

the girl who, yet too young to marry, is sent to her betrothed husband's home because of her parent's death or extreme poverty. Her mother-in-law resents this most vehemently. Why should she be called upon to feed and clothe for years the unfortunate child? As there is no one to take the girl's part, she is usually over-worked, reviled, beaten, and sometimes half-starved and driven to sleep with the dogs in her new home. If the mother-in-law goes too far, however, resource may be had to a curious mob law, as far as I know only practiced by the women of China.

Not long ago an orphan girl was sent to live with her mother-in-law, who had already one daughter-in-law living with her. The child's betrothed husband was an industrious business man, a good many years older than herself. He was seldom at home, and even when there, as it was not good form for him to take any notice of his little bride before marriage, he knew nothing of how she was treated.

Although the girl was a gentle, modest child, afraid to say or do anything contrary to her mother-in-law's wishes, she was most cruelly treated. When she was thirteen years old she inadvertently did something to offend her mother and sister-in-law, and the two women, working themselves into a fiendish rage, killed her with scissors, cutting her flesh horribly, and slitting her tongue, but leaving no mark upon her face.

When she was dead they carefully dressed her in her best garments, and, according to custom, were obliged to send word of her death to her aunt, her only living relative. This aunt was a desperate character, a beggar woman, who could hope or fear nothing from the magistrates, as she had not enough money to make it worth an official's while to pay any attention to her case. She obeyed the summons at once, and after carefully examining the body of the dead child, returned home, and gathering together thirty or forty women, each armed with an awl or sharp pointed instrument, came to execute vengeance on the murderers. The two women, however, managed to hide themselves, and the infuriated mob were obliged to disperse after being assured by the bridegroom, who was horrified at the dreadful death of his bride, that a grand and costly funeral should be given in her honor.

In another instance within my knowledge, a mother-in-law who had beaten her daughter-in-law to death did not escape so easily. In this case the murderess was caught by the mob of women armed with awls and sharp metal pins; they dragged her out into the street, stripped her of her clothing and pricked and jagged her furiously. Then they dragged her over the stones the whole length of the street two or three times, and finally left her, after pushing

a quantity of briars and small thorns into her flesh. She was carried home by her friends more dead than alive. "No one in that village has dared to kill her daughter-in-law since that time," was the significant conclusion given by the Christian woman telling me the story.

It is frightful to see a woman deliberately "nourishing wrath," as the Chinese express it. The word translated "nourishing" can also be rendered "kindle" as in "kindle a fire," and is most expressive in connection with the working up of anger. It was once my unfortunate experience to see my nurse maid "nourish" or "kindle" wrath. One day, after having a quarrel with the washerman, she sat down in spite of my remonstrances, and deliberately gave way to her evil passions. She drew her breath in with great violence at long and regular intervals, until she became wholly unconscious of her surroundings.

In this state, which lasted about forty hours, she threw herself about violently, and talked deliriously, especially after I had applied the mustard plasters which I had heard were effective in such cases. Although I lean toward homœopathic treatment, on this occasion I made two plasters thick and strong, one foot broad by two feet long, and applied them on her chest and down her back. While I was preparing the plasters my cook told me that the Chinese would call one in this woman's condition "possessed of demons." I am glad to state that by the aid of those mustard plasters, I exorcised the demons, and, better yet, that they have never dared to return to that woman!

She came legitimately by her temper. She often told me of her grandfather, who had a long-wished for and only son born to him late in life. He was so greatly delighted that he went in and out of his wife's room, exclaiming, "Aren't you happy! aren't you happy!" After repeatedly replying in the affirmative, the old lady finally, becoming irritated, answered emphatically, "No, I am not happy." Whereupon the old man "nourished wrath," refused to eat and drink, and died in a few days. Serious illness or death often follows this deliberate giving away to anger.

Women who claim to be possessed of a "fox or a wolf god" are much feared and revered by the Chinese. I once asked an intelligent Christian woman, Su May, whether she had known any women claiming this possession. She answered that she had met with very few, and those all claimed to be possessed of a "fox god." When a pupil in one of our Christian schools, she had been allowed by the matron, who had not yet given up all her heathen superstitions, to witness the attempted healing of a very sick child by a woman possessed of a "fox god."