

LOCUSTS IN CHINA.

They Are Regarded as a Calamity from Heaven.

The Singular Methods Adopted by the Celestials for Exterminating the Pests - A Queer 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 serious efforts made by the afflicted sections to dispel the scourge, says a Washington correspondent of the St. Louis 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 bamboos 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 in each 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 consular bears 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 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 against an adverse army in the field. Instead of a gun or a lance, however, each soldier is armed with a coarse hempen bag 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 sailors would fill a book and so also would those of soldiers. 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 crack racers of late years, and it will be seen that the mystic seven has entered most largely into their selection. In 1891 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 one. The Typhoon had the lucky seven letters and the lucky oo, and was eminently successful, therefore. It is also lucky to have double consonants in the middle of the name. The Gosssoon, a cutter owned by the Adams boys, won all the races in her class in 1890, and in a previous year those same yachtsmen pulled a word for the sake of gaining the lucky combination, and called a boat the Babboon.

Magnificent Temples.

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, inclosed by rows of columns and statues. The temple of Diana at Ephesus was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty feet wide, and with statues and columns. Of this magnificent temple traces still even

A MUSICAL BEAR.

The Novel Experience of a California Girl.

Her Piano Playing Attracts the Attention of Bears, 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 she 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 soon had 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 bear to jump on her and devour her at his leisure. But instead he turned around, commenced to claw 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 concert 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 flight, and the man thought he must have found a tame 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 it 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 came and mowed the ground.

Reverend Jokers.

In a certain western town, according to Texas Sittings, the clergy of the various religious sects were very tolerant toward each other. On the occasion of the Jewish rabbi's silver wedding, he invited the Protestant clergyman and also the Catholic priest. While the reverend clergymen were enjoying the good cheer set before them, the Catholic priest said to the rabbi: "I know that you are a very liberal-minded gentleman; but could you bring yourself to eat pork?" "Certainly," replied the rabbi, "some ham, at least." "And that would be a nice dinner for you."

Arrangement of the Apartments at Windsor Castle.

The state dining-room at Windsor castle is, according to the Pall Mall Gazette, a very fine apartment in the Prince of Wales' tower. It was redecorated shortly before the jubilee in gold and white, after a very tasteful design chosen by Princess Beatrice. The furniture is of a Gothic pattern, and is said to have been designed by Welby Pugin. The doors are ornamented with most exquisite Chippendale work. In the center of the north window, which looks out on the north terrace, the Home park, and Eton college, is displayed a massive gold punch-bowl, which was designed by Flaxman for the prince regent. The table, which is a very fine piece of work, is made in the form of a trochus shell. The whole cost two thousand guineas. This room was nearly destroyed by fire in 1853, and again by water in 1891. It is only used on grand occasions, when the queen's party is over sixteen. When it is under that number the queen prefers to dine in the oakroom, which looks out on the inner quadrangle, and contains fine pictures of the queen's four daughters-in-law. When the party is too large for the dining-room St. George's hall is used.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S HOME.

Arrangement of the Apartments at Windsor Castle.

Rooms into Which None But Members of the Royal Family Are Permitted to Enter—Rich and Costly Decorations.

The three drawing-rooms are connected with the dining-room, with the corridor, and with each other by folding doors, and all the doors are decorated with the same unique Chippendale work. The three drawing-rooms face the east and look down on the splendid east terrace and gardens over the broad expanse of the Home Park towards Datchet, Old Windsor. The crimson drawing-room is next to the dining-room. It is decorated and upholstered in crimson satin brocade, which, together with the richness of the embellishments and the wealth of gilding with which it is adorned, gives this room a very gorgeous appearance. Superb carvings, the finest ormolu work, and the most exquisitely inlaid cabinets line the wall, and conspicuous places in one of the windows is a large malachite vase, which, like the one in the grand reception-room, was given to the queen by Czar Nicholas, of Russia.

The crimson drawing-room opens into the green, which is similarly decorated, and furnished in the richest satin brocade, but the prevailing color, as might be expected, is green, by which I do not by any means mean eau de Nil, but green of a somewhat crude shade. The principal feature of this room is the magnificent collection of Sevres china, which is said to be the finest in the world. This is another product of the extravagant tastes of George IV., and the sight of the innumerable lovely pieces, delicately molded and colored, is enough to make a collector mad with envy. However, as a rule, collectors have not much time to examine very closely, for it is only on rare occasions, such as a state dinner party or by special favor, that her majesty's subjects are admitted into the green drawing-room.

The white drawing-room is furnished in crimson and gold damask with white walls decorated in an essentially French style. The walls of this room are hung with numerous portraits of the royal family, while a number of exquisitely worked cabinets and a table beautifully inlaid with Florentine mosaic in the form of flowers and fruit are among the principal ornaments. It is in the white drawing-room that the queen holds private investitures of the knightly orders, when a few ministers are summoned from town in order to form a council for the occasion. Luncheon is held first in the dining-room. The queen then proceeds by the corridor to the white drawing-room, while the company pass through the crimson and green rooms to the same destination.

The drawing-rooms were cleaned not long ago and the furniture rearranged, but otherwise they have been left untouched. The hangings and stuffs with which the chairs and sofas are covered might with advantage be altered, for though they are very rich the style is old fashioned, belonging to the early period of her majesty's reign, and shows only too clearly and somewhat plainly to the eye the advances that art has made since then. The queen, however, is very conservative in her tastes, and she likes the old fashions. One of the curiosities of this portion of the private apartments is Mozart's old harpsichord which stands in one of the tall windows which overlook the private garden. It is a quaint, rather shabby-looking instrument with a double set of keys. These fine rooms are all connected by the grand corridor. It is very handsomely decorated, the ceiling in gold and cream and the walls in sage green and gold. It is hung on one side with pictures of the events in this reign from Wilkie's "First Council" to Linton's "Marriage of the Duke of Albany." The other side is lined with portraits of statesmen, including Angell's picture of Lord Beaconsfield. Among the numerous curiosities are some magnificent china, a bust of Gen. Gordon, and his pocket Bible in a glass case.

Reverend Jokers. In a certain western town, according to Texas Sittings, the clergy of the various religious sects were very tolerant toward each other. On the occasion of the Jewish rabbi's silver wedding, he invited the Protestant clergyman and also the Catholic priest. While the reverend clergymen were enjoying the good cheer set before them, the Catholic priest said to the rabbi: "I know that you are a very liberal-minded gentleman; but could you bring yourself to eat pork?" "Certainly," replied the rabbi, "some ham, at least." "And that would be a nice dinner for you."

Indian Freemasonry.

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 today 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 sovereignty or by squawmen privileges. Only full-bloods are eligible to membership, but so jealously is the Katoowah watched 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 older men of the tribe. Then it was all-powerful and exercised full control over all tribal affairs; its mandate once 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 birthright 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 north-bound organization.

Non-Cherokee blood has been tainted can become a member, and it is said that the penalty for disclosing the simplest 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 schools, 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, Indians who have acquired thorough English educations 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 exercises 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.

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.

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SAVINGS BANKS FOR STAMPS.

To Be Introduced into the Boston Public Schools 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 book-keeping is avoided, the child always knows just how much he has, and the local treasurer can tell in the same manner. If a child loses the card, however, he is charged the card, however, he is charged the loss, or, rather, all that he has on that card.

WHALING IN NEW SEAS.

A Prospecting Cruise in the Antarctic Ocean.

New Grounds to Be Sought on Account of the Growing Scarcity of Whales in Our Markets.

The bark Gayhead, of this city, is on her way to the southern sea on an expedition the like of which has not been undertaken since 1811, says the San Francisco Chronicle.

In that year the British man-of-war Challenger was sent on an expedition to the Antarctic to ascertain whether or not there was a field there for the catch of whales, and she returned with an adverse report.

Since that date many thousand vessels have doubled Cape Horn and frequently have been driven many degrees further south than was absolutely necessary to make the trip. Invariably they have reported a number of schools of whales encountered on their voyages.

By reason of these reports the whalers of England and America have felt obliged to doubt the accuracy of the Challenger's report, but in the twenty-two years which have elapsed since then no one has had the daring or enterprise to undertake a personal survey of the waters until the present time.

In October last the Gayhead was started from New Bedford with instructions to spend a couple of years in the Antarctic, where she is to skirt the ice floe as far south as she can possibly reach. She is to fish for whales and see if a new hunting ground cannot be opened to commerce. The Gayhead will extend her voyage over what is called the New Bedford whaling cruise, that ordinarily lasts one year, but that will keep her out about three years this time.

The route calls her to pass St. Helena and skirt Graham's land, from where she will sail for Australian waters and then go north, talking in the Japanese waters, Behring sea and the Arctic ocean. San Francisco will be reached about October, 1891.

The fact of the matter, and the one point that has caused this extended exploration trip of the Gayhead, is that the hunting grounds in the north are giving out very rapidly, and the whalers have virtually ceased fishing in Baffin's bay, Davis strait and in the Spitzbergen whaling ground. The "right" and "bowhead" whales, which are more desirable on account of the bone they produce, are virtually extinct in these waters, and the whaling fleet now push on to Behring sea, Okhotsk sea, and the Arctic proper.

It is a fact that whalebone and ivory are two animal products which art or science have not been able to reproduce. In the good days of plenty whalebone sold at one dollar and a half a pound; its price today is six dollars. That gives a fair idea of how the supply has diminished in the last ten years.

Little is known of the waters south of seventy degrees south as compared to the knowledge had of the waters north of latitude seventy degrees north. Next to nothing is known regarding the Antarctic ocean, and the hope is entertained that the present expedition will develop a new field to replace the old one that is dying out.

At the present time an English and Scotch company is building three vessels at Dun-lee for the purpose of sending them into the Antarctic for whales. It is not unlikely, therefore, that in a few years the whaling fleet that sails out of this port will steer south after leaving the Hawaiian grounds, instead of going north, as they do at present.

Country Gentleman's Surprise.

A story is told of a gentleman in the King's county, England, who died only the other day full of years and honors. When Mr. Mooney of "the Doon" paid his first visit to London very long ago—perhaps in the forties—he found himself with a checkbook, but no cash; and to put an end to the situation he turned into a well known bank, filled up a check, and presented it to the cashier, who told him that he would be delighted to pay it if properly indorsed, or if he were vouched for by one of their clients. This could not be done of hand, and Mr. Mooney, who was quite a personage in his county, representing a fair estate and a good family, asked: "But I'm Mooney of the Doon!" However, the cashier, who in his way was a wit, regretted that he did not know such a gentleman, and that even if he were "Dooney of the Doon" he could not comply with his request.

Out of His Element.

A rather vulgar personage, who had been created a marquis a few months previous to this story, managed to get himself invited to a court ball in Italy. The new-fledged marquis could not contain himself for joy, and exhaled proud satisfaction at every pore. Casting an Olympian glance around the room, he chanced to spy among the ladies the tall, angular figure of an elderly matron, with compressed lips, as though afraid of wasting her breath, and as lean as a lath. She was leaning on the arm of a young gentleman, "Who is that nanny-goat?" said the noble lord to a gentleman who was standing beside him. And the latter replied with a knowing smile: "That nanny-goat is the ambassador of S—, the mother of the kid who is giving her his arm, and the wife of the old back who has the honor of speaking with your excellency."

Prophets in Java.

There is a good deal of profit in the prophet business in Java. A prophet of that island has been paid four hundred dollars a year for the last fifteen years "for not predicting a tidal wave which will sweep clear over the island." But, after all, he can't be very enterprising. With the amount of credulity ready at hand to work upon, he could get one thousand dollars a year just as easily as not.

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