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A TATTOOED PEOPLE.

MISSION WORK AMONG THE BUDDHISTS OF SIAM.

A Country Where the Young Adonises Imperil Their Lives to Make Themselves Fair in Women's Eyes—Curious Habits of the People.

HERE RECENTLY arrived in San Francisco from Siam a party of missionaries, men and women, connected with the Presbyterian mission at Lao, in northern Siam. As this mission has been established in the province of Lao for a number of years, and is the only distinctively American organization in the country, a sketch of the scene of operation and the work being done will prove exceptional interest, says the San Francisco Chronicle.

The boundary line between Lao and Siam passes irregularly along the eighteenth parallel of north latitude and the greater part of the Lao states lies between the ninety-ninth and 101st meridians of east longitude, reckoned from Greenwich. There are six Lao states tributary to Siam—namely, Lakon, Lampon, Cheng-Mai,

STARTING ON A JOURNEY.

Muang-Nan, Hluang Prabang, and Muang Prau. All are independent of each other and the rulers are autocratic. The offices of chiefs in the several states are held for life, but are not hereditary and are electorial under the will of the people with the consent of the King of Siam. The tribute paid to the latter by each chief is chiefly in the form of gold and silver betel boxes, vases, necklaces, etc., with representations of trees in gold and silver. Taxes are collected by the chiefs from farmers and others, and it is sufficient to say that the office of tax-collector is strictly "in politics," that is to say, it is a convenient source of private gain. It is a poor tax collector that can not leave his office a wealthy man.

The Laosians have a characteristic salutation when a wealthy or a aristocratic person passes along. It involves going down on elbows and knees and raising the hands to the face, almost in the attitude of prayer—a posture abject enough to recall the worst features of court civilization in Europe. The Laosians are unfamiliar with the practice of shaking hands and the usual greeting is a grunt. Under pressure they have been induced to follow the conventional practice, but in this case they extend the left or right hand indifferently. The Lao country between Bateng and the border of the Ngiou states, along the twentieth parallel of latitude, is the principal source of the elephant supply in Siam, and it may be said of the entire country of Lao that it is essentially the land of Buddhist temples and elephants. The latter are the only animals which can get through the dense jungle without difficulty.

Tattooing is practiced in western Lao to a considerable extent. As in civilized countries, so called, women pinch in their waists and shiver in insufficient attire to

ELEPHANTS AT REST.

please their youthful admirers of the sterner sex, so in Lao the young Lotharios and Adonises run the risk of the death penalty to make themselves fair in women's eyes, for the statistics of tattooing show a steady mortality of 2 per cent, with a much larger ratio of blood-poisoning and inflammation tardily recovered from.

The prevailing religion in the Lao States is Buddhism. The Laosian theory of the universe is a peculiar one, and sets gravitation at defiance. The center of the world is Mount Zinnalo, which is half under water and half above. The former portion is a solid rock with three root-like rocks protruding from the water into the air below. Round this mountain is coiled a large fish (furnishing a remarkable

SCENE AT CHEFG-MAI.

analogy to the emblem of early Christian sepulchers). This fish can embrace and move the mountain. When it sleeps the earth is quiet; when it moves it produces earthquakes. Mount Zinnalo is full of caves, which below water are inhabited by dragons called "Naks," and above by angels called "Thewedas." Above the earth and around the great mountain is the firmament, with the sun, moon, and stars. Above the water is the inhabited earth, and on one side of the four sides of Mount Zinnalo are seven hills, rising in graduations, which are the first ascents the departed has to make. If he is wanting in "merit" he can not get to the top; but, having reached the summit, he comes to the different chambers in heaven. In these also are degrees, and a system of government. Above all is the outer darkness or "Nirvana," well known as the annihilation state of non-existence, or everlasting rest of the Buddhist faith.

The American mission at Cheng-mai is under the charge of Dr. Cheek. This gentleman enjoys a high reputation among the natives as a physician, however reluctant they may have shown themselves to accept a change of faith. It appears that the mission was established about twenty-two years ago, its object being not so much to proselytize or evangelize the natives as to improve their general tone and elevate their minds by instructing them in useful industries. The success of the

ON THE MEPING.

mission, from an evangelistic point of view, was at first very poor the number of living converts in 1884 being less than 100. The Catholic church has long had a fairly successful mission in Siam.

Dr. Cheek has saved the lives of hundreds by his medical and surgical skill. He has also established a boat yard at Chengmai, where he employs large numbers of men and enables slaves to be emancipated themselves according to the customs of the country by making boats for their masters. American tools are fast superseding the primitive implements of the natives in the work of boat construction.

There are no newspapers in the Lao type, but the Rev. Mr. Peoples expects to have a font of Lao type prepared in this country, and great results are anticipated from its use. Mr. and Mrs. Peoples have spent seven years in Lao and will return in about a year's time. Mr. Peoples worked chiefly at Lakhon, an important Lao town.

There is now quite a large party of ladies in the Lao mission, and the prospects are much more encouraging than a few years ago. At Cheng-mai there is a

MISSION PARTY.

commodious school room where the girls are taught the ordinary subjects of study besides receiving practical instruction in needlework, household duties, etc., with lessons in music and singing as a recreation. The ladies' board of the society in New York sends out regular remittances for the purpose of redeeming Lao girls from slavery and sending them to school.

The elephant plays such a prominent part in Laosian life that special legislation is invoked in its favor. The stealing of an elephant or buffalo is a capital offense. The buffalo is the chief domestic animal, but is not used as a beast of burden.

The population of the Lao district proper is about 3,000,000; in all Siam there are about 10,000,000 of inhabitants.

Cheng-mai is the most powerful of the Lao states. When it was founded 600 years ago Muang Fang was the principal city. After being several times conquered and sacked by the Burmese and Ngious respectively, it remained deserted until about seventy years ago, when several princes came over from Lakhon, founded the present dynasty, and raised Cheng-mai to its present importance.

The Cheng-mai market is held every morning from 8 to 11 o'clock. The women do all the selling. The natives are decidedly partial to strong drink, and "samshoo" is the prevailing tipple. The climate of Lao is distinctly tropical, but not unhealthy, except in the rainy season. Dysentery and fever are the principal factors in the bills of mortality.

In this connection it is proper to mention that spiritualism is a popular craze in Lao. There are regular spirit doctors and mediums, who not only "charm away disease," but are consulted whenever any difficulty occurs in public or private affairs.

GERMAN JOKES.

QUITE APPROPRIATE.

Governess—Miss Emma, have you found in Schiller's works an appropriate poem to recite at the silver wedding of your parents.

Miss Emma—Yes, I have found an appropriate poem. It is entitled "The Fight with the Dragon."

SHE WAS UP TO HIM.

He—My dearest, darlingest little wifey——

She—You needn't employ any of that sort of taffy, for you won't get the latch key, no matter what you say.

MUSICAL ITEM.

A.—So your dog has run away again, has he?

B.—Yes; since my daughter has been taking singing lessons there is no such thing as keeping him on the premises.

HE LIVED HIGH.

Visitor—How did you come to rent a room the stairs to which are so steep and dangerous?

Poet—I had an object in view. You should see how polite the bill collectors are when they get up here and I hint about kicking them down stairs.

AN EYE TO THE FUTURE.

Father—Why do you ask for the hand of my younger daughter instead of that of her elder sister?

Sister—Because I think the elder sister would more satisfactorily fill the position of aunt to my future children.

A DEAD GIVE-AWAY.

Inquisive neighbor—Your ma's hair is as black as if she dyed it. Does she really dye it, Tommy?

Tommy—O, no, she don't dye it. That's the color it was when she bought it.

NOT AN ELIGIBLE BOARDER.

Landlady's daughter—Mother, you tell that man in the front room to clear out at the end of the month.

Landlady—Why so, my daughter? He is a very nice gentleman.

Landlady's daughter—He is a fraud. I've been through his trunk, and found lots of letters from a woman to whom he is engaged to be married. What sense is there in wasting the nice front room to that sort of a boarder? We want one who isn't engaged.

MEDICAL ITEMS.

A.—Dr. Jones is a good-hearted man.

B.—In what way?

A.—Very often he don't take a cent from his patients.

B.—Oh! I see. The executor of the patient's estate is called to pay it.

A FEW PASSING REMARKS.

Jones—What did your wife say when you got home last night?

Smith—What did she say? My dear fellow, it would take me three hours to tell you half of what she said.

THE first sawmakers' anvil used in this country is in the possession of E. Andrews, of Williamsport, whose uncle imported it from England in 1819.

THE LITTLE FOLKS.

Both.

Grandmother knit for the baby
A jacket of blue.
"No color for boys," so she wrote it,
"But this one will do."
And she sent a gold pin with a blank for the name,
To wait till he came.

Next day came from lovely Aunt Mollie—
Now, what do you think?
All scented, embroidered, and dainty,
A jacket of pink!
"To dress a girl-baby in blue is a shame!"
She wrote. "What's her name?"

"Dear grandma," wrote mamma, one morning
"Your jacket in blue
Is just the right thing for our baby,
His eyes are so blue."
And her note to Aunt Mollie was strange, you may think:
"Our dear little girl is so pretty in pink."

I fear that you'll say her two letters
At variance seemed,
Or that I'm telling you something
I could but have dreamed;
But the fact is, her stories were nothing but true;
For the twins wore both jackets—the pink and the blue!

—*Agnes L. Mitchell, in Babyhood.*

A Plucky Boy.

The boy marched straight up to the counter.

"Well, my little man," said the merchant, complacently, he had just risen from such a glorious, good dinner, "what will you have to-day?"

"Oh, please, sir, mayn't I do some work for you?"

It might have been the pleasant blue eyes that did it, for the man was not accustomed to parley with such small gentlemen, and Tommy wasn't seven yet, and small for his age at that.

There were a few wisps of hair along the edges of the merchant's temples, and, looking down on the appealing face, the man pulled at them. When he had done tweaking them he gave the ends of his cravat a brush, and then his hands traveled down to vest pocket.

"Do some work for me, eh? Well, now, about what sort of work might your small manship calculate to be able to perform? Why, you can't look over the counter."

"Oh, yes, I can, and I'm growing, please, growing fast; there, see if I can't look over the counter?"

"Yes, by standing on your toes; are they coppered?"

"What, sir?"

"Why, your toes. Your mother could not keep you in shoes if they were not."

"She can't keep me in shoes, anyhow, sir," and the voice hesitated.

The man took pains to look over the counter. It was too much for him; he couldn't see the little toes. Then he went all the way around.

"I thought I would need a microscope," he said, very gravely, "but I reckon if I get close enough I can see what you look like."

"I'm older than I'm big, sir," was the neat rejoinder. "Folks say I am very small of my age."

"What might your age be, sir?" responded the man, with emphasis.

"I am almost seven," said Tommy, with a look calculated to impress even six feet nine. "You see my mother hasn't anybody but me, and this morning I saw her crying, because she could not find five cents in her pocket-book, and she thinks the boy who took the ashes stole it—and—I—have—not had—any breakfast, sir." The voice again hesitated, and tears came to the blue eyes.

"I reckon I can help you to a breakfast, my little fellow," said the man, feeling in his vest pocket. "There, will that quarter do?" The boy shook his head.

"Mother wouldn't let me beg, sir," was the simple answer.

"Humph? Where is your father?"

"We never heard of him, sir, after he went away. He was lost, sir, in the steamer, 'City of Boston'."

"Ah! that's bad. But you are a plucky little fellow, anyhow. Let me see," and he puckered up his mouth and looked straight into the boy's eyes, which were looking straight into his. "Saunders," he asked, addressing a clerk, who was rolling up and writing on parcels, "is Cash No. 4 still sick?"

"Dead, sir; died last night," was the low reply.

"Ah, I'm sorry to hear that. Well, here's a youngster that can take his place."

Mr. Saunders looked up slowly, then he put his pen behind his ear, then his glance traveled curiously from Tommy to Mr. Towers.

"Oh, I understand," said the latter; "yes, he is small, very small indeed, but I like his pluck. What did No. 4 get?"

"Three dollars, sir," said the still astonished clerk.

"Put this boy down four. There, youngster, give him you name, and run home and tell your mother that you have got a place at four dollars a week. Come back on Monday and I'll tell you what to do. Here's a dollar in advance; I'll take it out of your first week. Can you remember?"

"Work, sir, work all the time?"

"As long as you deserve it, my man."

Tommy shot out of that shop. If ever broken stairs that had a twist through the whole flight creaked and trembled under the weight of a small boy, or perhaps, as might be better stated, laughed and chuckled on account of a small boy's good luck, those in that tenement house enjoyed themselves thoroughly that morning.

"I've got it, mother! I'm took. I'm a cash boy! Don't you know when they take parcels the clerks call 'Cash!'—well, I'm that. Four dollars a week! and the man said I had real pluck, courage, you know. And here's a dollar for breakfast; and don't you ever cry again, for I'm the man of the house now."

The house was only a little 10x15 room, but how those blue eyes did magnify it! At first the mother looked confounded; then she looked—well, it passes my power to tell how she did look as she took him in her arms and hugged him, kissed him, the tears streaming down her cheeks. But they were tears of thankfulness.—*English journal.*

"Miss Jennie and Me."

One evening a man, tall and spare, surrounded by a country atmosphere, cautiously approached the desk at Willard's Hotel, Washington, and hesitatingly said that he wanted a room. Mr. Harris placed the register before him and handed him a pen.

"What's that for?" inquired the would-be guest.

"Sign your name, please," was the reply.

"I've got a lady with me. It's my wife—we've just got married," was the faltering remark of the visitor.

"Then write both your names on the register," was the advice given.

An inspection a moment later revealed the following entry:

"Miss Jennie & me."

HOW I BECAME A SPIRITUALIST.

BY CHARLES S. BLACKBURN.

I AM naturally inclined to skepticism. Being of an investigating turn of mind, and my profession (dentistry) leading me into the realms of physical science, it was ever my habit to believe nothing that could not be most satisfactorily proven. Spiritualism I always considered to be the work of charlatans who should be declared vagrants and placed on the chain-gang, while its devotees I rated as soft-brained people who ought to be confined in an asylum for imbeciles.

But I had an experience that converted me. My wife had read of "seances" that were being given by a medium, and proposed that we go witness them. At first the suggestion so astounded me that I though her crazy; but she said of course she did not believe in such nonsense, only thinking it would be a harmless way to spend a pleasant evening. She enjoyed a sleight-of-hand performance, she said, and she considered these "spiritual" manifestation and materializations as nothing more. I agreed to go, withholding a desperate resolve I made at the time. I am a man of powerful physical strength and proportions—over six feet high—and would, before this occurrence, have bargained to hold a prize-fighter after I had once gotten my hands on him. I determined that when one of those spirits came near me I would catch and hold it, and prove it real flesh and blood.

We went. There was a good crowd. It was a small room. The only furniture was a cabinet in a corner farthest from the auditors. The room was darkened. To soft music spirits began to appear. They came from the cabinet, in which the medium, a dried-herring old man, weighing one hundred pounds, was seated, and were faintly visible in white raiment. One, larger than the rest, walked off from his fellows and came toward me. "Come a little further," I said to myself, "and I will see whether you are of diaphanous material or not." It came. I grasped it firmly around the waist. It made a noise that was neither a groan nor a howl, but seemed like a subdued moan struggling for louder utterances, and dragged me to the cabinet. Here my breath stopped short, my brain reeled, and I lost consciousness for a moment. The next instant the spirit was gone, the lights were raised, and I stood at the door of the cabinet stupidly gazing at the medium who occupied his seat as when first he entered, sleeping as quietly as an infant.

Trembling, scarcely able to stand, I tottered to my seat and fell into it as limp as a dishrag. I was frightened, but not fully converted. I felt that nothing short of an immortal could escape my strong hold as this had done; but in search of a confederate, whom, of course, I suspected, I minutely inspected the room. I found no place where one could be hidden. I had the cabinet taken to pieces. No fraud was there.

"Doctor," said the medium, who called at my office next day, "this was a test case, so I am informed by the control. Your intention was understood, and the spirit approached you in consequence. Are you still a skeptic?"

"Count me henceforth as a believer," I answered. "Truly, are there more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. The fact that any force can shake me off in an instant, as did that last night, is all-sufficient proof that it is not of this world."

HORACE ADLER.

"Men who think themselves the closest investigators are always the most careless," said the "medium," when he had returned to his room. "You converted him;" this to the big fellow who sat beside him, with an arm as hard as railroad iron and a hand as big as a canvased ham. "He was so frightened he couldn't understand how his breath left him so quickly."

"If he could see that, now, he'd know," said the man, holding up a fist as full of knots as a Zulu's club. "An' speakin' of breath, do you know I come mighty nigh suffocatin' after I got back in that panel closet," pointing to the wall. "It a tight place to be in, in more respects than one."—*Chicago Ledger.*

LITERARY NOTICES.

The policy of puff-for-puff finds no place in the "St. Louis magazine." It hews to the line every time.

If Americans could be induced to read more history, and less fiction, a better show of general intelligence might be made. The best publication devoted exclusively to historical subjects is the "Magazine of American History," published at 743 Broadway, New York.

A delicious holiday flavor pervades every page of the Christmas number of "The Ladies' Home Journal." Never has a better number of this wonderful domestic magazine been issued. To be surprised what a really perfect magazine can be given for almost nothing, let any one of our readers send 10 cents for this number of "The Ladies' Home Journal." The address is 433 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.

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"Why need it be?" we say, and sigh
When loving mothers fade and die,
And leave the little ones whose feet
They hoped to guide in pathways sweet.

It need *not* be in many cases. All about us women are dying daily whose lives might have been saved. It seem to be a widespread opinion that when a woman is slowly fading away with the diseases which grow out of female weaknesses and irregularities that there is no help for her. She is doomed to death. But this is not true. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is constantly restoring women afflicted with diseases of this class to health and happiness. It is the only medicine for their ailments, sold by druggists, under a *positive guarantee* from the manufacturers of its giving satisfaction in every case, or money paid for it will be refunded.

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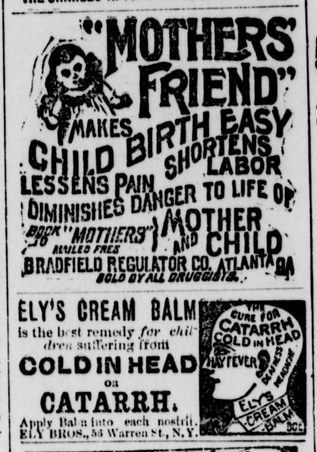

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