

CHINAMEN AT A PICNIC.

HOW THEY ENJOY THEMSELVES WITH PRETTY TEACHERS.

Each Celestial Has a Teacher All to Himself—Where Men are Scarcely and in Great Demand By the Fair Ones—Democratic Prince George.

NEW YORK, July 7.—The young American woman, who is devoting her Sunday afternoons to the education of the "heathen Chinese," is in a very unobtrusive way accomplishing a really important work, and the industrious Oriental is not ungrateful.

When the picnic season arrives, each Sunday-school, in which Chinese ideas are being taught to shoot in pigeon English, invites its teachers to go for a day's outing, usually on the Sound, or up the Hudson, and on these excursions Ah Sin "hangs the expense." The biggest steamer, the best band, the thinnest sandwiches and the coolest lemonade that money can procure are always provided for the occasion.

It is so difficult for him to learn English that he cannot be taught in classes. Each scholar has to have a whole young woman teacher all to himself; consequently there are just exactly as many hosts as there are guests, and this arrangement may possibly have something to do with the immense success that invariably attends these entertainments.

I came upon a Chinese Sunday school picknicking in Central park a few days ago. A party of slim, supple, young Chinamen were playing a game of Chinese football for the amusement of their teachers, and it seemed to me almost as good a game for a hot day as mumble-peg.

The players solemnly and deliberately kicked the ball from one point to another, and walked to and from their various stations as calmly as if they were taking an airing on Broadway. There was no rushing, no rushing, no noise, no perspiration, and the turf, which a college team of American boys would have left looking like a freshly ploughed field, scarcely showed a trace of the game when it was over.

Occasionally a party of native young men would stroll along, pause for a few minutes on the outskirts of the pleasant gathering, and indulge in remarks that indicated the green-eyed monster in their youthful breasts, and no wonder, for the guests were without exception very young, nearly all good-looking and some extremely pretty, while John Chinaman was got up regardless for the occasion, in American costume, with every attention to detail. Gloves and canes, fine white linen and good manners abounded.

One of our jennese doree, after hearing a pretty girl give a description of "how we teach a Chinaman to read the New Testament," declared himself convinced that there was a royal road to learning, and that the sooner Harvard's faculty adopted it, the better for that famous seat of learning.

Here is a fac simile of a letter that lately came to a fond parent in this city from his daughter at the sea-shore.

DEAR PAPA: Please send me the blue wrapper hanging in my closet, and also my gossamer cape, which I forgot, and oh, dear papa, don't you know a couple of men that you could coax to come down here. It is so dreadfully hot here, and I am so tired, I take a stroll with, and as for the ball-room, I scarcely enter it—it was just too flat, prancing round with Maude and Lulu W.

We are not one bit particular papa—anything under 15 or over 50 will do, and I do think you can find some one if you look round.

As "papa" is a very tender-hearted old gentleman, he is "looking round" very industriously, and those who have heard of the order he will be able to fill it.

From the Catskills and the Adirondacks, and from all along the sea-shore similar distressful appeals are coming to relatives in Gotham, and some enterprising managers of summer hotels, who saw that something must be done, are said to have hired squads of good-looking young men to sit on the piazza, play tennis and dance with their lady guests.

The arrival of Prince George of Greece created a welcome ripple in the dullness that always besets us as soon as old Sol commences to get in his fine work. In one sense at least he is the greatest of European royalties. His stature is six feet three inches and his weight 270 pounds. So far he has always appeared in suits of very light tweed, which apparently greatly increase his size, while the Greek gentlemen who have undertaken to show him the elephant, seem to have a taste for close-dark fitting clothes, and the effect is very picturesque. Any one who had not heard of them might think that a party of Lilliputians had brought a citizen of Pwobding to town to see the sights.

The royal young man seems to be of a scientific turn of mind. He has spent a great deal of time investigating the electric plant out at Menlo park, and the factories in which Uncle Sam builds his torpedoes and gun boats. He accepts invitations to dinner, goes to the Casino in the evening to hear Lillian Russell sing, and conducts himself generally in an exceedingly democratic and altogether popular manner.

The critics are paying their respects, or rather their disrespect, to a new novel named *The Modern Evil*. It is by a young woman, Miss Minnie L. Armstrong, a Western journalist of some renown, and a cousin of Robert Ingersoll. The unsophisticated, as they read its title, wonder which of the modern evils she is after. Corsets, waltzing and tight shoes suggest themselves. A dip into its pages unfold the astonishing information, that "the modern evil" in Miss Armstrong's opinion, is the abiding nature of the marriage contract. "People," she says, "ought to remain married only as long as they are in love."

The public was very grateful to John Biddulph Martin, when he captured Victoria Woodhull's mature affections and made a British matron of her, and it is proportionately sad to see a new priestess of free-love doctrines, capering round in the brogans that her sensible spouse insisted should be left behind her.

HERMIA.

THE GREAT MAGICIAN.

Herman Tells Something About Tricks That Surprise the People.

My reflections upon the art of magic, or prestidigitation, are drawn from a continuous experience of thirty years in practicing that art. My travels in connection therewith have led me into nearly every part of the habitable world.

Asia even more than Egypt is the land of secrecy. In all other lands wisdom seeks diffusion; there it is valued for its rarity. Its very language is enigmas, figures and ambiguity, producing perplexity rather than instruction. Time was when the student of prestidigitation aspiring to fame in his art did not consider his education complete without a visit to India. But this is no longer necessary. The very secretiveness of the East Indian juggler, and his lack of communication with others of his art elsewhere, have lost him the prestige he once commanded. Whatever was wrested from him by close observation has been wonderfully improved upon. He has gone on in the performance of the same old tricks by the same old devices, transmitted from father to son, and from generation to generation. The elder magicians soon learned that the first business of the East Indian juggler was to act upon the passions by the excitement of awe and fear in the spectators. Impressionable natives were easily subject to these passions, and, while filled with them by the handling of snakes or cimeters by the juggler, it was easy to distract attention and, by manipulation too rapid to be followed by the unpracticed eye, to produce phenomena unanticipated and that could not be accounted for. A European magician could not count on the excitement of the same passions on the part of his audience as a preliminary step in the performance of his tricks; and yet he has duplicated every trick of the Oriental and improved upon it.

On my first evening at Bombay a troop of these jugglers appeared upon the piazza in front of the hotel at which I was staying. They were fantastically dressed and painted, and drew a crowd by beating the tom-tom. After a short address by the leader, one of them produced an empty flower pot, which he filled with earth and moistened with water, dropping a few mango seeds in the pot during the process. He covered the flower pot with a large piece of cloth and rested it on a tripod of bamboo sticks. He addressed a few remarks to the spectators, and then walked slowly around the covered pot, dexterously allowing his robes to envelop it at each turn, while his followers sang a howling song of incantation. After three minutes of these proceedings he silenced his choristers, removed the cloth from the pot, and there was disclosed in it a mango tree about three feet in height, which had apparently grown since planting the seed. He performed the trick by removing the cloth beneath the cloth and substituting the mango, which was concealed in his robe, and this he did rather clumsily while he let the robe rest for a moment as if by accident, over the covered flower pot previously displayed.

The basket trick was then performed, even more clumsily than the other. This trick consists in placing a boy in a covered basket and piercing it with swords which are exhibited all bloody, apparently having stabbed the boy to death, while the boy, unharmed, appears, coming from another part of the enclosure. This trick would scarcely be worth repeating anywhere today, yet the Hindoo juggler is content to exhibit it. The most clever trick I saw in India was done by a native with a cobra. The native wore no clothing save a cloth. The cobra he deposited on the sand and covered with a cloth. He then began a series of incantations, which invariably accompany the performance of every trick, around the covered reptile, using his hands and arms in endless gesticulation. At last he snatched away the cloth. The snake had vanished, seemingly "into thin air," but in reality into the clout about the native's loins. During the gesticulations he had barely touched the cloth—the signal for the cobra, which was trained—and bending for a moment so that the clout would fall into a fold, the snake leaped into it so quickly that the movement was unobserved. So little was I impressed with East Indian jugglery that I did not deem it a paying investment to incur the expense or labor of securing the most clever of the juggler's assistants.

The magicians of Europe, beginning with Houdin and Cagliostro, have given a great impetus to their art. I regard the magicians of today as the best the world has ever produced. The perfection of the mechanical contrivances and the possibilities of electricity and chemistry have been wonderful helps in the exercise of the so-called black art. It is well for the magician that such is the case, for the demand upon him for novelty was never greater. I find the spectators at this species of entertainment more numerous and more interested than those of 30 years ago.

If I were asked to designate any one particular illusion as the most brilliant I know, I should unhesitatingly mention that of the vanishing lady, invented by Buatier de Kolta. Its very success was its ruin, so transcendent was the mystification. The effect of the trick upon the spectator the first time he sees it is nothing short of marvellous. The performer brings forward a lady to the front of the stage, seats her upon a chair in full view of the spectators, spreads over her a piece of filmy silk, so gauzy that the outlines of her figure may be discerned through it, and while she is in this position he whisks off the silk. The chair is there; the lady has vanished. The explanatory details of this wonderful trick, which are now known by every tyro in the profession, would weary rather than instruct. I have often experimented with the trick myself as a curiosity. Suffice it to say that the elaborate mechanical operations necessary for its production would almost build a locomotive, and yet are exhausted in a hundred springs and bolts of steel working like the springs of a watch and all co-operating, with the aid of a confederate working through a trap-door under the stage.

Judge—"How came you to enter the house?" "But just think, your honor! Two o'clock at night, no policeman within half a mile, an open window on the first story! Why, you would have climbed in yourself.—Fliegende-Blatter.

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"ASTRA'S" TALKS WITH GIRLS.

[Correspondents seeking information in this department should address their queries to "Astra," Progress, St. John.]

"I am very glad, my dear girls," as our dear old school-teacher used to say, "to notice a marked improvement this week." Of course she did not say it very often, her usual formula was, "I regret exceedingly, girls, to see so little evidence of improvement." She usually brought her spectacles to bear directly, during these remarks, upon a small embryo journalist with a particular turned-up nose and red hair, who was so busily engaged in writing poetry on the fly-leaf of her geography that she was blissfully unconscious of all extraneous circumstances, the world forgetting, if not by the world forgot. No, I have not "given myself away" this time, girls, so it is too soon to chuckle. My hair left off being red ages ago, and sorry for it I am. Little did I think in those happy, unfledged, red-haired days that I should ever have the delirious joy of seeing anything I wrote in print, still less that I should be sitting here this blessed July day with one dog at my feet, another directly behind my chair growling low deep growls of jealous fury at each other—the pup cuddled upon a fold of my dress barking muffled barks at imaginary enemies in his dreams, and the cat perched in an indignant ball on my knee and swearing under her breath at all three, while I try to keep peace in the family, or at least avoid an open rupture, and at the same time answer questions for, and give good advice to a rosebud garden of Canadian girls with just enough boys thrown in to preserve the centre of gravity. Little did I think in fact in those days that I should ever see Canada at all, being like the young ducks, then with all my troubles before me. I may have more before me still than I wot of if I did not begin upon the very respectable pile of letters on my desk, so to work.

ROBIN, St. John.—Welcome again, Robin! I wonder why I like you so much? You may be a very ordinary girl indeed for aught that I know, and yet somehow from your letters I don't think you are. Now, don't begin staying away again just for the pleasure of being welcomed back, as lovers quarrel for the sake of the making up, for if you do I shall have to devise some fresh scheme in order to circumvent you. I wonder what you are like? A bright little soul I fancy like your namesake of the scarlet breast. (1) I really think I should ask that? Youth once more to return my property to me. You will not be able to forget it, but will be wondering why he kept it, and you know he should have returned it long ago. (2) Have you ever read Dickens' *Pictures from Italy*, Bulwer's *Rienzi* and *Last Days of Pompeii*, and last, though not by any means least, Mark Twain's *Tramp Abroad*? All these books are instructive and sensible. Bulwer's are historical, and the *Tramp Abroad*, humorous as it is, is really a most charming book of travel, interspersed with bursts of delicious fun. I think if I were dying and someone read Baker's *Blue Jay Yarn*, or the *Alpine Sunrise* in my presence, I should postpone the operation long enough to laugh. In poetry read Edwin Arnold's *Light of the World*, *Evangeline*, *Hawthorne*, and *The Idylls of the King*. Of course you have read the three latter, ages ago; so have I, but I hope to read them over many times more before I die, for they are always new. Thank you, I should like to see that letter very much.

WANDERER, New Westminster, B. C.—Of course I would care to have a correspondent in British Columbia; but do you know I have already had one there? I cannot recall her name just now, but I remember her letter very well; so you see you have company on your long journey. I am very glad you considered it worth your while to write, and I am always pleased to hear from new correspondents. No, I never had a correspondent describe him or herself yet. I never have the least idea what they are like, so you see you are not in the minority at all. (1) As your present will have such a long journey to take before it reaches its destination, of course it must be something unbreakable, and as compact as possible. There is a rage for spoons of all sizes and shapes just now, so what would you think of a dozen, or half a dozen, whichever you can best afford, of coffee or chocolate spoons? They are made in beautiful designs now, and are so tiny that they can be packed in a very small space, and such a present would delight any girl's heart. A carving knife, fork, and steel is another useful and easily transported present, and it comes already packed in a case. (2) Yes, it is only polite to raise your hat each time you meet her, even if it should be half a dozen times in an hour. You did not ask many questions at all, and I have great pleasure in answering them. Have you "Wanderer" from the Maritime Provinces, or have you always lived in B. C. and if the former, how do you like that new country?

WHEAT, St. John.—It was very kind of you to write about the freckle remedies, and if you were moving that was excuse enough for not writing before; indeed I think it is excuse enough for anything short of murder, or cruelty to animals, which are the two great sins in my calendar. Never mind about the freckles at all; the Irish consider them beauty spots, you know, and after all they are a sign of a very delicate skin. I think I have given the girls enough recipes for them already, and if they try them all they will have their hands full for the summer, and by the autumn the freckles will have left of their own accord, and everyone will be happy. No, I don't think I have very many myself, just a few across my nose for sun kisses. I am of a bashful nature, and hate describing my own charms, but as you ask, I have blue eyes and dark brown hair like yourself. I am afraid we don't very often find "hair of spun gold," or "blue-black tresses," out of the pages of a novel. I did have a lot of letters today, but I was glad to get yours all the same, for I don't like my girls to forget me.

BERYL, Hampton.—I think you must be Beryl the second, for I heard that the original Beryl was married and away in New York. The girls have certainly done nobly this week, and my desk is piled with letters. If you want me to tell you what I really think, I am afraid I must say that your behavior was undoubtedly very unladylike, and I am afraid the young man must have thought so, too, judging from his remark. Of course I know very well that young girls are often so full of spirits

they do foolish things, but they should not let their high spirits run away with their discretion. You were right in not sending back any messages. I do not see what you can do, unless some friend introduces you over again, for you could not possibly bow to him now, after so long a time has passed. Your writing is very good, and your letter quite ladylike.

NORAH.—Do you know, Norah, my dear, that you have never given me any address, so I have not the least idea where you live. Thank you so much for your kind letter and cheering words of appreciation. I don't believe that ever present question amuses you any more than it does me, though I do find it intensely tiresome sometimes when I open about six letters in succession, each of which winds up with the same query expressed in exactly the same words. Don't imagine that I have such a sweeping contempt for slang, some of it is far more expressive than the very best English, and the man who originated the pithy exclamation, "Rats!" should have received some sort of recognition from a grateful public instead of remaining in undeserved obscurity. Geoffrey is very well thank you, and I think you may expect to hear from him again very soon, for he shows signs of getting over his silent fit and coming out in print again; to tell you the truth he has been a little cross lately, and that is always a sign of mental activity with Geoff. When he is too good natured he is apt to be lazy. I have seen a good deal of him lately, because the red haired beauty is at the seaside. You may fall in love with him as much as you like, so long as you continue to "put me first." Of course you did not bore me, and I hope to hear from you soon again, for you know you are one of my Red Cross girls. I wonder if you can guess what that means?

VACATION, St. John.—Really, my dear boy, it would not have such an impolite sound, I should be tempted to remark that you do seem to be on a vacation, and your wits appear to have taken a holiday, too, for your letter rivalled Mark Twain's famous *Item*, as far as being involved went. If you mean to try hot water to keep your moustache in curl, and wish me to thank "Earwig" for the suggestion, I will do so, but what you meant by mixing up "orange blossoms" with a young lady who signed herself "Rail" because she was so thin, passes my comprehension. Soda water is very good, my friend, when one is off on a vacation, especially if you are fishing; try it. Perhaps if you had taken some before you wrote that letter its meaning might have been clearer.

M., St. John.—You will pardon me for abbreviating your name, and I hope you will find your answer by the initial, but the *nom de plume* you selected was really too long to get into one line together with your address, and it there is one thing above another that the composers object to, it is having their top line spoiled; they are very particular on that point, and the compositor is a mighty man in a printing office. I am very glad to hear from you, but regret that I cannot agree with your opinions regarding Canada in general, and St. John in particular. During my childhood I lived in some of the finest cities in the United States, and yet strange to say I have never yet discovered the "Canadian roughness" you speak of, though I can make an impartial comparison—not being either a Canadian or an American. I consider St. John a very bustling city indeed, for its size, and the only fault I have to find with it, is the climate, which I dislike exceedingly, it is so raw and cold. As I have never tasted either St. John ice cream or soda water, of course I cannot compare those luxuries with the delicacies served up in Boston or New York. I prefer a long engagement by far. I was engaged for five years myself, and I only wish the time was to come over again in some ways. Far from showing indifference on the young man's part, it more generally shows that he loves her too well to make her his wife till he can offer her what he considers a fitting home, and I don't think a man ever permits his wife to continue her chosen occupation, whatever it may be, after marriage, unless it is her especial wish, and many women are so devoted to their profession that they cannot bear to give it up. I know if Geoffrey ever carries out his favorite threat of burning all my pens, pencils and paper and emptying out all my ink, it will break my heart and make things most unpleasant for him. Do you know I always thought keeping a diary a great waste of time, though it is sometimes useful for reference. I generally prefer staying at home during the summer myself. You are mistaken, Geoffrey and I have been married for more years than I care to count. I am glad you like our column, and the serial stories; I fancy there will be a new one begun very soon. Your writing is neat and very legible.

GEORGE, Woodstock.—Certainly, George I will be as good to you as I know how. Your whimsical quaint letter made me laugh very heartily. Well, yes! I undoubtedly did make my appearance on the streets of Fredericton that Sunday in company with "Mrs. Bildad," so you may have seen me, but it is needless to say, I did not see you. The case you quote is a most amusing one, and though the young lady certainly had right on her side, according to the strictest letter of the law, she was very arbitrary and foolish about enforcing it. The inflexible rule is that a young man walking with a lady must lift his hat to anyone she bows to, and you should have done so—pardon me—but it was snobbish not to have done so in the case you mention. On the other hand the young lady exceeded her privilege in bullying you about it, and calling the person her friend, but I do respect her heartily for bowing courteously, all the same. There is no better index to the character of a lady, than the manner in which she treats her inferiors. I scarcely think you need apologize, but it would be very nice of you to tell her you are sorry if you hurt her feelings, and that you admire her courtesy and kindness of heart. I am proud of the girls, if my column is making them what you call "too proper." You have no right to put your arm around any girl you are not engaged to, no matter how huggable she is, unless you are dancing with her. How would you like any other man to hug your wife? And she may be some other man's wife some day. I am glad you had the grace to "wilt" when that nice girl snubbed you, so don't come to me for sympathy. I don't blame a fellow in the least for wanting to put his arm around a pretty girl. It is

quite natural I know, but we want to do lots of things that we can't do, all the same, so get a girl of your own and embrace her as much as you like. I am not at all alarmed about Geoffrey. He can take excellent care of himself. Besides that, I am sure he would agree with you, for I believe he would hug any girl who would give him the least opportunity of doing so. Write again George, and strive to be a better boy, meanwhile.

JOCELINE JOLIFFE, St. John.—You are evidently no relation, however distant, of that celebrated Scotch dominie who prayed—"Oh Lord, gie us a guid conceit o' ourselves," for you are overstocked with that useful commodity, by your own showing. My dear boy, you know lots of things I am sure, but one subject on which you are still very much in the dark is: the manners and customs of the genus, girl. Did you never hear of the ground sparrow, who flutters around a spot far from her nest, in order to mislead the pursuer? I don't believe you ever did, but let me tell you that some girls have a habit very much the same, and when they don't want people to know that they are fond of a man, the way they will abuse him when other girls are teasing them about him, would make your hair rise on end, if you were not up to the little ways the dear girls have. This would be especially noticeable in the case you mention, because the young lady's parents being so strict, she would naturally be very much afraid of their hearing that she had an admirer, and would do everything in her power to prevent people thinking she cared for you. Under the circumstances it is not her fault that she cannot ask you to the house, and I think you have done very wrong to judge her without a hearing. How do you know that she really did speak unkindly about you? You are only depending upon hearsay evidence, and if you care for her at all

as you say you do, you will give her an opportunity of clearing herself. As to knowing when a woman is in love with you, the best possible way of finding out is to ask her. No, kissing is not at all silly when properly applied, but intensely so when indulged in promiscuously. I should say there were lots of chances for you to meet with true hearted girls, the world is full of them.

Good gracious: the three dogs and the cat are all tangled up in an inextricable mass; war has broken out at last, and a most uncivil war it is, too! Thank goodness I have time to interfere before they all eat each other up.

ASTRA.

Careless New Yorkers.

In a city where there is such a scramble for money it is somewhat remarkable that New Yorkers run such risks with great sums. A little man with \$300,000 in the pocket of his overcoat hurried through a crowd on Nassau street on Friday holding an umbrella with one hand and a cigar between the fingers of the other. An ordinary expert pickpocket could have gotten away with the money without detection. Yesterday a lad was sent to Brown Bros. banking house to deposit a certified check for \$65,000. He went along swinging it in his hand. In front of the bank he tried to balance the check on end. He played with the valuable paper as if it were simply a worthless scrap.—*New York Advertiser*.

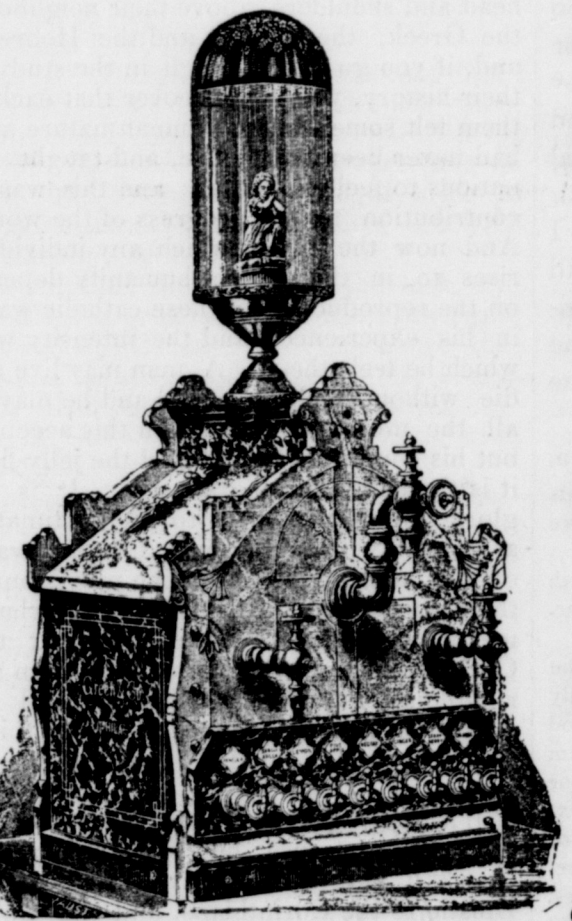
"I thought," said the boy's mother, "that I told you that I wanted you to stay where I could put my hand on you?" "I didn't know," he whimpered, "that you wanted me to git across yer knee an' stay there!"—*Washington Post*.

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