

MARRIAGE IN CHINA.

Among the pure Chinese, and especially among the higher classes, the affair is a much longer and more serious one. From the old Turkish strictness with which females are secluded, it is comparatively rare that a couple see each other previous to betrothal, and still more so that there should be any acquaintance between them. This has given rise to the necessary employment of a character equivalent to the bazvalan or marriage-broker of ancient Brittany, to Mr. Foy's Parisian Matrimonial Agency Office, or the daily marriage advertisements of our own papers. If your wish is for marriage in the abstract, the broker will find you a fitting partner first, and negotiate the transfer after. If you are less purely philosophical, and wish to consult your own tastes as well as the interests and increase of the nation, you are only to name the party, and the broker becomes your accredited ambassador. There is, however, one preliminary point to be ascertained. Has your intended the same surname as yourself? If so, it is a fatal difficulty, as the laws of China would not permit the marriage. If, however, she is Chun and you are Le, or she is Kwan or Yu, and you rejoice in any other patronymic monosyllable, the next step is for the broker to obtain from each a tablet containing the name, age, date and hour of birth, etc. These are then taken to a diviner and compared, to see if the union promises happiness; if the answer is favourable (and crossing the palm with silver is found to be as effectual with fortune tellers in China as elsewhere), and the gates are equal—that is, if the station and wealth of the two families are similar—the proposal is made in due form. The wedding presents are then sent, and, if accepted, the young couple is considered as legally betrothed. A lucky day must next be fixed for the wedding, and here our friend, the diviner, is again called upon. Previous to the great day the bridegroom gets a new hat and takes a new name, while the lady, whose hair has hitherto hung down to her heels in a single heavy plait, at the same time becomes initiated into the style of hair dressing prevalent among Chinese married ladies, which consists in twisting the hair into the form of an exaggerated tea-pot, and supporting it in that shape with a narrow plate of gold or jade over the forehead, and a whole system of bodkins behind it. On the wedding morning presents and congratulations are sent to the bridegroom, and among the rest a pair of geese; not sent as we might imagine, by some wicked wag or irreclaimable bachelor as a personal reflection on the intellectual state of his friend, but as an emblem of domestic unity and affection. The ladies, too, in China, as well as elsewhere, indulge in a little fashionable crying on the occasion, and so the relatives of the bride spend the morning with her, weeping over her impending departure, or, more probably, their own spinsterhood.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

FRETFULNESS.

Fretfulness is one of the most common and grievous faults of ordinary life. "I dare no more fret," said Wesley, "than I dare curse and swear." Nothing more surely and certainly destroys the peace of a family than the causeless, profitless habit of fretting, grumbling, and fault-finding so common in many families.

"Look into the home of a fretful man or woman, and mark the discomfort, the unhappiness, the positive misery they often cause within its sacred enclosures. Notice a fretful man in his business relations—how disagreeable he makes himself and others, and how much he detracts from his own power to act coolly and wisely. See such a man in church—what an amount of friction and trouble he causes, where all should work smoothly and quietly. Besides the rasping and discomfort such a person occasions, the example he sets is most pernicious. Children easily catch the manners of their elders, and many fretful people have no one to blame but themselves if they have worrisome, teasing, disagreeable children."

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers." Put away grumbling and complaining. Look on the bright side, make the best of everything, bridle your temper, rule your own spirit, and possess your soul in patience and in peace.—*Selected.*

FISH CULTURE ADVISABLE.

Fish culture might be made a source of profit on many farms. Ponds, brooks and small streams which abound throughout the land might be made alive with multitudes of fish. Every farmer who has a small pond, a brook or a spring of never-failing water might easily arrange to raise abundance of fish for the use of his family and have a surplus for sale. A stock of fresh fish near at hand, where they could be made available whenever such an article was wanted for the table, would be a great convenience, especially in the country, where supplies of fresh fish are difficult to be obtained, and where fresh meat of any kind is not easy to find during the warm weather of summer. The man who had a stock of fish in a pond or a brook near by could supply his table whenever he wished with the best and freshest of fish directly from the water. A fish cooked within an hour from the time it comes from the water is delicious compared with one which has been out of the water twenty-four hours before cooking. With a little care almost any man having water facilities could easily raise five hundred or a thousand pounds of fish to sell yearly. The cost of production would be far less than the cost of raising an equal weight of beef, pork or mutton, and it would sell for higher prices.

WHEAT IN HISTORY.

Dr. E. L. Sturtevant gives the following account of the part of the wheat plant:

"Isis was supposed to have introduced wheat into Egypt, Dræmeto into Greece, and the Emperor Chin Wong into China, about 3,000 B.C. In Europe it was cultivated before the period of history, as samples have been discovered from the Lacustrine dwellings of Switzerland. In England

it was probably not cultivated by the ancient Britons; but the Anglo-Saxons, when Bede wrote, early in the eighth century, sowed their wheat in spring; and in the days of Queen Elizabeth its cultivation was but partial. Indeed, wheat was an article of comparative luxury till nearly the seventeenth century. In India, wheat seems not to be native but introduced, for its Sanscrit name signifies 'food for the barbarians'; yet three varieties are mentioned in the Bhavaprakāsa, one of which, a large-grained, is said to have come from the west, and another, a small grained or beardless wheat, is said to have been indigenous to middle India.

"The first wheat raised in the New World was sown by Spaniards on the Island of Isabella in January, 1494, and on March 30th ears of corn were gathered. The foundation of the wheat harvest of Mexico is said to have been three or four grains carefully cultivated in 1530, and preserved by a slave of Cortes. The first crop at Quito was raised by a Franciscan monk in front of the convent. Garcilasso de la Vega affirms that in Peru, up to 1548, wheaten bread had not been sold at Cuzco. Wheat was first sown by Gosnold on Cuttyhunk, one of the Elizabeth Islands in Buzzard's Bay, off Massachusetts, in 1602, when he first explored the coast. In 1604, on the Island of St. Croix, near Calais, Me., the Sieur de Monts had some wheat sown which flourished finely. In 1611 the first wheat appears to have been sown in Virginia. In 1636 samples of wheat grown in the Dutch colony at Netherlands were shown in Holland. It is probable that wheat was sown in the Plymouth colony prior to 1629, though we find no record of it, and in 1629, wheat was ordered from England to be used as seed. In 1818 wheat was introduced into the valley of the Mississippi by the Western Company. In 1799 it was known among cultivated crops of the Simos Indians of the Gila River, New Mexico."

MY LAST OFFER.

We had a wedding at our house last night,
With throng of guests and maze of flowers;
The rooms were brilliant with their blaze of light;
In song and feasting passed the hours.

My little nephew, four years and a half,
Bewildered, glad and wonder-struck,
Saw all the glitter, heard the song and laugh,
And ate unwonted sweets beside.

Next day he pondered much, as wise folks do,
Then craved of me a little boon;
"Aunt Jeanie, why don't you get married, too?
I hope you'll do it very soon."

"Dear child," I said, and stroked his curly head,
"You would not wish it if you knew
That I must go away if I should wed,
Instead of living here with you."

His face grew grave, for he had only thought
Of wedding cakes and ices sweet;
But, if with loss of auntie it were brought,
The feast would be a doubtful treat.

He clasped my neck and kissed me on the cheek,
Then said the loving little elf,
"Aunt Jeanie, don't get married till next week,
And I will marry you myself."
—C. M. St. Denys, in *Our Continent.*

THE HUSBANDMAN.

Give fools their gold and knaves their power,
Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
Who sows a field or trains a flower
Or plants a tree is more than all.

For he who blesses most is blest;
And God and man shall own his worth,
Who toils to leave as his bequest
An added beauty to the earth.

And soon or late, to all that sow
The time of harvest shall be given;
The flower shall bloom, the fruit shall grow,
If not on earth, at last in heaven.

—J. G. Whittier.

THERE was a heavy snow storm all Wednesday night of last week at Denver, Col.

ONE of the sweetest passages in the Bible is this: Underneath are the everlasting arms. What a vivid idea it gives of the divine support. God knows our feebleness. He remembers that we are dust.

As the tree is fertilized by its own broken branches and leaves, and grows out of its own decay, so men and nations are better and improved by toil and refined out of broken hopes and blighted expectations.

It is to help that Christ came. He brought the love that kindles love. He will raise us as we will be raised. We cannot sever the interests of Christ from those of the world. There is nothing that can be His without our being the better for it. He asked nothing for Himself that was not for us also.—*Rev. A. G. Lawson.*

IN prayer we have two intercessors—one in heaven, one in the heart; Christ for us, the Spirit within us; Christ at the mercy seat, the Comforter in the supplicant's breast. Every believer's soul is a chapel, an oratory, where this heavenly guest is both prophet and priest. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," and it is in prayer, if ever, that we are filled with all the fulness of God.—*A. C. Thompson.*

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

CHOLERA is prevalent in Japan and Manila.

THE Episcopal Church of Scotland has 229 churches, with 67,483 members.

LONDON expends £10,000 a day in cab hire. It has 12,000 licensed cabbies, and 9,000 cabs.

THE London School Board intend to organize evening classes for ordinary and science subjects.

THE Mormon Church has issued a manifesto calling on the Saints to maintain their political status.

THE Greek Patriarch and Bishops deny that there is any insecurity for Christians in Damascus or Syria.

MR. TENNYSON says that Goethe is meant by the "him who sings to one clear harp in divers tones."

THE Chinese have reinstated the King of Corea, and intend to assist him in preserving order if necessary.

AN earthquake at Panama last week entailed a loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars and several lives.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE has resigned the Greek chair in the University of Edinburgh, after holding it for thirty years.

SYRIAN magnates deny that there is any danger of a Mussulman rising against Christians in Syria or Palestine.

THE Legislature of Guanajuato, one of the Mexican states, is considering a bill providing for compulsory education.

BARNES, the "mountain evangelist," has made a total failure in Indianapolis, both in the attendance and the "conversions."

A PARTY of capitalists in Chicago have formed a company, with \$6,000,000 capital, to ship refrigerator beef from Texas to New York.

At the recent meeting of the Maryland Teachers' Association, the abolition of corporal punishment in schools was generally advocated.

THE United Presbyterians (American) are not disposed to acquiesce in the introduction of organs, and the minority has appealed to the civil law.

THE higher schools of Ceylon are doing a good work. In Jaffa College fifty out of the seventy-three students have renounced Paganism for Christianity.

IT is complained of the public schools of Philadelphia that their teaching is narrow and antiquated. Memory is cultivated at the expense of every other faculty.

THE Government daily papers in Tokio, Japan, consent to insert an advertisement of the Scriptures, which is regarded by the missionaries as an important concession.

THERE are 610 Chinamen on the rolls of the Chinese Sunday-schools in New York, and the average attendance of these reaches 331. Forty of these scholars have confessed their faith in Christ.

NINETY years ago the first English missionary entered the field. Now the whole number of foreign missionaries is five thousand, with an army of native helpers numbering thirty thousand.

THE fastest run yet by a full railway train was made recently between Philadelphia and Jersey City—ninety miles in eighty minutes. The engine which drew the train is new, and has seven-foot drivers.

THE estimated value of real and personal property in the United States in 1880 was \$33,805,000,000, against \$24,169,000,000 in 1860. That is, the gain in twenty years has been \$1,320,000 a day, or nearly \$1,000 a minute.

SIR HENRY BULWER, in a letter to Lord Kimberley, and also in one to Bishop Colenso, charges the Bishop with being the main instrument in causing the late agitation in the Zulu country. Sir Henry intimates to the Bishop that he should leave politics to the "duly constituted and proper authorities."

LUTHER's last will and testament, purchased from a rich Hungarian collector by Archduchess Maria Dorothea, and presented to the Evangelical Church of Hungary, is to be deposited in the National Museum at Pesth. The city of Berlin has recently purchased a collection of some 5,000 objects of interest connected with Martin Luther.

ACCORDING to Dr. Rae, the Esquimaux are not a diminutive race. They are fully as tall as the average native of London, and much heavier. The young women are very pleasant-looking, almost pretty, extremely solid and compact, with small feet and hands and well-formed limbs. The men can lift 400 or 500 pounds with ease.

THE Church of England, by a recent decision, has received the reversion of some property which had been leased for 999 years. This is equivalent to deciding that the Church of England has had a corporate entity since the time of Alfred the Great, and that it did not, as had been supposed by many, originate in the time of Henry the Eighth.

A SUDDEN riot between the Mohammedans and Hindus at Salem, in the Madras Presidency, broke out recently. One hundred and fifty Hindus and several Mohammedans have been arrested and the disturbance quelled. The principal mosque of the place was razed to the ground, houses burned or plundered, and many persons killed and shockingly mutilated.

ACCORDING to Edwin Alden & Bro.'s catalogue, there are 12,158 newspapers published in the United States and the Canadas. Total in the United States, 11,522; Canadas, 636. Published as follows: Dailies, 1,152; Tri-weeklies, 80; Semi-weeklies, 150; Weeklies, 9,078; Bi-weeklies, 23; Semi-monthlies, 202; Monthlies, 1,290; Bi-monthlies, 12.

THERE is a church in Philadelphia which has a seating capacity of fifty, and whose congregation is composed principally of boys and girls. Boys take up the collection and perform the duties of sexton. When money is needed for any special object, the rector tells the children, and they go to work to raise the money, and invariably succeed. There have been eighty-six baptisms in the church in two years.