

French Mother-in-Law is a Diplomat

Why, asks a writer in The London Daily Mail, is the mother-in-law a failure in England and a success in France?

"The English attitude toward her," she writes, "is aptly expressed in the hideous appellation 'mother-in-law'! Who could love a mother with the legal reminder tucked on? How much more gracious is the courtly French designation 'Belle Mere'!"

"Of course, they have the mother-in-law joke in France, but it is without meaning, and in most cases without meaning, for Belle Mere is, far more often than not, an unmitigated success and a most welcome addition to the household. In France it is rare for the wife's mother to keep a separate establishment. Think of the expense—and how much better to share in the home and motor car! Thus the young men can afford a larger house and indulge in luxuries that might otherwise be beyond their grasp."

"But Belle Mere's benevolences do not stop here. The housekeeper passes into her experienced hands and she sees to it that during the first critical months of married life the young wife shall be free to go out with her husband and join in his pleasures and amusements."

"Later, too, when babies arrive, Belle Mere establishes herself as nurse in chief. It is she who accompanies the children to the park or plays with them untiringly throughout a rainy day."

"What would you?" she says. "My daughter must occupy herself with her husband. Otherwise . . ."

"Yet there is nothing in all this that

French mother-in-laws would not gladly do. Why, then, must English mothers and married daughters live right apart? Even a visit from mother-in-law to a young menage is too apt to result in tears.

"The reason is not far to seek. It lies in tact and tactics."

"Upon the moment her child is married the French mother disciplines herself to what she considers a sacred duty. It is to idolize her son or daughter-in-law."

"The wife's mother and husband speedily become fast friends. He consults her in all his difficulties. She even advises him in his business affairs."

"Similarly if it is the husband's mother who shares the house, she sets a halo upon the wife. True, Belle Mere does the housekeeping, sees to the cooking, helps with the sewing. But the glory of it all she ascribes to the young wife."

"How different is the method of the British mother-in-law!"

"My darling," she whispers, as soon as she enters her son-in-law's house, tell me, are you happy? Is he all you thought him to be kind to you?"

"Add Belle Mere?"

"My little," she exclaims, "that young man is adorable and he worships you. But what have you got for his dinner?"

"In the quarrels of everyday life Belle Mere invariably supports her son-in-law. But, strange to say, both mother and husband are frequently on over to the daughter's viewpoint. Oh, how wise and how truly kind is Belle Mere!"

THE GREAT FAMINE IN NORTH CHINA

THE RESULT OF FLOOD AND OF DROUGHT.

Five Provinces, Chihli, Shantung, Honan, Shensi and Shansi, Swept by Scourge.

In China ten persons are dying every minute from starvation. This means that six hundred people pass away each hour and fifteen thousand perish between sunrise and sunset. Forty-five millions are directly affected and one-third of this number are actually starving and will succumb before spring. Such is the appalling situation today in the land of the yellow man in what is rapidly becoming the most stupendous misfortune of all history.

The world's ear has long been attuned to the piteous plea for help. Until the great Chinese famine developed, most of the appeals for aid have come from the innocent victims of war. The tragedy there was man-made. The Far Eastern calamity which now implores the assistance of western civilization is the result of flood and drought. Man had no part in seeing this whirlwind of death and suffering. The elements are solely responsible.

Eighty-five Millions Affected.

Clearly to understand the dreadful Chinese dilemma you must know first of all that in the northeastern corner of the oriental republic are the provinces of Chihli, Shantung, Honan, Shensi and Shansi, five of the most populous districts of a much-populated country. Under normal conditions eighty-five million people live here, and they comprise more than one-fourth of the entire human population of China. Ninety per cent are farmers, whose principal crops have been wheat, millet, corn and beans. So densely settled is this region that the crops, large as they are in ordinary times, are barely sufficient to feed the inhabitants. And decrease in productivity, therefore, automatically works a hardship because in this particular section of China transportation facilities are hopelessly inadequate.

The people of these five provinces are simple, frugal and thrifty folk. They usually harvest two crops a year. In 1916 the output was only fair and there began the series of circumstances which have now engulfed them in sorrow and suffering. Before the autumn harvest was well under way, the land was inundated by a flood which wiped out entire towns and villages, ravaged the countryside and caused a loss of \$100,000,000.

The Chinese man is by temperament a stoic, and the farmers began to rebuild their shattered fortunes. Ill-luck dogged them, because the crops of 1917 and 1918 were reduced. Still they persisted and again sowed the fields in 1919. Both crops that year, as well as the following year, were complete failures. The net result is that the advent of the present winter found eighty-five millions of people virtually stripped of sustenance and without resource of any kind. What little grain had been husbanded was soon wiped out. When hundreds of thousands sought to escape to other provinces and take up the burden of life anew, they were met by cordons of police at the frontiers and forbidden to enter. Forced back to their own desolate firesides they had to make the most out of nothing.

Greatest Calamity in History.

Other calamities pale before this colossal visitation. The world war cost approximately 17,500,000 lives. The black death in England in 1348 and 1349 caused 2,000,000 deaths. The Irish famine of 1846 killed 1,000,000, and the Indian famine of 1866 took toll of 1,450,000. The Chinese famine of 1917 and 1918 has killed 1,000,000, and the Indian famine of 1866 took toll of 1,450,000. The Chinese famine of 1917 and 1918 has killed 1,000,000, and the Indian famine of 1866 took toll of 1,450,000. The Chinese famine of 1917 and 1918 has killed 1,000,000, and the Indian famine of 1866 took toll of 1,450,000.

The whole pain-ridden narrative of human suffering contains no more poignant revelations than are disclosed in China today. Here are some specimen chapters of tragedy culled from the larger story of a nation in distress:

A missionary encountered a woman weeping on the banks of a river. When he asked her the cause of her grief she replied:

"I have thrown my baby into the waters rather than have him die of starvation in my arms as two of my other little ones did."

"Along the highways in the devastated area it is no uncommon sight to behold girls tied to trees by their parents and left to starve. This shows that the pangs of hunger have driven many thousands of men and women insane. With this maddening hunger has been born a desperation that forces parents to every terrible extreme."

To visit the famine field is to touch grief and encounter sacrifice. Life is literally eeked out. In Honan a representative of the Associated Press found a family lying exhausted by the roadside. When he asked them how they had subsisted they told him that they ate chaff and that three-fourths of a pound of this had to suffice for six persons for a day. In a village nearby a population of 2,000 people had dwindled to 200.

A family of five plodded northward

—and the worst is yet to come



On the public road in the Shensi province until the mother's strength failed. Their funds were exhausted and they had to have food. The eldest child, a girl, was sold at the first village for ten dollars. Before the day ended the mother dropped again; she was unable to carry her newly born baby any further, and it was thrown into a convenient well. Three days later this entire family had been wiped out. It is a common occurrence.

The First Tag Day.

Montem, a curious custom long ago allowed to lapse, used to be an institution at the great public school of Eton, in England. In his reminiscences, Mr. Montagu Williams gives us a description of it.

Montem took place once every three years. It was originally founded for the benefit of any college student who in his last year attained the highest place in the school, but who, by reason of no vacancy occurring in time, had not the luck to be sent up to King's College, Cambridge. All the money that was taken, under the peculiar name of "salt," passed into his pockets on the day that he left, and was supposed to go a long way toward paying his expenses at either Oxford or Cambridge. The amount collected was something on the order of even twelve hundred pounds.

There was a certain number of sixth-form, or upper division, boys, who wore fancy dresses and acted as salt bearers. They carried large sliken bags into which they put the money collected from visitors and passers-by. The donors received in return for their contributions little pieces of blue paper on which was inscribed the motto for the montem of that particular year. The motto for the last montem was *pro me et monie*.

Royalty itself was not free from the tax. Two salt bearers were stationed at Windsor Bridge, and when the queen drove down the hill—and she never missed a montem—the elder of the two stepped forward, stopped the carriage and, taking off his hat with the words, "Salt, Your Majesty, salt," placed under contribution the highest and noblest lady of the land.

X-Ray Aids Customs Officials.

It is hard to see how we managed to get along without the X-ray. Nowadays it finds so many employments, most of them very necessary. Surgeons use the X-ray to examine fractures of bones; dentists, to discover hidden abscesses at the roots of teeth, etc.

The newest use for the mysterious ray, however, is to detect dodgers of smugglers. Packages are examined for contraband without disturbing the wrappings; cakes of soap in which diamonds may be concealed are similarly inspected, and the customs officers do not hesitate to go so far as to radiograph the shoes a woman has on her feet. She is not even obliged to take them off. There may be a ring hidden in the heel of a neat boot, or in the sole.

During the war the X-ray was used to detect contraband in bales of cotton and other material shipped to Europe. It did the work so well that many manufacturers and shippers make a business of "shadowgraphing" articles in search of flaws.

One of the most remarkable new uses for the X-ray is to detect the presence of valuable pearls in mussels and pearl oysters. This is already done commercially in Ceylon. Oysters which are thereby proved not to contain pearls are restored to the beds, thus avoiding their needless destruction.

Tree Seeds for Great Britain.

In response to requests from forestry authorities in the United Kingdom tree seeds were collected in British Columbia by officers of the Dominion Forestry Branch. These were forwarded to the Forestry Commissioners for Great Britain to be used in the carrying out of reforestation plans under way in the United Kingdom. The seeds included those of Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, alpine fir, and of other species which the British authorities desire to test—Annual Report, Director of Forestry, Ottawa.

The Pacific coast of Costa Rica produces a species of shellfish from which a rich purple dye for silk is obtained.

Matching Wits With a Grizzly.

The cunning of an old bear that Mr. Enos A. Mills tells about in his book *The Grizzly*, shows what a wily antagonist you will have against you if you ever try to match wits with old sphraim.

After passing an hour or more without seeing the bear, says Mr. Mills, who was following a grizzly to study his behavior, I climbed a cliff, hoping to get a glimpse of him on some ridge ahead. I could see his line of tracks crossing a low ridge beyond and felt that he might still be an hour or so in the lead. But in descending the cliff I chanced to look back along my trail. Just at that moment the bear came out of the woods behind me. He was trailing me!

I do not know how he discovered that I was following him. He may have seen me or scented me. At any rate, instead of coming directly back and thus exposing himself, he had very nearly carried out his well-planned surprise when I discovered him. I found out afterwards that, leaving his trail far ahead of me, he had turned and walked back in his own footprints for a distance. After tramping this stretch a number of times he had leaped into scrubby timber and made off on the side where his tracks did not show.

After discovering him on my trail I went slowly along as if unaware of his presence. He followed within three hundred feet of me. When I stopped he stopped. He occasionally watched me from behind bushes, a tree or a boulder.

I concluded to turn the tables on him. After crossing a ridge where I was for the moment out of his sight, I turned to the right and ran for nearly a mile. Then, circling back into our old trail behind the bear, I traveled serenely along, imagining that he was far ahead. I was suddenly startled to see his shadow move from behind a boulder near the trail, only three hundred feet ahead of me! At the place where I had left the trail to circle behind him he had stopped and apparently guessed my movement, for, turning in his tracks, he had come a short distance back on the trail and lain down behind the boulder to wait for me.

I went on a few steps after discovering him, and he moved to keep out of sight. I edged toward a tall spruce, which I planned to climb if he charged. Pausing by the spruce, I could see his silver-gray fur as he peered at me from behind the boulder. I concluded finally that it was best not to follow him farther. Going a short distance down among the trees, I built a rousing fire. Between it and the cliff I spent the night, satisfied that I had had adventure enough for one outing.

Music Hath Charms.

Do animals like music? The effect of it on various wild creatures was recently studied at the London Zoological Gardens. For most of the tests a violinist supplied the music.

Whether tarantulas listened or did not listen could not be determined; they remained unmoved and sulky. Not so the scorpions; after a few notes, they became agitated and writhed and danced tumultuously; their excitement increased with every crescendo and decreased with every diminuendo.

In the reptile cages the effect was more marked. The monster lizard listened and swayed; the black snakes were attentive and started up and hissed. A boa crept as close as possible to the instrument and seemed enraptured. Of all the snakes the cobra is said to be the most susceptible to music; the specimen at the Zoo did not belie the reputation of its kind. On hearing the violin it raised itself on its tail in the traditional attitude, spread its hood and swayed to and fro.

The polar bear stood up at the front of its cage to listen and showed much pleasure. The wolves snarled and cowered in fear, with their tails between their legs. Their bodies quivered with fright. The foxes and jackals acted in the same way.

The elephant did not care for the music; on the contrary it trumpeted and snorted with rage. Some of the monkeys listened eagerly, with nods and gestures of appreciation; others scowled and turned away in disgust.

After the violinist, players on the piccolo and the flute performed. As a rule, the shrill notes of the piccolo annoyed, frightened or enraged the animals, whereas the softer tones of the flute soothed and pleased them.

Motoring on a Wall.

The first motor vehicle introduced into West China has caused a great sensation.

A missionary residing in Szechuan, returning from a holiday, took back with him a motor-cycle, the gift of some friends in America. It is the first thing on wheels seen west of Hankow, and the owner spends most of his time demonstrating its powers to schools and civic bodies in the provincial capital.

This motor-cycle has given its owner more publicity than all the missionary work he has done in the city. There is a certain amount of thrill in navigating the first motor-cycle through the narrow streets of a Chinese city, and up to the present the only comfortable place for driving has been found to be the top of the city wall!

Your body contains as much phosphorus as 5,000 boxes of matches.

STEADY PROGRESS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

POSSESSES GREAT POSSIBILITIES.

Largest Iron Ore Deposit in World—Farms, Live Stock, Pulpwood and Coal.

The island of Newfoundland is essentially a fishing country, and revenue from this source so far outstrips returns from other products that the latter are cast into shadow. The island fisheries are worth more than two millions annually. The most important fish from the point of output and revenue is the cod. Nearly 1,000 men and 50 large vessels are engaged in the bank cod fishery, and 39,680 men and 15,120 small vessels in the shore cod fishery. The sea further swells the island's revenue with its returns of lobster, whale and seal.

Great Agricultural Possibilities.

Nevertheless, the island possesses great agricultural possibilities, which the government is endeavoring to further encourage and develop, and almost supplies its own needs in farm and dairy products, the amount of imports, excluding four grains, being only fifteen per cent. The yearly agricultural production is worth upwards of \$3,000,000, and the island possesses 13,288 horses, 40,427 cattle, 100,447 sheep, and 27,575 hogs at the last census. Its population was nearly 250,000 in 1911, according to the Government Year Book of 1920.

The island has also the largest iron ore deposit in the world, the total scattered resources of the island being estimated at \$600 million tons. Most of the raw material utilized by the Dominion Steel and Nova Scotia Steel Corporation is drawn from this source. There are also valuable coal deposits which have been mined for some time, and are now being extended. The government is taking the unique step of entering itself into the mining industry and engaging in mining and marketing coal. There are valuable pine forests in the north of the island, and a sawmill industry has been built up and is continually active.

Government Establishing Stock Farm.

With the intention of improving the animal husbandry of the island, a government stock farm is being established near the city of St. John's. The Minister of Agriculture visited the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto last summer, and personally selected pure bred horses, cattle and sheep which were shipped through to St. John's.

Important development of the great pulpwood resources of Newfoundland is being undertaken under two grants recently issued, one to a British and the other to a Norwegian company. The Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, some years ago, purchased timber limits and have had a pulp mill in operation. This concern has, for some time, been supplying the Northcliffe papers in England with paper.

A New Kind of Fit.

Stodious and bookish men are proverbially careless about dress. Probably no such man ever carried his indifference to clothes to the point to which Mr. Poland, Q.C., long prosecuting counsel to the British treasury, carried it.

Mr. Montagu Williams, in his amusing *Leaves from a Life*, says that Mr. Poland had a mind far above dress, but that his family had not, and that times out of number his sister took him to task about his badly-fitting clothes and begged him to go to a good tailor. In any difficulty Miss Poland was in the habit of seeking the advice of her brother-in-law, Mr. Underdown, Q.C. The interview that Miss Poland had with Mr. Underdown with regard to her brother's attire was a serious one, and it resulted in Underdown promising to visit Poland at his chambers. The visit was duly paid, and Underdown succeeded in persuading Mr. Poland to order a completely new outfit.

In due time the new clothes were sent home. Very soon Underdown was again summoned by his sister-in-law to a private consultation. She was in terrible distress and told him that, though the quality of the new clothes was excellent, they fitted her brother worse than the old ones. Underdown went at once to the tailor, who was one of the best in London, and asked why the clothes fitted so abominably.

"It is not my fault, sir, I assure you," the tailor replied. "Every eye was taken, but how could we fit a gentleman who insisted upon being measured sitting down?"

Underdown did not know what to make of the complaint and went at once to the Temple to get an explanation from Poland. With the imperturbable manner peculiar to him, Poland enlightened him. "Well, it's my business and not yours," he said. "I like to be comfortable. I spend three parts of my life sitting down, and I prefer to be measured so."

Gets More Light.

The discovery by a London scientist that oxidizing the surface of glass lessens its reflecting power has led to the invention of lenses which transmit more light than normally.

When the King Opens Parliament.

There are a pair of gates in London that are kept permanently shut to conveyances every day of the year except one. These gates lead out of Dean's Yard, Westminster, into a lane that runs straight down to the House of Lords. They are only opened on the day on which His Majesty the King opens Parliament in person.

On that day His Majesty proceeds from Buckingham Palace in a wonderful old coach, drawn by jet-black horses. Whilst the King is on his way Yeomen of the Guard still search the vaults under the Houses of Parliament, to ensure the safety of the monarch and his Ministers.

When the Sovereign reaches the House of Lords, the gates are fired in St. James' Park. The moment of arrival is signalled by hand. Flag-signallers stand on the towers of the Houses of Parliament, and send their messages to other signallers on Government offices overlooking the park. From thence it is conveyed to the troops below.

Ministers await the arrival of the King outside the House, and then take up their position in the procession to the Lords. Usually a large number of peers attend as well.

Everybody stands, and it is "hats off" for the Black Rod when he passes down the central corridor on his way to summons the Commons, who enter a few minutes later at a rapid march—their pace is always quick—to hear the King's speech.

The King's speech is prepared by the Cabinet, and deals with the international situation, and reviews the legislation it is intended to introduce during the next Parliamentary year.

Sunday School Founder Got Idea from Shepherd.

Robert Raikes, of Gloucester, is acknowledged as the founder of the Sunday School, says the London Daily News, but nothing is heard of Emmanuel Twynning, the shepherd of Magpie Bottom, Sheepcombe, Gloucestershire, from whom Raikes got his idea.

"Magpie Bottom is a beautiful crinkle at the edge of Sheepcombe, where the lane departs down the valley, at last reaching Gloucester, eight miles away," the writer says. "I don't know where marjoram grows so well as along the dry banks of the lane by Magpie Bottom; and the common-like field just over the wall is in summer almost one mass of thyme."

"From Gloucester to Sheepcombe is a good deal more than the Sabbath journey that was no doubt deemed correct in the time of Robert Raikes; and the young man must have been up here to take a service. At any rate, as he went by Magpie Bottom there was shepherd Emmanuel Twynning in that thyme-scented little paradise, with a ring of children round him, explaining perhaps the pastoral parables of the New Testament."

"Master Bob Raikes stopped, perhaps joined in a hymn and talked to the shepherd, asking him how he went on when the weather was not so favorable. He was told that on wet days some handy cottage sheltered the chae, and that, come wet or fine, there was a class every Sunday."

"During the walk back to Gloucester the thought took root and, without the thyme and the marjoram and the inconsequent chirruping of grasshoppers, Robert took up his shepherding in the dark streets of the cathedral city."

There are still plenty of Twynnings in Gloucestershire, though at Sheepcombe there are at present none.

There were 426 Canadian chaplains on active service during the war; 108 gained awards, 21 were wounded, and 6 died.

Dangers of Dry Air in Homes.

The air of our houses in the winter time is drier than that of any desert.

This is not good for folk, one disadvantage of it being that the mucous membrane which lines the nose passages and throat is kept too dry, and liability to colds is increased.

To remedy the trouble resort is had to various expedients, such as keeping a supply of water in receptacles attached to the furnace, in order that it may moisten the air by its evaporation. This helps, though inadequate for the purpose.

There is no such thing as absolutely dry air in nature. Always it contains more or less water, though a quantity of it may be rendered entirely water-free in the laboratory.

The percentage of water that air can hold in suspension depends upon the temperature of the latter. In air at 70 degrees Fahrenheit there may be as much as eight grains of water to the cubic foot, but no more. It is then "saturated." This means that sixty cubic feet of air would be required to hold one pound of water.

But air at 10 degrees will hold in suspension a little more than twenty-six grains of water.

On the other hand, air at a temperature 30 degrees below zero can hold less than one-fifth of a grain of water.

A glass of ice water in a warm room rapidly accumulates moisture on its outside. This is because the air immediately surrounding the glass is cooled and thereby rendered unable to hold its water, which condenses upon the surface of the glass.

The clouds in the sky are composed of tiny globules of water. Formerly it was supposed they were hollow like soap bubbles; else, it was argued, how could they float?

The "Phrenology" Humbug.

There has recently been a marked revival of the "phrenology" humbug, and charlatans are coming money by examining people's "bumps" and drawing therefrom analytical conclusions in regard to their talents and traits of character.

The clever fakers in this line specialize in the alleged study of physiognomy as indicative of psychic traits, etc. This sort of thing "goes" wonderfully well, inasmuch as the average person is most interested in his own face and in what it may be supposed to express.

Physical anthropologists, however, are firm in asserting that there is nothing whatever in the idea. There is no essential relation between the features of a human individual and his character—beyond, of course, the fact that disposition and temperament may and commonly do so modify the muscular structure, especially about the mouth, as to render the expression indicative. Thus, for example, a sour temper or a crafty habit of mind will show itself in a person's face more and more as he grows older.

A prominent chin does not necessarily signify firmness of character; nor, when exaggerated, does it mean brutality. Story-writers nowadays teach us that eyes set "too close together" indicate slyness and meanness. There is no more truth in that idea than in the notion that a big nose suggests generosity.

Where beauty of feature is concerned one might say that it depends fundamentally upon the shape of the skull mask. A woman's skull is more lightly constructed than that of a man, and even the texture of its bones is more delicate.

A "duck of a man" often makes a goose of a husband.

When a sewing machine will not work, stand it near a fire so that the oil may melt, and then remove and clean with pure paraffin, putting it into every oil hole. Work the machine well, and then wipe every part with a clean cloth.