



THE CHINESE HIGHBINDERS.

A Powerful Organization—Their Rites as Initiations. The name highbinder is said to have been used by a policeman in court, and had no significance whatever, but the term tickled the public, and is now a part of the English language.

It has numbered at times more than one hundred thousand, and still includes many who have no sympathy with the diabolical practices which made the name a terror.

The late Tie Ting rebellion was instigated by Triads, and after ten years' duration was suppressed by the late Gen. Gordon. The rebels fled abroad to save their necks and started the Chee Kung Tong.

Some of the initiation ceremonies of this society are interesting. A candidate pricks his finger until the blood flows into a cup of wine. This cup is passed around the assembly to be sipped, so that a blood fellowship may be established.

TAKING AN OATH.

Explanation of the Origin of the Custom and Its Phases.

The topic of kissing the Bible upon the taking of an oath was the subject of a discussion by the Cogburn club the other evening. Nobody seemed to know just why the discussion was started, but several members who have not been heard from lately had pronounced views upon the subject.

One of the members declared that the kissing habit was the relic of an idolatrous age, when men kissed the mouths of idols to such an extent that they wore them away, and it was believed that he who kissed the mouth of an idol and then told a lie would immediately die.

"There is very little reverence to modern oaths. Men take them so frequently and unhesitatingly that it is almost shocking, and perjury must be common. The court officers are much to blame for this. An oath is usually administered to a witness in a confused jumble of words, without pause or emphasis.

"It is a senseless piece of mummery when compared with the administration of the oath only a few years ago. I am not an old man, but I can remember the time when oaths were administered with an impressiveness and a reverence and a sanctity that made them worth heeding.

"The medical profession condemns the practice for the reason that disease may be thereby communicated, and it is my opinion that people who contemplate taking the oath and kissing the public Bible might better carry an edition of their own in their pockets than put to their lips a greasy covered copy that has been pressed by the lips of all kinds of people, from the tramp to the politician."

A Strange Case.

Young Doctor—I was just going around to see your brother. How is he this morning? Patron—He is no better. Young Doctor—What? No better? That is certainly very strange! The prescription I gave him yesterday contained forty different things.

—A young man who inherited a large fortune a few years ago is a beggar today. He bought a copy of a book entitled "Every Man His Own Fortune-Maker, or, How to Develop Speed in a Trivial."—N. Y. Recorder.

RURAL MIND-TRAINING.

The Need of Education in the Country Intelligently Discussed.

Practical education is needed in the country as well as in the city, writes Grace Dodge. There has been too little brain-culture in the past, with too little sense development and mind-training. With all opportunities for objective teaching and manual training, but little of it has come to the country, and yet the boys and girls there need this training as much as children in crowded city tenements.

Take, for example, two neighborhoods on the Hudson, near New York. In one a library association was started a few years ago by some ladies. There seemed but few people around who could or would utilize a library or reading-room, but soon many men and boys gathered nightly. A sewing-school was started for Saturdays upon strict business principles and within a month was overcrowded.

In the other neighborhood practical classes have also started and are all crowded. In this small settlement are now being held three weekly cooking classes for different groups of girls, two large sewing classes, a dressmaking course, and boys' carpentry classes.

Village bands and choruses are valuable. In one place a large group of boys are kept interested by their weekly band practice. A right feeling of pride is aroused when they are called upon to lead local processions, to play at entertainments, etc.

Interest in surroundings should be roused. The country, with its woods, rocks, trees and plants, should be studied, intimacy with the beautiful variety of animal and insect life should be encouraged.

How Two Fawns Took Their Rations. Amos Patterson, of East Valley, Wash., has two fine, young deer that he has raised on his place. He was out hunting one day and killed a doe with two young fawns. The creatures were very small and ran away in terror at the death of their mother.

Danger in Trains. A well known New York physician advises a mother with young lady daughters to have their trailing street gowns cleaned in the open air immediately on coming in from the street.

Satisfactory Explanation. "How did you come to give me such a piece of meat as this? Why, it doesn't smell good," said a fastidious man to the waiter in an Austin restaurant.

On Bargain Day. Clothing Salesman—Well, sir, what can we do for you? Mr. Mainchance—I want my seven dollars change! Salesman—Why, we don't owe you anything!

The Ocean-Bathing Habit. Fair Young Passenger (on transatlantic steamer during a storm)—Oh! oh! oh! How the ship does pitch! I'm afraid we'll all perish.

Driven Forth. "So you've rented an office, eh? I thought you did all your work at home?" "Well, I did; but my wife bought a canary-bird."—Judge.

A CHINESE POKER SHARP.

He Was a Good One, and Several Club Men are Sorry They Met Him.

Some mischievous club men met an innocent looking Chinaman on Delancy street the other night and took him in tow. After inducing him to take several drinks they escorted him to their club house under the pretext of "having some fun."

Once inside the building the Chinaman was made the target for everybody's witticisms. These John endured with patience. Finally the men grew tired of this sport, and somebody suggested that a game of poker be started.

"Me play plockee," he said. "Me have much mloony," and he displayed a roll of small bills.

In the hope of having "more fun" John was permitted to play. The ante was ten cents and the limit fifty. Quietly the game progressed for a few minutes, John in the meantime showing that he was by no means a novice.

For a time there was considerable action, but John stood every raise until the crowd began to get tired.

"Why don't you call, John?" said a player in a bantering tone.

"Of course the thing had to be ended at some time or other, so John was finally called. With a grin that resembled a slice out of a watermelon he spread out a straight royal flush of spades.

And John went. But after he had gone somebody picked up John's hand and started back in surprise.

"By gracious, boys! George over there had a nine spot of spades in his hand, because he showed it to me. Cal discarded one and I had two others. Now how did that heathen get hold of the fifth nine spot? I'll bet he managed to hook up the one discarded by Cal. Let's look and see."

Hurriedly the pile of rejected cards was run through, but there was no nine spot of spades among them. John had needed that particular card in his business, and in some way unknown to his unhappy victims had secured it without detection.

A PATIENT ANGLER.

He Always Gave the Fish a Fair Chance at the Bait.

Trose was a well-known character in Blank, some years ago.

On one occasion, when he was going some ten or fifteen miles, he was asked to take along a horse, and leave it near the place at which he was going to stop.

He delivered it safely, trudging the entire way on foot, leading the horse.

"Trose was a great fisherman, and was never happier than when seated on the bank of some winding stream, rod in hand.

One day a passer-by called out: "Well, 'Trose, what luck?" "Jes' tollerble," answered Trose. "Have you caught many?"

"Aren't you afraid of typhoid fever?" said Dennis.

"Yes, I am," answered Pat. "Pat?"

"What are those microbyas and germs the docthoors are all talking about?" "Waal, I'll tell ye my idee, Dinny; thin germs and microbyas are peculiar things. Flannigan was tellin' me about thin. He says they reside in the wather. He was fishing through the ice last Monday, and he pulled up his line and found a microbe on it. He says it looked a good dale like a bullhead, but it had a mighty queer face. He says he threw it back aft'er he got over being scart. Me own opinion is, Dinny, that microbyas are a peculiar kind of fish."

Half Acclimatized. A lady up town has a fine pair of horses and a very intelligent coachman.

"Which one?" she inquired. "Same one dat wuz lame las' week," he replied.

"I don't see how that can be; I thought he was all right." "Well, Miss, I tell you wot my 'pinion is 'bout dat hoss. He's acclimated to de climate, but he ain't acclimated to dese yer pavements yit."

On Bargain Day. Clothing Salesman—Well, sir, what can we do for you? Mr. Mainchance—I want my seven dollars change!

Mr. Mainchance—Yer don't, eh? Hain't you advertisin' your late \$15 suits now for \$8? Wa-al, this 'ere is one I bought three weeks ago! Whack up yer change!—Puck.

Fair Young Passenger (on transatlantic steamer during a storm)—Oh! oh! oh! How the ship does pitch! I'm afraid we'll all perish. Experienced Father—Calm your fears, my dear. The bets are three to one that we won't 'rows. —Good News.

MONUMENTS, HEADSTONES, TABLETS, ETC., ETC.

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IN PURSUIT. How the Materials for Tragedy Were Turned into Comedy. A hansom cab from a railway station drove up to the ladies' entrance...

Sits and Dreams. She sits and dreams of knights of old (Her mother at the wash tub scrubs), Of maidens fair with lovers bold...

Artful Cupid. As I went walking down the dale Master Cupid ran beside me, And with many a winsome tale...

Equality Among Sailors. If you meet a sailor on the Bowery you can never be sure to what navy he belongs...

POETICAL GEMS. Palms. I held her hand To trace her fate by line and bend; 'Twas half-past eight when I began...

The Wicket in the Lane. One evening just at milking time I strayed across the door, And heard the church bells chime...

Artful Cupid. As I went walking down the dale Master Cupid ran beside me, And with many a winsome tale...

Equality Among Sailors. If you meet a sailor on the Bowery you can never be sure to what navy he belongs...

A SILK MAT. The Fun That Was Had With It in the Far West. Some eighteen years ago a man conceived the idea of establishing a weekly paper at Yuma, Ari...

ONLY FEMINE CAPRICE. How a Young Lady Tried to Test Her Lover's Opinion of the Other Girl. She-O, don't you think Miss Browne is the nicest girl in the world?

She Made Her Point. "What is the gender of sausage?" asked the lady teacher of a class in the Jefferson school.

For the Best of Reasons. "Keep your face toward the foe always, my son," "Why, father?" "Then you'll never be shot in the back."



