

illustration of the great difference between their customs and ours from their point of view. The following are a few illustrations of the very wide difference between their customs and ours. The customs enumerated while on the whole general throughout China are more particularly true of Central China.

In reading a book the Chinese reader begins at what would be the back to us and reads toward the front. Beginning at the upper right-hand corner of the page he reads downward instead of across from left hand to right. To a foreigner this new motion of the muscles of the eyes is very trying at first and results in frequent aching of eyes and head.

In recitation at school a Chinese boy turns his back instead of his face toward the teacher. This is called backing the book. It is done as loudly and rapidly as possible, while the pupil rocks himself back and forth from left to right, keeping time. Usually the other pupils are studying their lessons at the same time, and in the same way in their seats. The regulation way of reading is a sort of chant, while the women make a disgusting noise as they suck in their breath while reading.

In most parts of China quarrels seldom end in murder. Murder is usually the work of robbers. But suicide is very, very common. In the earlier years of our work doctor and evangelist alike were out at all hours to administer emetics, etc., to would-be-suicides of opium. Suicide is usually the refuge of the weaker in a quarrel. Instead of killing one's opponent a Chinese usually kills himself or herself. This is their method of revenge. It puts the other party in the wrong, and beside, the spirit of the suicide will haunt the house or person of the other party. A dead Chinaman is more powerful and more to be feared than a live one. Suicide with the Chinese is not usually "to end the heartache," but to be revenged on an oppressor or opponent. It is, if possible, committed on the opponent's doorstep, in his house or yard. His spirit will thus more assuredly haunt that house. It is the common resort of oppressed daughters-in-law.

In order to prevent such a tragical ending to a quarrel, there often steps in a peace-maker. This is a most difficult position to fill and one of great merit. One can well understand, after having witnessed a Chinese quarrel, the appropriateness of the Beatitude, "Blessed are the peace-makers." The peace-makers and his kindsmen, the middleman, are two of the commonest and most useful functionaries in China. It is largely to prevent such unseemly quarrels that a middleman is employed. When a person wishes to buy a piece of land, rent a house, hire a servant, or marry a wife,

he never goes directly to the owner or person directly concerned, but always employs a go-between, or middleman, who settles all details and to whom resort can be had if there is any fault to be had and who receives a fee proportionate to the responsibility he bears.

When a Chinaman meets his friend, instead of clasping and shaking his friend's hand, he clasps and shakes his own.

His heart is directly in the centre of his breast, at least so he thinks. If it is to the one side or the other there is something wrong with him morally or physically.

The place of honor is always on the left-hand side of the host, and etiquette demands that the guest make a strong protest against taking such a seat of honor.

Honors revert to one's ancestors instead of one's descendants, i.e., it flows up stream. These ancestors, father, grandfather, or great-grandfather, may be, usually are, long since dead, but they receive the honor nevertheless. The descendant has to work for his honors. There is, therefore, no such thing as an hereditary aristocracy in China.

A Chinese woman, when sewing, passes her needle from the cloth on her left-hand side through toward her right. Though done with the right hand it is a left-handed, backward movement.

With them the needle of the compass points toward the south instead of the north. It is called "the pointing-toward-the-south-needle." The south, therefore, is the important direction.

If asked the direction toward a certain place a Chinaman will seldom take the trouble to lift his hand and point, but will stick his lips out in the desired direction. In beckoning he turns the palm of the hand downward and bends all the fingers.

Chinese rules of etiquette enjoin that a man should keep his hat on when making a call, or receiving a caller, or when attending at worship. It is not considered a shame either that men should have long hair. It is contrary, too, to their ideas of filial piety that a man should "leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife."

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Poetry.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE NOT SEEN, AND
YET HAVE BELIEVED."

(From the German.)

We saw Thee not, when Thou didst tread,
O Saviour, this our sinful earth;
Nor heard Thy voice restore the dead,
And waken them to second birth;