

AUTHORITIES FAIL TO CURB
SALE OF GIRLS IN HONG KONG;
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Hongkong, April 28—They eat the leavings from the family table, carry heavy burdens, sleep sometimes less than four hours per night, and work anywhere from twelve to sixteen hours daily. For pay they get the legal rate of 50 Hongkong cents or about 12 cents gold, a month—and they are lucky if they get it. If they are more than 15 years old they get double that amount, though it is doubtful if they could work harder or longer hours.

Such is the status of the "mui tsai"—or, more generally speaking, the slave girls, ranging from 3 to 19 years old. In Hongkong, there are more than 4,000 of these tots registered with the government, but it is estimated that there is more than 6,000 unregistered. Does salavery exist in Hongkong under the British flag? Sir John Simons recently remarked in the House of Commons that it does: Hongkong does not quite agree.

Law Requires Registration

Officials here say that the mui tsai system has been abolished, that a law was passed in 1923 abolishing it, and that under a provision of that law, that was not put into effect until December, 1929, all of these little slave girls are free; their slavery is nothing more than "domestic service," they are paid for their work and they are no longer the property, body and soul of their employers.

By registering with the police, and fines are stipulated for those employers failing to register the youngsters bought from their parents, it is pointed out that the children have only to complain to the police when they are abused and their parents by adoption are heavily dealt with. Since the law went in it is doubtful if more than sixty of such children have had the courage to appeal to the police, show their bruises and ask for redress. Children of such tender age, seldom have the courage or the reasoning power to walk alone into a police station and tell on their elders.

The system of mui tsai is an old one, recognized throughout China proper for countless generations, but that it is able to continue under the flag of a great world power that has done so much to free the oppressed is what occasioned both surprise and comment.

Poor Families Sell Girls

The name of mui tsai, means literally, "little mate" or "little girl" and is applied only to small girls who have been sold into slavery. Most of them come from the poorest families in China, peasants and farmers who have not enough money to spend on the raising of girl babies. Some of them are sold as early as 3 years old and the original contract calls for the complete purchase, though local conditions in Hongkong have been changed under the pressure of reformists.

The contract, which is a deed of sale, states that the purchaser will have the right to change her name and make her wait upon him. When she grows up the purchaser shall also have the right to marry her as a wife or a concubine and no interference shall be allowed. After the girl is sold, no retraction or redemption will be allowed. This is an open sale and purchase and not a case of kidnapping.

"In the event of any mystery as to the origin of the girl," the contract continues, "the seller of the girl will settle it with the go-between and the purchaser shall not be responsible. After the girl is sold each party shall acquiesce in heaven's decree in case of any misfortune."

A Field of Kidnapers

By the Hongkong ordinance, such a sale is no longer considered binding, and the slave girl can leave her employer at any time and seek another home or job. Baby girls fetch anywhere from 60 to 150 dollars each. The go-betweens or traffickers sometime kidnap the children or purchase them according to their honesty, most, if not all of the mui tsai in Hongkong have come from the mainland of China, brought over by the go-betweens who effect their sales.

Parents never see those who finally buy their daughters, nor are they allowed to visit them or even know where they are working. Any meetings between parents and children occur in a middleman's house, the parent, more often than not paying \$1 local money or more for the privilege of seeing their own children. Not all of these children are badly treated. Some well-to-do Chinese own several slave girls,

and at the time of their marriage they are allowed a certain amount of freedom, many of them, in fact, marrying other servants of the same household. It is among the middle classes and lower middle classes where most of the abuses are found.

The attitude of the British Colonial Government—for Hongkong is a crown colony—is one of non interference in native customs. On the legislative council are three Chinese and the government is able to keep in pretty thorough touch with local Chinese needs and opinions. Go-betweens and those known to be dealing in children are treated harshly when caught, and one of the latest achievements of the local police was the arrest of twenty men and women, all Chinese, engaged in the traffic of children.

The relation between the white slave traffic and the mui tsai is sufficiently close to dig under the shell of the conservative opinion that believes in the noninterference of Chinese customs. As the law now stands, no further mui tsai is to be taken into Hongkong for employment; employers have no authority to keep muisai against the child's consent; existing mui tsai are all to be registered; and all are to be paid wages—ranging as noted before.

So far little more than 4,000 child slaves and registered and local reformers declare that there are more than 6,000 who are evading the law. No timid girl slave between the ages of 3 and 15 years old can be expected to come forward and register. As for the purchaser, he is none too eager to come forward and queer what he considers a good business deal.

NO TRAFFIC LIGHTS
NO W IN LONDON

Philadelphia Pa., April 24—"London traffic lights have been discarded as less efficient than the judgment of the traffic policeman and intoxicated automobile drivers have almost disappeared from London streets."

Those observations were noted by Dr. Hubley R. Owen, chief police surgeon, in a report today to Director Schofield of Public Safety in the handling of drinking and traffic problems in England.

His survey of traffic conditions, Dr. Owen said, showed it is possible to wipe out intoxicated driving. "The English have accomplished this by sending every person to jail," said Dr. Owen. "There are no fines and no cases are fixed. While I was in England a oman of social prominence ent to jail for 90 days for driving while intoxicated.

Dr. Owen said there is little drinking among London police and the "bobbies" are more courteous than American policemen, particularly those of New York.

"Just before I left I was bawled out by a New York policeman," said Dr. Owen. Much the same sort of mistake—driving the wrong way on a street—occurred in England. There the "bobby" came up to me and said quietly, "You can't drive that way sir." That's all there was to it."

Arbitrary speed laws and similar restrictions are eliminated from the English traffic laws, he said, but motorists are required to use good judgment and if they fail to do this they are fined about \$10. The elimination of traffic lights, he found had served to speed up traffic and cut down traffic blocks.

SUB-DEB

My sub-deb daughter's much the same

As others, in this "grown-up" game. She slicks her hair behind her ears. Affects long skirts, and there are tears

When I suggest, the belt that ties Her high and tight around defies Nature's design. But, I confess, I still find cause for thankfulness She does not "sneak" my high-heeled shoes,

Nor "borrow" my silk stockings Whose Good luck is more than mine

My sub-deb daughter has big feet!

MARY CHAPLIN DAVIS, in New York Sun.

CHARLES M. SCHWAB SAYS TEN
GOLDEN YEARS ARE ON THE WAY

(In Boston Traveller)

Washington, D. C., April 27—The science of navigation, possibly the most ancient in the world, is in need of standardization, the national bureau of standards at Washington finds. In co-operation of the department of the navy; the bureau is looking into the matter.

Paradoxically, there is no science which is more standardized and at the same time more subject to the individual practices of the master mariners. As old as the use of the sea is as a highway of adventure and commerce, many fundamentals have been followed immemorially. The fixed position of the stars does not alter from century to century and the same North Star which guided the Phoenician adventurers from the Mediterranean to the British Isles and that guided Neccho, the Portuguese, down the African coast, hangs aloft as a beacon for the most modern craft.

Nevertheless more sea captains work out favorite forms of calculation and stick to them. The mariner's compass is centuries old, invented, according to some authorities, by the seamen of the Amalfi, by others accredited to the Chinese. Other instruments of navigation have been invented, many refinements in modern times. Some navigators prefer certain instruments, some others. Furthermore, there are various methods of working out positions and courses, all of which have their champions.

With the steamship lines of the world becoming increasingly crowded, the need for a greater measure of standardization is felt both in the matter of the use of instruments and definitions.

Navigation is a science of immense complications because of the many different conditions under which the navigators must work. Positions can be accurately determined with comparatively simple instruments by observation of the sun, "shooting the sun," as

it is called. But oftentimes the sun is invisible for days on end and the helpless mariners drifting in ocean currents or swept before a gale at a loss to know his whereabouts.

Method of Dead Reckoning

One of the oldest methods in navigation is by dead reckoning. This was the method employed by Christopher Columbus in crossing the western ocean. Its success then has endeared it to mariners ever since.

But right on that point the bureau of standards finds that there is no standard of dead reckoning.

For more than a century, a period which includes the whole history of tseamships and goes back to sailing days, the Bible of navigators the world over has been Bowditch.

Nathaniel Bowditch was a Salem Mass., lad who made very good at shipping as a boy, after an apprenticeship to a ship chandler, he rose to be holder of a master's ticket—under sail, of course, for he got his first command in 1802. Before the mast, as supercargo and in various minor capacities, he spent every moment he could spare in the study of mathematics and astronomy with particular application to navigation. In 1802 he published "The American Practical Navigator."

The Volume was instantly seized upon not only by the merchant marine but by the navies of the world. Bowditch has been standard for the United States navy continuously, the latest revision, officially guided, having been made in 1911. It would be difficult to find a parallel case in which the work of one man on a scientific subject has remained standard for more than a century. The name of Bowditch is known on every sea. The man himself lived to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and be offered the chair of mathematics at Harvard, the United States Military Academy, and the University of Virginia an honor declined in each instance.

FIREMEN IN NEW YORK CITY
REPORT TO MANY ALARMS

(New York Sun)

"Confound those fire engines!" grumbled Edna, as she hurriedly backed her car to make room for the hook and ladder. "What good are they, anyway? I'm always missing the traffic lights so as to let them go by and they wake me up in the night with their sirens and bells, but I hardly ever see an honest-to-goodness fire."

The well-informed young man at her side cleared his throat.

"I'll tell you what good they are," he replied with great confidence, "for it so happens that I have recently been brushing up on the subject. There are several reasons why you never see an honest to goodness fire as you call it. Serious fires are largely obviated in the city owing to the strict regulations covering fire prevention, the speed with which calls are answered and the up-to-date apparatus employed. Again, it may interest you to know that one of every four alarms sounded are false.

"With typical feminine logic," he continued, "you have got hold of the wrong end of the stick, and since you, are driving the car at the moment I can say this with impunity. You complain that in spite of all fire engines which disturb the peace, you have seen few serious fires, whereas it is precisely because of those fast red engines that the fires do not get a chance to

become dangerous.

"If you are capable of assimilating statistics," added the young man, "let me tell you that the Fire Department responded to 42,459 alarms last year; 11,066 of those being unnecessary, but 92 per cent of the bona fide fires were confined to the point of origin. To show you that I can remember more than my name and address, let me tell you that the firemen were protecting a total of 637,499 buildings with an assessed valuation of over eighteen billion dollars, that they covered an area of approximately 315 square miles, and that the population depending on them for aid in emergency was 6,930,446."

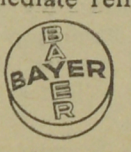
"That's perfectly all right, Smartie," retorted Edna, "but what I want to know is—"

"Every man in the fireDepartment," interrupted the young man ruthlessly, "must be an American citizen and must pass a strict mental and physical examination. Under the present to-platoon system every fireman works 84 hours per week, an average of 12 hours per day. Every sixth day the men are on duty for twenty four hours. Now they are agitating for an eight hour day in place of the twelve hour shift. Do you think they should have it?"

"Of course," replied his fair companion. "Just think. We would have four hours every day and night without those horrid sirens!"

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