the balance.

By this method all bookkeeping is avoided, the child always knows just how much he has, and the local treasurer can tell in the same manner. If the child loses the card, however, he loses his money, or rather, all that he carried on that card.

LOCUSTS IN CHINA.

They Are Regarded as a Calamity from Heaven.

The Singular Methods Adopted by the Celestials for Exterminating the Pests—A Queen's Occupation for Soldiers.

The great province of Kiang-Soo, China, is being devastated by locusts. Consul Jones at Chin-Kiang sends the state department an account of the curious efforts made by the afflicted sections to dispel the scourge, says a Washington Globe-Democrat. Some of the methods resorted to are as striking as the suggestions offered to the Kansas people when they were suffering from a similar visitation some years ago. When the locusts make their appearance in one of these Chinese districts there is consternation among the unfortunate peasantry, who assemble in the fields with wild clamor and din of gongs, armed with long bamboo with streamers attached, and vainly endeavor to drive off the terrible invaders who are settling down in myriads and devouring their crops before their eyes. Every leaf and twig is covered thick, giving the appearance of some hideous yellow fruit or plant. A faint, sour smell, like that of fermenting vegetable matter, is always perceptible in the neighborhood. It comes, no doubt, from the droppings of the insects.

There is a curious and widespread belief among the Chinese in the existence of a "king" locust—"wang" he is called—of colossal size and quasi-supernatural character, who hovers invisibly in the upper regions of the air, directing and controlling the migrations of the different swarms. At some places the leading officials have publicly sacrificed and made offerings to the king of the locusts in order that he might be influenced to spare their localities.

"I know of few sights," writes the consul, "more extraordinary than a swarm engaged in pairing. The air is filled with clouds of locusts drifting, circling, crossing and recrossing, with a faint, whirling noise, and settling on the ground in thousands of couples. The ground is carpeted thickly with them; you cannot take a step without crunching heaps of them under your feet, while thousands more start up in pattering volleys against your legs, hands and face."

The eggs are deposited in holes drilled by the female an inch or more deep in the ground. The time required for hatching depends entirely on the temperature. In very hot weather the new brood begins to make its appearance at the end of a week. At this stage they are very small, black, and as active as fleas, making extraordinary bounds by means of their muscular hind legs. At a little distance they suggest the idea of a swarm of black ants seized with sudden insanity. In shape they are exact copies of their parents, save for the want of wings. They are greedy feeders and grow rapidly. By the eighth or ninth day wings have budded and the color begins to change, yellow spots appearing, and in about a month they are full grown.

The destruction, by suitable measures, of this formidable pest, involving, as it does, the prevention of famines, fever epidemics and riots, is a matter of grave public concern. One constantly hears of mandarins losing their buttons and being disgraced as the penalty of remissness or failure to destroy the enemy.

Consul Jones says the Chinese consider that the visitation of the locusts is a "calamity from Heaven, and that there is no help for it." Chinese records chronicle many instances of the appearance and the calamities inflicted by locusts in former times, but they have no peculiarly effective methods of destroying them. The government usually issues proclamations ordering the soldiers and encouraging the farmers to destroy them. The latter are given a bounty for their destruction.

The soldiers, with their officers at their head, are used against the locusts as a kind of adverse army in the field. Instead of a gun or a lance, however, each soldier is armed with a course hempen bar attached to a bamboo pole, which, with wide-open mouth, is waved back and forth among the swarms until filled, when they are killed and the action renewed.

Sailors' Superstitions.

The superstitions of actors would fill a book and so also would those of sailors. But this, says the Boston Home Journal, has affected the amateur yachtsmen, who are men of education and who might be expected to laugh at it. Notice the names of craft racers of late years, and it will be seen that the mystic seven has entered most largely into their selection. In 1871 the "Adams boys," as they are called, had a boat called the Beatrix (notice the seven letters) which was very successful. She was altered and renamed the Harpoon, which, in addition to the seven letters, had a lucky 00. The Typhoon had the lucky seven letters and the lucky 00, and was eminently successful, therefore. It is also lucky to have double consonants in the middle of the name. The Gossoon, a cutter owned by the Adams boys, won all the races in her class in 1870, and in a previous year these same yachtsmen mispelled a word for the sake of gaining the lucky combination, and called a boat the Baboon.

Magnificent Temple.

The temple of the sun at Palmyra covered a square of twenty-two yards on each side. It was approached by a magnificent avenue over half a mile long, flanked by rows of columns and statues. The temple of Diana at Ephesus was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty-five feet broad, and with statues and columns innumerable. Of this magnificent structure not a trace remains even of the foundations.

QUEEN CUSTOMS.

Corpses Are Always Kept for Three Months in Borneo.

Mr. Charles Hose, the British resident of the Basam district in Borneo, has just sent to the royal geographical society an interesting account of some of the native customs which he learned in his journey in Saramat. After sleeping in a chief's house one evening he found at the head of his bed a box containing the dead body of his host's wife. It appears, says the Chicago Inter Ocean, that the natives always keep corpses for three months. The body is then removed from the house and conveyed with much ceremony to the tomb. Every one present sends one or more cigarettes made of tobacco, wrapped in the dry leaves of the wild banana, to his dead relatives in "Apo Legman" (shades). These cigarettes are placed on top of and around the coffin, and should the body be that of a man, his weapons, tools and a small quantity of rice, with his "prik" (cooling pot), are deposited in the tomb with him that he may be able to continue his daily pursuits in the other world. But if of a woman, her large sun-hat, her little hoe—used for weeding in the paddy-fields—her beads, earrings and other finery are placed with her body, that she may not be found wanting on her arrival on the other side of the grave. Mr. Hose once was present when the corpse of a boy was placed in the coffin, and he watched the proceedings from a short distance. As the lid of the coffin was closed an old man came out on the veranda of the house with a large gong and solemnly beat it for several seconds. The chief said that this was always done before closing the lid, that the relations of the dead who had already passed out of this world might know that the spirit was coming to join them. There was another strange ceremony called "Dayong Jano," in which the dead are supposed to send messages to the living, and which proved that "spiritualism" was of very ancient practice among them.

INTELLECT AT A DISCOUNT.

Germany Overcrowded by Idle Men Who Have Been Educated at Her Universities.

Germany suffers from an intellectual overproduction, according to the Forum. All professions are overcrowded. It was fondly believed up to our days that the state had no more important task than to render the acquiring of knowledge as easy as possible, and for that purpose to establish many higher schools. But it was not asked whether there was room enough for employing men and women when their education was finished. Taking, for instance, the career of law in Prussia, we find that there are 1,851 men who have not only passed through the gymnasium and the university, but have already served the state gratis for about five years, while the annual average demand is 100. There are more than 7,000 examined architects without a fixed employment; it is the same with engineers, teachers in classics, mathematics, etc. These unemployed forces are particularly attracted to the great capitals because everyone hopes that with the many chances they offer he will find a gap into which he may jump. Men of university training are almost without exception capable only of intellectual work. If they do not succeed in their branch they cannot become tailors or carpenters; they must take to petty trading, giving lessons, copying, writing for papers, etc. There are lawyers, physicians, doctors of philosophy among those who are regularly relieved by the Berlin poor board. All these men are, of course, discontented with the present state of things and ready to join with those forces which hold out hope of overthrowing it. Nor are female candidates wanting in this proletariat; all those who give cheap lessons, write mediocre novels for low-class journals or work for shops at starvation wages are swelling the army of social revolution.

DIGGING FOR FISH.

Novel Way of Catching Them in Ceylon.

In some parts of Ceylon the natives are accustomed to dig in the mud during the hot season for fishes, which are found buried in the soft clay at a depth of two feet or more. It is thus that the curious animals hide themselves during a period of torpidity. More than one species indigenous to the island have this remarkable habit, which accounts for the appearance of full-grown fishes in ponds which have shortly before been entirely dried up. This phenomenon was for a long time regarded as an inexplicable mystery.

The creatures as they find their accustomed element disappearing by evaporation during the dry time of the year bury themselves in the mud, sinking to a depth at which they find sufficient moisture to preserve life for months, while the bed of the pond above them dries and cracks by the heat of the sun. As soon as the water comes again they emerge and people take advantage of the opportunity while they are still floundering about in the shallows to effect their capture in large numbers.

SERVED HER SHARE FOR SUPPER.

A Gallant Noble and How He Taxed His Cook's Resources.

Remarkable instances of gallantry are the subject of an article in the San Francisco Examiner, which says: In London a century ago it was no uncommon practice on the part of the "fast men" to drink bumpers to the health of a lady out of her shoe.

The earl of Cork relates an incident of this kind, and to carry the compliment still further, he states that the shoe was ordered to be dressed and served up for supper.

"The cook sat himself seriously to work upon it; he pulled the upper part (which was of fine damask) into fine shreds and tossed it up into a ragout, minced the soles, cut the wooden heel into thin slices, fried them in butter and placed them round the dish for garnish. The company testified their affection for the lady by eating heartily of this aristocratic impropra."

A MUSICAL BEAR.

The Novel Experience of a California Girl.

Her Piano Playing Attracts the Attention of Bruin, and He Falls in Love with the Young Lady and the Instrument.

Mary Carter was practicing her music and was all alone in the house. But for some reason she was always alone when she did so. As soon as she struck the first note of her exercises everybody went outdoors and staid there regardless of the style with which she went over the scales. Mary, according to the Elmira (N. Y.) Telegram, was a San Francisco girl who had gone to spend the summer with her sister, who married a rancher that lived away up in the mountains near the headwaters of American river. Her brother-in-law, Mr. Matthews, was well-to-do and fixed the little house to which he took his bride in fine style. Things were so elegant it was hard to imagine that the place was nearly fifty miles from civilization. When he was buying furniture he was persuaded to take a splendid grand piano, which in due time arrived at the ranch, and it was on this that Mary was practicing. She did not like the idea of being alone at first, but as she found it impossible to persuade her sister to stay with her she had to make the best of a bad job. She went over the scales carefully every few minutes, taking a look out into the garden to see that her relatives did not get too far away. After finishing one piece she rested a moment, thinking of what she would play next. Suddenly she heard a shuffling sound, and, turning around, she saw a large, brown bear standing in the doorway leading to the back part of the house. She was paralyzed with fear and could neither move from her chair nor scream.

She saw the bear come nearer, and she trembled like a leaf. Oh, how she wished she could faint. But she was a strong girl and couldn't, and the bear kept coming closer, and she heard his paws around her. She gave herself up for lost as she felt the grip, which she knew was deadly, tighten around her and the warm breath of the creature on her face. Looking through the window she could see her relatives lounging around peacefully in the shade of the pines and tried to call them, but her tongue would not move and she closed her eyes, expecting to open them in that happy land of which she had been taught from childhood. But what was this? The bear was not hurting her. He held her gently but firmly in his paws, and was actually licking her face, like a pet dog. She opened her eyes, and the world was the same as usual. She could not tell whether she was frightened or not, but somehow she did not try to scream. She just kept quiet, hoping something would happen to end the agony, which she did not understand. The bear did not hold her more than a second, although it seemed ages to the girl. He did not want to hold her, for he threw her on the floor. She was still frightened and expected the beast to jump on her and devour her at his leisure. But instead he turned around, commenced to play the piano and was evidently delighted with his performance, for he kept time with his feet and looked around approvingly. The people outside heard the clatter but did not pay any attention to it, as they afterward said it was not unusual. Mary has never forgiven them for this. The bear began to play furiously, and Mary, seeing a way to escape, took advantage of it and ran away screaming from the room. Her relations at first refused to believe her story, but hearing the clatter ran to the window and looked in. Bruin was still at it, and by this time had become so enthused that he was performing a sort of can-can to his own accompaniment. He was in the height of his glory and had found out where the bass keys were, and with these he was particularly delighted. The deep, continuous rumble seemed to afford him the greatest pleasure, and he would execute a bar that sounded like the cadenza of "A Storm at Sea."

He howled and jumped and whined, and at last concluded his concert by getting on the piano on all fours and executing a jig. At this time Mr. Matthews thought he had better take a hand, and he ran into the room with an ax, as that was the only weapon available. The bear did not seem surprised, but got out of the way, and had there been room would have left the house. He was struck several times with the ax, but did not show fight, and the man thought he must have found a lame bear, although he could not imagine where it came from. He then changed his tactics and tried to capture it, as it did not appear dangerous. He got hold of it and tried to tie it in the piano cover. But at this the brute's wild nature showed itself, and it got ready to make an attack. Before the man could realize what was coming he heard a deep, angry growl and the next moment was clutched angrily by the monster. The beast could have killed him but did not want to. It just gave him a good squeeze and threw him violently against the wall. After looking at him a moment the bear went out the door and walked leisurely into the yard. Mrs. Matthews and Mary rushed in and soon had Mr. Matthews back to consciousness. He got up and looked out of the window and saw the bear walking quietly over the hill in the direction of the mountain.

Thawing Out a Field.

So much trouble has rarely been taken to prepare athletic grounds for a match as at Cardiff not long ago. The occasion was a football match for the championship of England and Wales. Two hundred braziers or perforated fire buckets were set up on the field, and bonfires were kindled in many parts of it, the flames being kept going until the frost was thawed out of the ground. Then the field was covered with straw to retain the heat, and just before the match began a small army of men cleared and raked the ground.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET.

A Young American Girl's Featworthy Feat in St. Petersburg.

A military punishment once prevalent in Europe consisted in compelling the offender to run between two files of men who stood facing each other, and who were privileged to strike him as he passed. The gauntlets upon the men's hands being bullet-proof, of copper or steel, often made the punishment very severe.

Whenever a girl voluntarily places herself in a position to draw forth unfavorable comment, she may be said to run the gauntlet. Seldom does she escape unscathed.

A few years ago, according to Youth's Companion, an uninitiated American girl, walking in St. Petersburg, wished to pass down a certain street. The gentleman with her objected, saying it would be necessary to pass a certain famous club-house where all the diplomatic corps and young gentlemen spent the morning, and that she would not enjoy their silly and often indecent jests.

"Indecent!" was her reply. "I think I can stand these gentlemen. My sections can bear the light, we will not retreat before the enemy."

"As you like," was the vexed reply. The words were hardly uttered before a party of young men, talking loudly and smoking their cigarettes, came striding out of the club. They parted to let the couple pass, indulging meanwhile in bold staring and comments in a language which happily the girl did not understand.

"I said I would do it," she cried exultingly when the two were alone. "Was it not amusing?"

"It is a form of amusement, mademoiselle, which I confess does not commend itself to my taste," was the stiff reply. And the gentleman, who had assiduously sought her friendship hitherto, dropped her acquaintance from that time.

THE POWER OF WATER.

Constantly Working to One Form or Another to Destroy the Land.

A southern engineer contributes an article on "Geology and the Mississippi Problem" to the Engineering Magazine. In it he says:

"We find in water the only tireless agent that works in the modification of continents; and instead of being the great renovator of the land, as it is popularly conceived, it is the great destroyer. The destruction of ancient Rome has been attributed to time. But it was due simply to the moisture of the atmosphere working through chemical agencies. It was water, invisible, but penetrating even the very stones of the wonderful city, that caused her to crumble into ruins, and gave to modern Rome a grade greatly elevated above her ancient grade. But it works not alone in the cities and towns. There is not a hill on earth that has not been shorn of something of its altitude by this subtle force, and there is not a mountain on earth, if not fitfully renewed by volcanic action, that has not been compelled to lower its peak before this universal leveler of the exalted. It may be a dreadful thought, indeed, but we do not know absolutely that we are not dependent on the earthquake and the volcano for keeping our continental habitat above the level of the ocean; for water not only destroys, but it has the persistency and force to carry off to its burial place in the sea all that it has caused to perish. It may take a long time at its task, but, working either in its gaseous, its liquid or its solid form, it seems to be the most persistent thing on earth, never perishing, and, however divided and invisible at times, always ready to unite its forces for a supreme effort at the degradation of a continent."

RECREATIONS OF GREAT MEN.

Simple Diversions of Minds Stored with Learning.

The favorite recreation of Pope's leisure hours was the society of painters. Nothing was more agreeable to the poet, says Chambers' Journal, than to spend an occasional evening with his friend Kneller, who, to use the words of Thackeray, "bragged more, spelt worse and painted better than any artist of his day." Warburton tells an amusing anecdote of the two friends. Mr. Pope was with Sir Godfrey Kneller one day when his nephew, a Guinea trader, came in. "Nephew," said Sir Godfrey, "you have the honor of seeing the two greatest men in the world."

"I don't know how great you may be," said the Guinea man, "but I don't like your looks. I have often bought a man much better than both of you together, all muscles and bones, for ten guineas."

Sir Joshua Reynolds used to amuse himself in his last days in his house in Leicester square with a little tame bird, which, like the favorite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille, often served to while away a lonely hour. But this proved a fleeting pleasure, for one summer morning the window of the chamber being by accident left open, the little favorite took flight, and was irretrievably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square and neighborhood in the fruitless endeavor to regain it.

Where Marriage Comes High.

A young man laughingly remarked: "Oh, yes, I could afford to get married; that's cheap, but I don't know that I could afford to get unmarried again, for that comes pretty high." That young man ought to live in Spanish Honduras for awhile, and he would not talk so slightly of the expense of getting married. The unfortunate natives have to be twice married before the knot is considered sufficiently tied. The civil marriage is absolutely necessary, as it is the only one the state recognizes. The religious marriage is equally necessary, as it is the only one the church recognizes. Of course this is true in many Catholic countries, but in Honduras there is a fee of twenty dollars to be paid for each ceremony, and the native Honduran is generally miserably poor. Forty dollars looks as big there as four hundred dollars does here, consequently marriage is not very much a la mode in Honduras.

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