

THE PEOPLE'S JOURNAL.

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, AND THE DISSEMINATION OF MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND NEWS.

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FROM PUTNAM'S MAGAZINE. THE ZAY-NIS OF YAN-KY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE BY TAY-KIN.

The eminent Chinese philosopher and traveler Tay-Kin has recently returned to his native country from a long journey through the remote and unknown regions of Central Tartary, and notwithstanding the revolution which is now ravaging China, has succeeded in publishing the results of his observations. They are so graphically and forcibly expressed that the volumes have had an unprecedented circulation; and the most enlightened critics of Peking and Shanghai do not hesitate to call the work, which, in the original flowery Chinese, is entitled *Light from Dark Places*, the undoubted Uncle Tom of Chinese literature. This praise, we presume, is awarded to the book on account of its prodigious sale, rather than from any essential resemblance to the celebrated American romance; for, although we have carefully perused the old volume which has fallen into our hands, we do not find—except possibly in the title—any reason for comparing it with Mrs. Stowe's novel.

The immense popularity and interest of that work may be inferred from the fact that the Emperor of China has, according to the most credible rumors, frequently suspended operations against the rebels when he came to an absorbing passage; and, on one occasion, in the eagerness of perusal, he was known to have burned the imperial mouth by omitting to cool the tea, which he sipped as he read. The history of the means by which the odd volume has fallen into our hands shows how the book has bewitched the nation, for it fell into a chest of superior Gunpowder from the trembling hands of a laborer who was engaged in packing the tea, and endeavoring at the same time surreptitiously to devour the *Light from Dark Places*. He immediately buried it in the tea leaves that it might not be discovered by the lynx eyes of the overseer, who would not have refrained from ordering the extreme punishment allotted to such neglect of duty. "Whoever," says the first section of the first statute of the Code of Confucius concerning the packing of tea, "shall fall asleep while at work, he shall be immediately awakened. But whosoever shall be detected in the reading of novels or any other exciting books, excepting always the profusions of the priests, he shall incontinently lose his cue." To this wholesome fear of the cue, therefore, we are indebted for our knowledge of the present volume, from which we propose to lay extracts before our readers.

It has long been conceded that there are no more interesting works than those which treat of the life and customs of foreign lands. The Arabian Nights have an exhaustless charm for every generation; "for man," in the words of Confucius, "is always man." These tales deal with a fairy and impossible realm. Their scenery and figures have sufficient resemblance to the world with which we are familiar to arouse our sympathy and profoundest interest, yet without ever rising into a consciousness of absolute reality. In this sole respect the great work of Tay-Kin may be called superior to the *Thousand and One Nights*. For, although he describes the customs of countries far beyond the influence of Christianity, and into which the bowie-knife has not yet cut a way for civilization, yet he tells his story so simply and naturally that the reader could almost fancy the whole thing to be within a day's journey upon the midway. At the same time, for enlightened readers like ourselves, who live in the midst of humane and noble institutions, in a land where social prejudices never compel to crime, and where public opinion respects true manliness of character so wisely as to know that it cannot be affected by passionate slander,—in a country where it is universally conceded by the practical men, that the good name earned by an upright life cannot be tarnished by a single word spoken in anger by an enemy; for readers so fortunate in all this as we are, the extracts which we have selected from the Chinese work will have all the charm of an incredible romance.

A deeply seated interest in China, dating from the time when we are first conscious of having eaten meat, and long and profound study of the willow-pattern plates which illustrate its history, have qualified us, we flatter ourselves, to present a translation so accurate and so often

caused in the familiar English idiom, that we are induced to hope the reader, as his eye passes along the page, may gradually forget that he is reading of regions so remote and of a race so barbarous, and confess with a throbbing approval or condemnation the power of Tay-Kin.

We must premise that our traveler had been absent more than a twelvemonth from China, traveling toward Yan Ky, a district of whose people and customs only the vaguest rumors were current in the polished circles of Peking. We commence our extracts with the opening of the thirteenth volume,—for to each month of his journey the philosopher allotted a volume.

I, Tay-Kin, was now turning southward from Thibet, and at sunset of the tenth day, Whang, my faithful interpreter and guide, pointed toward an irregular ridge of dark mountains that glistened in the fading light, and said sententially:

"The Bi-Tek Mountains in Yan-Ky!"

"Is that truly Yan-Ky? I asked myself musingly, abandoned to that pleasing melancholy which the first sight of famous places is sure to occasion. Do I really behold Yan-Ky?"

As I strained my eyes pensively toward that illustrious land, I recalled the words of my friend the mandarin and philosopher Tom-mo, who sat upon the top of the great wall of China dangling his heels, as I passed out of the northern gate toward Thibet, and shouted after me, as he waved his cue freely, like a banner, over the landscape:

"Hi! hi! so you are going to travel! Give my love to the Grand Lama! In Yan-Ky a well-developed woman is an indecorum! Mind your cue!"

And so the lingering winds blew me Tom-mo's paternal counsel until distance drank his voice.

As we entered the land of Yan-Ky I opened my eyes and my ears and proceeded to absorb knowledge. When night fell we encamped outside the chief city of the country, and next morning passed through the gates. As we were slowly advancing along the street to the great Khan for strangers, I observed a man of lofty mien who stood by the wayside curling a heroic moustache. I was so struck with his warlike aspect that I summoned Whang, and pointing out the man of lofty mien inquired his name and position. "He is, probably, the lord of Yan-Ky," I said to Whang.

"That," replied Whang deferentially, "is Zay-ni, which, being interpreted into Chinese, signifies the Soul of Honor."

He had scarcely done speaking when a smaller man, whom a vivid fancy might have mistaken for an offshoot of the Soul of Honor, a sucker, approached me, and, bowing courteously, said:

"Zay-ni requests me to invite you to name time and place, and weapons."

"What is this?" demanded I, in perplexity, of the faithful Whang.

"Zay-ni," explained my interpreter, "or the Soul of Honor, conceives that the character of your glance toward him demands the arbitration of the duello."

"I do not understand," I responded plaintively, upon which the Twig, or Sucker, snuffed the air impatiently, and said:

"You are no Mandarin!"

"You are perfectly correct in your remark," answered I, "I am only Tay-Kin, the Philosopher, traveling upon a tour of observation."

The Twig withdrew toward the Soul of Honor, whose moustache glowed along his lip like a permanent declaration of war; and I rode quietly along with Whang toward the Khan for strangers, much meditating.

At length I said to him:

"I shudder, my dear Whang, with vague apprehension. What may not be true of a land which Tom-mo's parting remark was descriptive? Have we not fairly penetrated the outer regions of civilization, or should not a philosopher say, the very heart of barbarism? Was ever such welcome before offered to innocent philosopher? O Whang! is not Yan-Ky the Barbary of which we read?"

"My friend," returned Whang, fumbling in his crimson silk tobacco-purse, "before lighting the pipe of discussion let us smoke that of narration." So saying, he piled upon the Gozeh the weed of Tumbak from Persia, and we sat silently inhaling and expiring that aromatic smoke. Then I ventured to ask my friend and guide:

"What is that duello to which the Twig referred?"

Whang smoked for some time without replying; at length he said:

"It is a venerable and honored institution of Yan-Ky, condemned by the public opinion, and cherished by the private opinion of the Yan-Kyse. They who invoke its arbitration upon slight cause, like our friend Zay-ni, are held in contempt, being supposed to eat fire."

* Vernacular Yan-Ky.
† Eastern pipe.

They who, being grave and honorable men, of long and unsullied lives, invoke its aid to settle the passionate difference of a moment, are held in universal veneration, and receive services of gold and silver, or the equivalent admiration of all Yan-Ky."

"Truly?" asked I.

"Remember that you are in a remote and savage land," replied Whang, "nor be surprised when you hear the priests of Yan-Ky preaching the doctrine of the circular square. Perpend! It is an institution holding neither by logic, humanity, nor common sense, but by the mystery of honor, of which words can give no account. Honor belongs not to men, like nobility, justice, truth, &c., but to gentlemen—one of the inexplicable institutions of Yan-Ky. With the gentleman, the nose is the most sacred part of the person," continued Whang complacently.

"How?" interrupted I, fearful that I was losing my senses, and shuddering as I remembered that I was distant many months' journey from the most distant prospect of the Great Wall.

"The gentleman and the soul of honor," resumed Whang, "are held to be synonymous in Yan-Ky. If I render the word gentleman in pure Chinese, you have, he who respects his nose. It is the man who always carries that member before him, like the imperial banner of the Celestial Emperor, and defies the world to criticise or touch it. The Yan-Ky doctrine of the nose is subtle, and not easily explained. It presents strange illustrations. It often appears by proxy. Sometimes, for instance, it may be represented by a remark. We will suppose that I declare the day to be pleasant. Into that remark I am held figuratively to put my nose. You, O Tay-Kin, instantly shout offensively, that I am willfully mistating the fact of the weather; that, in truth, it is an unpleasant day. Now, figuratively, you are held to have put your hand into your remark, which, as it conflicts with mine, is—clearly enough—your hand, by proxy, pulling my nose, or sacred member, by proxy. At this point, the question of fact drops out of the discussion, and without reference to the state of the weather, we each proceed to show that we were each in the right; or, in other words, we go out to defend our honor, which is the figure of speech used to express the nose on such occasions. If I succeed in destroying you, I demonstrate by the *argumentum ad hominem*, as Confucius says, that the day is pleasant."

"But if I shoot you?" I replied.

"Ah! in that case the day is not so clear," rejoined Whang, emitting a heavy cloud of smoke.

"But observe," he continued, "if we only shoot, whether damage is done or not, honor is held to be satisfied; the nose is put in its right place again. I agree in the most gracious manner, that I intended to remark that the day was unpleasant. You insist that the first syllable of your adjective was superfluous. We pay profound homage to each other's noses, and Yan-Ky, with loud acclaim, receives us as twin souls of honor. This case involves the principle of the duello. It is an appeal which may be as decently invoked in the small aspersion, as in the large defamation, since, as the Souls of Honor justly declare, a lie given impeaches honor, whether a mill or a million be involved in the question of fact. In truth, the original fact has nothing to do with the decision. It is a matter of the nose. My dear Tay-Kin," said Whang, "the history of the father of Zay-ni, which I shall now relate, is the best illustration of the subtle doctrine of the nose, or of a life regulated by what is called in Yan-Ky, the Code of Honor, which is the practical contradiction and denial of the Law of Confucius, and of the Eternal Order of Things."

Whang refilled the Gozeh, and, after smoking quietly for a few moments, during which my memory recurred regretfully to China and Civilization, he thus commenced:

"The family of Zay-ni, which is one of the largest and the most respected in Yan-Ky, is descended from the king of some emerald island far beyond the Lost Atlantis, of whom it is recorded that, from time to time, he requested the leading men of his kingdom to tread upon the tail of his coat,—an expression of which there is no equivalent in Chinese. From extreme youth, he was carefully instructed in the orthodox doctrine of the nose; and, if any companion ridiculed its shape or color, he instantly vindicated it from reproach."

"In what manner?" I asked.

"By transforming his coat, in a means of a few magical robes, into a wine-butt, and then scanning claret from his nose," rejoined the serious Whang, while I fell into a more intolerable perplexity with every word he uttered.

"And what proved him, to be the Soul of Honor?" I asked faintly.

"Whang did not condescend to reply."

"As the youth grew, he disclosed a

new way of proving the propriety of his name. If any man brushed him roughly in passing, or looked at him, lady of Yan-Ky, or trod upon his foot instead of his coat-tail, in passing, Zay-ni instantly called him to account; and if prompt reparation was not made, demonstrated that he was the Soul of Honor."

"By —?" inquired I, doubtfully.

"By shooting him dead," replied Whang, sententially, and, I believe, according to the strict idiom of Yan-Ky.

"But the wife and children of the dead?"

"O Tay-Kin," responded Whang, "whoever undertakes to live in Yan-Ky, where the nose is held sacred, must not entangle himself with domestic alliances, for he can never tell when, where, nor in what shape, the injured nose may present itself, and demand satisfaction. The principles of the nose, or, as they are generally called, the Code of Honor, declare, that the fact that wife and children depend upon the tongue of a man, is a profound reason for his holding it fast, and not suffering it to wag against his neighbors."

"True," I answered; "but if your tongue wags against me, thereby exposing your wife and children, it may be well enough that you and your family suffer. But why should I and my family suffer, who are entirely innocent, and are wagged against? or why should the decision be left to a chance which may punish the offended, and let the offender free?"

"O Tay-Kin," replied Whang, "you do not understand the sublime mystery of the nose. Rather be silent, therefore, and listen. Long after Zay-ni was a full-grown man, which in Yan-Ky is upon the completion of the sixteenth year, he was one evening assisting at the frequently-recurring feast of Hele-an-to, the great god of the Yan-Ky nobility. In the midst of his devotions to that deity, while he was performing the priestly function with a solemnity and religious earnestness beyond all praise, another of the absorbed devotees encountered him suddenly, and for a moment they both tottered, but fortunately neither fell. Now during the performance of the solemn rites of Hele-an-to, the entire person of the devotee partakes of the sacred inviolability of the nose, and violently to touch the body is an aggravated assault upon that member. Zay-ni, therefore, having concluded the customary genuflection to his partner, who, in these Hele-an-to ceremonies, is always of the other sex, slipped smilingly into an adjoining apartment, and there met the young Spoonski. He requested Spoonski to inform Klumski, who had encountered him, that he demanded an apology for his awkwardness. Klumski, whom every body in Yan-Ky respected and loved, and who had recently married a young wife, who, with her infant, was fondly attached to him, said to Spoonski, that he was sorry that he had harmed Zay-ni, and regretted the encounter, but that he considered Zay-ni to be a very foolish fellow to demean himself so like an emperor; adding, that he feared Zay-ni was in the habit of eating fire, and cherished too exclusive a regard for his nose; and that, for his part, he should as soon consider a man who eat fire as much beside himself as he who only drank it; and precisely as much to be avoided, and treated as a dangerous neighbor."

"When Spoonski repeated this message to Zay-ni, his wrath was unbounded."

"He piles insult upon insult," said Zay-ni. He then departed to find his friends, while his nose, angrily flaming, led the way like a burning torch."

"He bumps me," he says he is sorry in an insulting manner; and my outraged nose is ready to drop," cried Zay-ni, fiercely. "By acknowledging his regret in such a manner, he makes his offense a deliberate insult, which if I endured I should ill deserve to be called the Soul of Honor."

"Perhaps you were hasty," said one.

"He is a coward!" said Zay-ni, the large Yan-Ky manner.

"But his wife and child," said another.

"But my nose!" cried Zay-ni, while that sacred member flamed with ardent thoughts of his friends.

"In vain things of the wise men, and quoted the nose of Confucius. Zay-ni coughed, and said:

"Oh, yes; that's all very well; but understand that kind of thing, you know. Do you suppose I am a woman?"

"Your sex seems to be a little uncertain," said the oldest friend. "You say that you are not a woman; but is this the conduct of a man?"

"So said a few of the thoughtful and the best. But Yan-Ky at large said that it was a pity Klumski should have criticised the conduct of Zay-ni. No man should make remarks concerning his townsmen which he is not willing to stand by. Klumski, on the other hand, said that he had made no remark that he was not willing to stand by; and

begged to repeat, that he considered Zay-ni to be a very foolish fellow. Upon which repetition, Zay-ni sent Spoonski, summoning Klumski to the duello.

"It is a great pity," said Yan-Ky; "but really, what can a man do? My dear, (addressing his wife,) it is most time for temple-service: you had better get ready."

"And thereupon Yan-Ky decorously went to the temple, and heard the priests read the laws of Confucius, and expound the behest of the Eternal Order of Things; and coming out of the temple, said, each man to the other,

"I am very much opposed to the duello. You know we have laws against it. But in this case, what can a man do?"

"Klumski, however, smiled, and returned this answer to Zay-ni, that he had considered him a foolish fellow, and had therefore called him so when occasion arose; but that now he had taken such pains to prove it to all the world, that he trusted there would be no longer any difference of opinion.

"Because you are a fool," said he, sternly, "I shall not be one; not even if all Yan-Ky, obeying its old, stupid superstition, undertakes to be foolish, and condemn me. Their tacit opinion justifies your conduct, thereby giving the measure of the worth of their opinion. I prefer to be right with myself, and with Confucius, and with the wise and brave, who perceive the Eternal Order of Things, rather than with those who support Zay-ni in his theory of the nose."

"Alas! my honored Wang," interrupted I, "I seem to be listening to stories of animals, and not of men. Who would have dreamed, that upon the same globe with our placid and discreet China, there could have existed a nation of such moral savages, the law of whose religion, and whose statute-book, was set aside by dull, unreasonable, and inexplicable superstition? Wonderful is travel! But pray, proceed with the story of Zay-ni, the Soul of Honor."

(CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.)

A STREET DIALOGUE.—Regular—"I go for letting people do as they choose about slavery—that's my Democracy. If they want it, let them have it, and if they don't want it, let them do without it. Why isn't that right?"

Independent—"You couldn't suit me better; only you must carry out the principle to the end. Some favor the plan of allowing a part to have slaves or not, as they may think best, and compelling the rest to be slaves, whether they like it or lump it. But the true rule is to let every one decide for himself, first, whether he will have slaves if he can get them, and secondly, whether he shall be a slave, if any one is willing to take him in that capacity. 'Let the People decide for themselves,' is my motto—not one for another, but every one for himself. Why isn't that true Democracy?"

Here Independent looked up and saw nothing of Regular but his coat-tail, horizontally extended, turning the next street-corner in double quick time.—N. Y. Tribune.

Whenever we have asserted that the National Administration has been perverted from its original aims, to foster the designs of Slavery, we have been charged with "sectionalism," "abolition prejudice," &c., &c. We offer an opinion on the same subject from the Charleston (S. C.) Courier, a leading slaveholding organ.

"The various occasions and the Southern Interests have first imported slavery in Congress, or, well worth an advantage, which who erroneously the consideration of the General suppose that it been, on the whole, Government slavery. The truth is, that adverse sentiment, although hostile, in its our City, to domestic Slavery, and if being into being with a strong bend toward abolition, yet afterwards so changed its policy that its action, for the most part, and with only a few exceptions, has fostered the Slave-holding interest, and swelled it from six to fifteen States, and from a feeble and sparse population to one of TEN MILLIONS!"—Albany Journal.

The Dublin Nation has quite turned upon its old friend John Mitchell. It says:

"His brain appears to have been turned, his heart to have grown hopelessly malcontent in exile, and he sees the world again only to scoff and sneer and make it echo with his egotism. Eight numbers of his paper still leave a doubt whether the writer is a little insane, or a good deal possessed of a devil."

A married gentleman, present at a rapping circle, being informed that the power depended wholly on the will, begged that his wife might try it, as he had never seen anything resist her will.

The Lady Philanthropist.

Mrs. Ames was sitting in her front room when she saw approaching Mrs. Armstrong, a very public spirited lady, who took a wonderful interest in all reforms and benevolent enterprises, especially those undertaken for the benefit of people at a distance.

"My dear Mrs. Ames," she commenced, "I am the agent of a sewing circle just established, the object of which is to provide suitable clothing for the children in Patagonia. I am told that they are in the habit of going about in a state of nature, which you know is dreadful to contemplate."

"Perhaps they are used to it," "But that's no reason why we shouldn't improve their condition. So we have agreed to hold meetings two evenings in a week with this object in view. Will you join?"

"I'm afraid I can't. I should be obliged to neglect my own children, as I presume will be the case with some who attend. Look, for example, at that boy in the street. He has a hole in each elbow, and his clothes are covered with mud. I presume his mother belongs to some of these benevolent associations, and hasn't time to attend to her own children."

"Mrs. Ames!" asked her visitor rising with indignation, "do you mean to insult me?"

"Insult you!" was the astonished reply; "of course not. What makes you think so?"

"Do you know who that boy is, of whom you speak?"

"No, I don't; but I should like to." "You would? Well, ma'am your curiosity shall be gratified. He is my son—George Washington Jackson Armstrong! What have you to say to that?"

"Say, why nothing. Only it's unfortunate for the poor boy that he wasn't born a Patagonian!"

Mrs. Armstrong, without a word of reply, swept out of the room with the majesty of a queen.

She is still canvassing for the sewing circle in behalf of the Patagonians, while George Washington Jackson is permitted to roam at will through the streets, on condition that he will not venture within sight of Mrs. Ames' window.

MORAL.—Philanthropy, like charity, should begin at home, though there is no occasion for its ending there.

Cain.

The following paragraph from the Louisville Courier, of Saturday, suggests the heading of this:

MOVEMENTS OF MATT WARD.—We have already noticed the arrival of Matt Ward and brother at Cannelton, Ind. They had been in town but a short time, before, as we learn from the Huntsville Eagle, a committee of citizens waited upon them and desired them to leave the place. Thereupon they went to Judge Huntington's, some distance in the country; and after a tedious passage in the Eclipse of Arkansas. When the steamer reached Henderson, a large crowd collected at the wharf and ordered the captain Eclipse with his boat and cargo.

passed Paducah Thursday and should be a wanderer again. He finds no refuge, no abode, wherever he goes venturing his life. His case is not one of Prometheus, bound to the rock but like that of Orestes pursued by the Furies.—Cleveland Leader.

An Honest Man—With a Qualification.

Judge W., who has been for many years a worthy occupant of the Federal bench in Michigan, fell into conversation a few days since in a barber's shop, with a plain, substantial looking and rather aged stranger, from the neighborhood of Tecumseh. The Judge being formerly well acquainted in that vicinity took occasion to ask after certain of its citizens.

"You know Mr. B. do you?" said the Judge.

"Very well," was the reply.

"He is well, is he?"

"Quite well," was the reply—when Judge W. remarked,

"Mr. B. is a very fine man."

"Yes," said the old farmer, rather cautiously, "a fine man for a lawyer—you know we don't expect a great deal of them!"

LAND OWNERS IN FRANCE.—The tax books for the year 1854, show that 12,000,000 of the inhabitants, or one in three, own land, with or without buildings upon it. It may be safely said, that in no country, and at no period, has there been such a general subdivision of the soil. Some of the lots are very small, but nevertheless the holder is a landed proprietor, and proud of the title.

We hope our next Congress will disclose what proportion of this country are owners of the soil they cultivate, distinguishing North from South.—Trib.