

PLEASANT KNOWERS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.



CHINESE SERVANT BEARING PIPE AND RICE BOWL WITH CHOPSTICKS.

THE CHINESE QUEUE.

BY CHESTER HOLCOMBE.

One of the most marked and striking points of difference between the Oriental and Western races is found in the hair. The hair of Eastern people is always coarse, straight and a true jet black. That of the people of Europe and America is softer, silkier, and of such variety of colouring that a pure black head of hair is a rare exception. In many years of residence in the East I have never seen upon the head of a pure-blooded Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, Malay, or Indian, any other shade of hair than jet black, excepting, of course, those heads on which age has bleached the covering to gray or white.

Another and equally marked point of difference is found in the growth of hair upon the face. No amount of cultivation ever yet enabled an Asiatic to grow more than the most scanty beard or moustache.

At the most, one may see a Chinese or native of Japan with a few straggling hairs upon his chin or upper lip, or what is more common, three or four long hairs growing from a mole on cheek or chin, and these three or four hairs are combed, fingered, and cultivated with the utmost pride and care, as precious, though scanty, signs of manhood.

The queue is not only the badge or mark of a Chinese; it is the sign of Chinese manhood. In infancy and childhood the head is either clean-shaven and kept as smooth and shining as a billiard-

ball, or patches of hair are left to grow in circles helter-skelter upon its surface, and from each sticks up a little tuft of braid, as though the blood, in its excess of vitality, was sending out the sprouts of half a dozen queues.

It is only when the boy reaches the age of thirteen or fourteen years that these "baby queues" are shaved off, and he is formally invested with the sober queue of manhood.

But the queue, although the badge of a Chinese man, is not Chinese. It is a foreign importation, and, compared with other things in China, is a modern and recent fashion. It is Tartar, or Mongolian, and was brought into the empire only about three hundred years ago by the present rulers, who themselves are foreigners.

Prior to that time the Chinese did not shave the head, but dressed the hair much as we do ours. But when the country was conquered by its present rulers, a decree was issued that all good subjects of the new Emperor should shave the head and wear a queue. This immediately aroused an intense excitement and bitter opposition throughout the whole empire.

To wear a queue was regarded as degrading and as a mark of slavery to a foreign tyrant. Mobs and riots occurred, and for a long time there was much trouble, and it seemed doubtful if the new fashion could be enforced.

But the Tartar Emperor met the difficulty with that shrewdness and tact which has made his name historical in China as the ablest and wisest of all her rulers, ancient or modern.

He issued a further decree, in which he forbade persons convicted of serious crimes to wear the queue, and in which he required his officers to cut off the queues of all such persons and not to allow them to shave their heads.

Thus he made the queue a mark of respectability, and his new subjects were soon as anxious to adopt it as they had been determined in their opposition. To this day in China and among the Chinese a full head of hair and the absence of a queue is the badge of a criminal.

This will explain to you the reason for the intense opposition among the Chinese in this country to any interference with their right to wear the queue.

The queue has now become an object of almost superstitious reverence among the Chinese. It is combed and dressed with the greatest care, enlarged and lengthened with horse hair or silk, wound about the head at times, and covered to keep it from the dust. In fact, it is generally treated as an object of dignity and honour.

The Chinese boy longs for it, as the Canadian boy does for trousers with pockets in them. To pull it is an insult, and to cut it off is a grave crime severely punished by law.

Mandarin is the name given by foreigners to Government officers in China. The Emperor is at the head, and among the numerous titles by which he is addressed are these: The August Lofty One; The Celestial Sovereign; The Son of Heaven.

Underneath the Emperor are nine ranks of officials who are chosen from among those who have passed successful examinations. These various classes of officers are known by the colour of the buttons they wear, some of the buttons being of ruby and coral and sapphire. Officers of the third rank wear also a one-eyed peacock feather. One of the pictures given on this page represents a man-

darin in full dress, and very pompous he looks. As a class, they are intelligent and shrewd, but they are often very corrupt and extortionate, using their power for selfish ends. Some of them, however, have accepted the Gospel and become true Christians. The officials have been much impressed by the benevolent work accomplished by the missionaries, especially in connection with hospitals and dispensaries for the relief of the suffering. May God move the hearts of all these rulers so that the millions of China may be led to accept the Gospel.

HOW TWO BOYS EARN A LIVING.

Two little boys who live in Brooklyn, New York, and who know something of the hardships of poverty, have adopted a novel method of earning a living. Unable to compete with the larger boys in selling newspapers, or to obtain regular employment, they have formed a partnership under the firm name and style of Deyo Brothers, with headquarters in a rear room of their mother's house, and there they manufacture two useful articles. One is a match-scratcher, a bit of pine wood cut in the form of an elongated diamond, with a brass screw to fasten to the wall. They make everything by hand, employing flint dust, made from ground pebbles, for the rough surface. The edges are gilded, the back is stamped with the business name and address and the article is then ready for the market. The other specialty is an emery stick, about ten inches long, for the sharpening of penknives and scissors. When it is considered that the little fellows are only nine and eleven years old, respectively, and that their original capital consisted of fifty cents, their work is surprisingly good. As soon as the stock on hand amounts to a gross of each article, the younger boy, who is the drummer for the firm, fills a leather satchel and sallies forth to sell the goods. He visits both offices and homes, doffs his cap politely if a lady is addressed, and displays his wares with ready tact. He seldom fails to sell. The earnings are sufficient to pay all living expenses for the little partners, as well as to help their mother, and enable them to dress well. Both boys give evidence of careful home training, particularly in speech and deportment.

A TRUE STORY.

By ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

One bright Sunday afternoon last winter the sun rose over the Mexican city, Matamoras, and drove away the clouds that for days had hid its bright rays, making the little Mexican boys and girls shiver under the bright and sometimes tattered blankets which, instead of overcoats, they wear around them.

As the sun mounted higher and higher, the people began to collect in the streets, as if waiting for something. "What was it? Not for church and Sunday-school, for there is only one small Presbyterian church and Sunday-school in Matamoras, and none of these idle sight-seers were



CHINESE MANDARIN

going there. "What was it, then, for which they waited, lining the streets and craning their necks?"

"Ah! a shout goes up. And around a street corner comes a rabble of men, women, and boys. In the midst of the crowd is a poor, dirty woman, with hardly any flesh on her bones, her clothes filthy and ragged, her hair matted, her eyes bloodshot, walking on her knees. It was said that she had come this way for a great distance, some said one hundred miles, to say her prayers at the altar in Matamoras.

The Mexicans thought this a holy thing to do, and they spread their blankets before her all the way up to the shrine.

"But why does she do it?" you ask. Because she feels that she is sinful, and she cannot rest until her sins are forgiven.

"Will she feel, when she has dragged herself up to the altar, that her sins are really forgiven then?"

Perhaps she may for a while, but the peace does not last. She will sin again, and be unhappy again. Around on another street, hundreds of young voices are singing:

"What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!
What can make me clean within?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"

And the missionary is reading the sweet story of how ready Jesus is to forgive all their sins.



CRIMINAL DEPRIVED OF HIS QUEUE.



PRISONERS DRIVEN BY THEIR QUEUE.