

BURMAH AND ITS PEOPLE.

A LAND OF REMARKABLE SIGHTS AND QUEER IDEAS.

Horrible Beggars Who Line the Way to the Great Pagoda—The Wonderful Golden Dome.

BURMAH is a country of queer sights and strange sounds. I was talking a few days since to Professor S. S. Baldwin, the famed traveler, so well known throughout the East by the title of "The White Mahatma." Said he: "Burma is what an American girl would call a funny country."

Rangoon is an attractive city of beautiful buildings, stately pagodas and long avenues, overhung with magnificent shade trees, yet right through the centre of one of these beautiful boulevards runs a sluggish open stream of the nature of a sewer, in which dead dogs, cats and rats make the air redolent with a perfume that is not at all suggestive of "Araby the Blest."

At Rangoon is the great golden pagoda, situated at the top of a hill in the outskirts of the city. The roadway from the valley to the top of the hill consists of a series of irregular steps, some ten or twelve feet wide, and from three to ten inches high. These steps are entirely inclosed on the left side (as you proceed toward the top), and are covered with an arched and vaulted roof. On the right side the roof is supported by pillars and arches opening out on a terrace of gardens and walled inclosures. This stairway is about one-eighth of a mile long, and at the bottom on each side are two enormous dragons, some thirty or forty feet high, carved out of brick and plaster work. These dragons have immense mouths wide open, showing horrible fangs and a protruding tongue, while the tail of the beast is curled and forked, like that of the traditional devil. The architecture is extremely quaint and interesting, as well as beautiful. The pagoda itself is built in the center of, and surrounded by, an immense garden of palm trees, in one of the most beautiful spots that one can conceive of, and if the place and the approaches were kept clean it would be a lovely spot. But at the very entrance of the stairway, each side is simply lined with the most disgusting beggars—men, women and children, but mostly men and women—thin and attenuated, and mostly with some portion of their body half eaten away with leprosy. These people simply swarm around the traveler, clamoring for alms, thrusting their mutilated arms and limbs, that have been partially eaten off by the ravages of the disease, fairly into one's face; sometimes an eye will be gone or a portion of the jaw. If charity is given to one, it is almost a necessity to give it to all his comrades, for they crowd around you like flies, and fairly bar your passage.

Most tourists before visiting this pagoda, which at one time was deemed so wonderful and beautiful that it was included in one of the lists of the seven wonders of the world, are cautioned to take with them a stout stick, also a light rattan switch. The stick is intended as a defense against the pariah dogs, with which the place is overrun. The light rattan is to be used to keep the beggars at a distance, for cruel as it may seem, often the only way to keep them from absolute annoyance is by a vigorous slashing at their bare backs or nude limbs, and then they will often stand at a little distance and spit at the traveler and overwhelm him with curses and imprecations. As the beggars are all religious mendicants, they are looked upon by most of the natives with perhaps somewhat of a spirit of modified veneration, and unless the English traveler is accompanied by a party sufficiently large to be perfectly able to take care of themselves it is just possible he might be roughly handled by the natives in case of any hurt to one of the beggars. Should the tourist be accompanied by a native policeman, which is often the case, the policeman has no hesitation at all in pushing the beggars right and left as if they were nine pins, so that they generally keep at a respectful distance.

It is said that it cost some eighty or ninety thousand dollars to gild the dome of the large pagoda, but this is done every two years or thereabouts. This is usually the gift of religious Burmans as an offering to Buddha.

Professor Baldwin, who has had very many years of Oriental travel, states that one of the most peculiar things which he has ever seen is the rocking pagoda at a Burmese village many miles up the Irawaddy. This pagoda was originally built on the top of a very large boulder of granite, some sixty or seventy feet high. After the pagoda was built the lower part of the boulder was gradually removed and rounded until now it seems as if the pagoda was resting upon an enormous ball or globe of solid rock. The rock is so nicely balanced that a heavy wind or the exertion of a person pushing strongly on the rock will cause it to slightly oscillate. It does not go far enough to cause any damage, but rolls and rocks backward and forward like an enormous rocking chair. This pagoda is kept exclusively for the priests. The only access to it being by means of a rope ladder, which is drawn up after them, they are thus kept from annoyance.

The phoogy, or priests, are very numerous, each father, especially among the better class, making every effort so that one son at least shall belong to the order. They are a lazy and insolent lot, and to the European observer never seem to be engaged in any special duties except squatting on their haunches and holding conversations with each other, or else squat-

ting in the same position for hours, gazing dreamily into the distance and supposed to be contemplating the virtues and graces of Buddha, or in earnest prayer for the joys of Nirvana, the Buddhist heaven, where each and all lose individuality and finally sink into a deep and eternal sleep and become a part of the great mother nature.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

Oldest specimens of glass are Egyptian.

Fishes can be frozen hard without losing their vitality.

Spider silk thread is used to some extent in Madagascar.

Storm warnings were first given early in the last century.

The best specimens of alabaster carvings have been exhumed at Ninevah.

The first cardiologist is said to have been Antiphitis, an Egyptian, about B. C. 332.

The perfectly round pearls are the most valuable; next in order come the pear-shaped, and lastly, the egg-shaped.

Species of snakes that are enemies of one another in captivity will curl up into their winter sleep in the same bundle.

Research shows that there is not a particle of vegetation in the eastern part of the North Sea. It is one great watery waste.

The woodpecker has a three-barbed tongue like a Fijian spear, with which it draws out the worm which it has excited by its tapping.

A seventeen-year-old girl, who was arrested in Brooklyn recently on the charge of vagrancy, could converse fluently in six languages.

Bicycle riders in Southland, Australia, are required to dismount twenty-two yards from an approaching horse and draw their wheels past.

The last criminals who were beheaded in England were the Cato street conspirators in 1820, though they had previously been killed by hanging.

If man had been limited to the use of his natural weapons of defense he would long since have been beaten out of the contest by the animal kingdom.

The people of Italy are the most heavily taxed of any civilized nation. The State taxation equals twenty-two per cent. of the earnings of the people.

Drone cells are larger than workers' cells. The queen cells are still larger and may be easily recognized, as they always point downward after being capped.

Mrs. John Shenk, living near Lebanon, Penn., went into her cellar to procure some provisions recently, and while there was stung by a copperhead snake. A favorite cat which accompanied Mrs. Shenk attacked the reptile and killed it.

A farmer tells of a sheep with twin lambs, one of which was blind. The mother and the other twin lamb evidently knew that the little one was sightless, for they were unwearied in their care lest it should come to harm. A kindly "butt" from one or the other prevented it from running into danger.

Every one is familiar with the strength of an egg, pressed endwise between the palms of both hands. Strong men, even with fingers locked, have been unable to break an egg held in this manner. One was tested at the Waterville, (N. Y.) Arsenal recently in the testing machine, and it required sixty-five pounds to crush the egg.

Dressing Small Skins.

Small skins may be dressed and made equal to tanned ones by the simple process called tawing. This is as follows: The skin is soaked in warm water to soften the adhering flesh and fat, these being then scraped or shaved off with a sharp knife, such as a mowing scythe, with a smooth, keen edge, the skin lying on a rounded block or slab. The skins are then placed in a tub of a solution of equal parts of sugar of lead, alum and salt, and remain in it for a week, being turned and opened so that every part is exposed to the liquid. After the skins have absorbed all the liquid, or rather those substances which are drawn from the water by the skins, they are taken out and again shaved and partly dried, then well rubbed and pulled, to soften the skin, until nearly dry. The inner side of the skin is then rubbed with a smooth piece of pumice stone and yellow ochre until it is smooth and soft; when thoroughly dry this is repeated until all dust is got rid of. A little oil may be slightly rubbed over the fur to brighten and soften it.—New York Times.

Buttermilk as a Drink.

For a cooling drink in hot weather there is nothing more generally satisfactory than buttermilk. It is none the worse for being from cream that has undergone the acid fermentation, its slight acidity making it agree better with most people than does absolutely fresh, sweet milk. There are thousands in cities who were brought up on farms in the country, and to such a drink of buttermilk is a treat. No doubt in every village farmers who make butter could find a good market for buttermilk if they look up customers who would like to drink it occasionally if they knew where it could be procured.—Boston Cultivator.

A Shoplifter's Bogus Baby.

A Parisian shoplifter carried a bogus baby with her during her predatory excursions. The infant had a wax face and a hollow, leather body. It was the thief's custom to dexterously transfer pilloined articles, such as gloves, lace, etc., to the spacious baby.—Chicago Herald.

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Baby's Sitting Posture.

Careful mothers give much attention to the first sitting posture of a child in the baby carriage, where the continued motion may exert a wrong influence in curving the spine, says the Philadelphia Ledger. Miss Lindley, a physical culturist, observes that "careful thought should be given to the chair that succeeds the high chair at the table. This must have the seat of a length to correspond to the child's thigh from the back to the bent knee. Then the leverage of the spine in supporting the body in its correct sitting posture is brought from the extreme lower end, instead of at the waist, as is the case when the chair is too deep for the length of the child's thigh. The back of the chair should be straight instead of hollow.

Virtues of Hot Baths.

Warm baths will often prevent the most virulent diseases. A person who may be in fear of having received infection of any kind should take a warm bath, suffer perspiration to ensue, and then rub dry. He is advised to dress warmly to guard against taking cold. If the system has imbibed any infectious matter it will be removed by resorting to the warm bath if the latter is taken before the infection has had time to spread over the system; and even if some time has elapsed, the drenching perspiration that may be induced by hot water will be very likely to remove it. In cases of congestion, bilious colic, inflammation, etc., there is no remedy more certain to give relief than a hot bath. In cases of obstinate constipation, also, wonderful cures have been wrought.—New York Dispatch.

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