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Chinese Reverence for the Dead.

We ran across an interesting book the other day entitled 'The Real Chinaman,' by Chester Holcombe, for many years interpreter, secretary of legation, and acting minister of the United States at Peking. It contains so many interesting facts and presents them in such a practical, entertaining way that we have pored long over its pages. Its pictures of Chinese home life and burial customs are so vivid and instructive that we cannot resist the temptation to note a few. We were not aware that Chinese home life calls into requisition to such an extent as it does all the working ability of every member. The family property is held largely in common, and divisions of it are made only when the male head dies. All members of the family, old and young, male and female, take part in the labor. If it is a

life of ancestors as shown in the worship of tablets and in the burning of joss paper, which costs millions of dollars in China every year, is certain proof that the Chinese believe in the continued existence of the soul after death. They are disturbed by the fear that should their bodies not receive the benefit of burial in the ancestral ground their spirits may be doomed to perpetual exile among strangers and amid cold, hunger and desolation. The ancestral tablet is found in every Chinese home, and obeisance before it is made daily. It is nothing but a strip of wood a few inches long set into a wooden base. The top of the strip is carved to represent a human face, and bearing an inscription to show its purpose. The more formal sacrifice which occurs twice a year at the tombs is more elaborate and expensive. The grave mounds are cleared of grass and weeds. A table is spread. Offerings are laid upon it for the comfort of the spirits. Fire-

ance. He was kind, open-hearted, and honest—a converted, God-fearing man,—making the most of the few religious privileges he enjoyed. Rarely could a minister of the Gospel set foot on this far-off rocky island during the oft-recurring gales of winter.

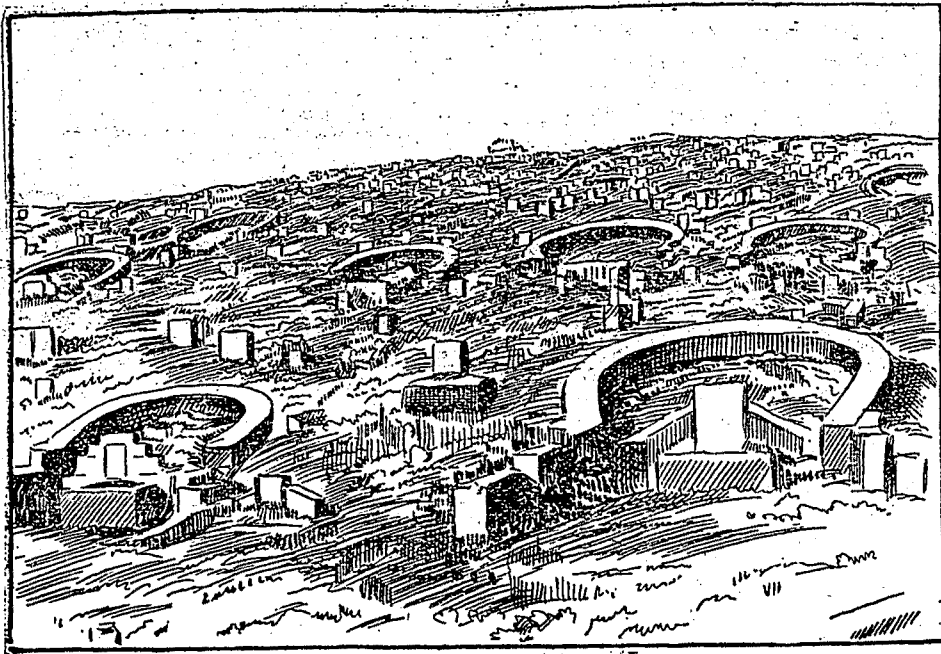
Archy himself fearlessly crossed the channel to the kirk at Portree; but he was unwilling to expose his wife to the fierce wind and rain, or driving sleet, which she would often have to encounter. Still, whenever the weather was even tolerably favorable Archy's little craft, with his good wife on board, might be seen coming out of the harbor by early dawn on the Sabbath, bound for the capital of the 'big island,' as Skye was designated by them. To them the small town of Portree was a large city; the island of Skye, compared to Raasay, an important country.

Archy not only traded to Portree, but to many other places along the coast of the mainland, and to the numerous islands which stud those seas. Sometimes, when waiting for a cargo, or detained by a foul wind, he was absent from home for several days together. When Margaret expected his return at night, it was her custom to put a lamp in the window, which looked down the loch, so that, however dark the night, her husband might have little difficulty in making the mouth of the harbor.

'Tare thee well, wife,' said Archy one day, as he was about to step into the boat to pull out to his little vessel which lay with her sails loosed in the centre of the loch. 'Maybe I'll be back to-morrow, or maybe I shall be longer, but you'll be on the look-out for me, my good wife, whenever I come.'

Margaret promised, and intended to keep her promise. She fancied that Archy would return the following night, and placed the lamp in the window; but he did not make his appearance. On looking into her oil-can in the morning she found that her stock of oil was exhausted. On endeavoring to procure more oil, not a drop was to be found on the island. Before night arrived, the wind got up, and it blew a fierce hurricane. Archy will surely remain snug in the harbor to-night, so there would be no use keeping the lamp burning, even if I had the oil,' she said to herself. The wind lulled a little during the day, but the following night the gale blew as furiously as ever. 'He'll surely not come to-night,' again said Margaret, though her heart misgave her, and, conscience-stricken, she felt very sad, till at length, overcome with the fatigue of her household toils, she fell asleep. From this sleep she was awakened by the fury of the storm, and, getting up, she lighted all the candles she could collect, and placed them close to the window. They flared wildly with the wind, and some of them were blown out, and the fast-returning day showed that they were useless. The day wore on. 'There is something floating in the loch, mistress!' exclaimed Jenny, the servant-girl. Margaret looked out. It was the mast or spar of some vessel. Two of the men were despatched down the side of the loch to ascertain if there were other pieces of wreck. Margaret stood on the shore watching the spar as it drifted slowly on.

Her heart sank within her. She felt that she had not been attending to her duty—



A CHINESE GRAVE HILL.

farm, all go to the fields together at day-break and spend the day at work. Women work like men. Mr. Holcombe says that he once saw a Chinese farmer holding a plough which was drawn by a cow, a donkey, and his wife, the three harnessed and pulling together as a common team.

Some months ago Rev. J. H. Worley sent an ancestral tablet and some photographs representing a Chinese cemetery. One of these photographs we have had engraved. It represents a section of a grave hill showing horse-shoe graves and the rest house, where coffins are kept till 'lucky day' and places are found. Thousands of acres around Foo Chow are occupied by these burial places. It is the dream of the Chinese life, no matter how far one may roam from the native haunts, to be carried back, dead or alive, to the solemn ancestral ground where the spirit may receive worship from the on-coming generations of descendants. The Chinese often provide themselves with coffins years in advance of death, and often pay visits to the spots where the coffins are stored to see that their coffins are safe and in good order. This carefulness as to a future resting place, and the sacred regard for the spirit-

crackers are discharged, and the gilt joss money is burned in large quantities. After spirits have appropriated as much of the offering as it is supposed they can, the persons making the offering appropriate all that is left. The extent of the sacrifices in these solemn burial hills is limited only by the ability of these poor, deluded pagans to indulge in the useless and foolish custom.—'Christian Advocate.'

Let Your Light Shine.

Between the island of Skye and the mainland is the isle of Raasay, to the north of which is the 'small islet' of Rona, on which stand a single farmhouse and a few laborers' huts. A widow, who rents the island, lived there, and had done so for many years past. Her husband had been a seaman as well as a farmer. He owned a small vessel, in which he made constant trips to Skye or to the mainland, to sell the produce of his farm. No happier couple could be found than Archibald Macfarlane and his wife. Archibald was a good specimen of a western islander—tall, strong-limbed, though spare in flesh, and with a remarkably intelligent counten-