

### SACRED WHITE ELEPHANTS.

#### THE ANIMAL THAT IS WORSHIPED IN THE EAST.

Member of the Royal Family—Its Capture and Life-Histories—Ceremonies.

It is the general impression that the white elephant is specifically different from others, but this is not the case. Of the fourteen or more various elephants that formerly existed in this country, Europe and Africa, only two, the African and Asiatic, are alive to-day, and white elephants are likely to occur among either. Albinoism, however, occurs more frequently among the Indian races than any other, and it is merely the result of the absence of the minute particles of coloring matter that the microscope shows us in the lowest layer of the epidermis, or what we call outer skin, that is, the color-giving layer.

Albinoes have always been regarded with superstition in the East; especially white monkeys revered, and records from the earliest times contain mention of them. The common white animals were prized, and quite naturally the rare ones were revered by a people among whom superstition has reigned for centuries, and so it comes that the possession of these creatures is considered the greatest possible honor. It is said that the king of Ava is called the "Lord of the White Elephants," and considers it one of his proudest titles. Twelve years ago the king of Siam at Bangkok received intelligence that a baby white elephant had been captured in the northeastern portion of British Burmah, in the vicinity of Tounghoo. It was brought to the capital with magnificence and pomp, and nursed on the way and later by twelve native women selected especially for the honor. Even under this treatment the infant died, and the nation went into mourning, all occupations ceasing for several days, and the entire populace shaving their heads.

Such attention is not surprising when it is realized that the white elephant, be it mottled, yellow, brown, or gray, is considered and looked upon as a member of the royal family, ranking next to the queen. As a matter of course, less important officials and dignitaries are anxious to claim relationship to it; hence the king of Cambodia calls himself the "First Cousin of the White Elephant;" the prime minister of Siam, the "General of the Elephants." The king of Burmah is styled the "Lord of the Celestial Elephant," the king of Siam the "Master of Many White Elephants," and the foreign minister of Cochinchina "Mandarin of Elephants," which, in fact, is only a few of the titles acquired by attendance upon these pampered brutes.

The royal white elephant has its corps of attendants of royal blood, mandarins of the highest class, its cabinet, its special priest and medical attendant, or generally those who divide their services between the elephant and the human king. In years gone by the white elephant has been worshipped by all classes and considered sacred as being the temporary abode of a mighty Buddha. It is now regarded as a deity and worshipped by the lower classes, the most intelligent nobles only considering it an ornament of good luck to possess them, and an honor; but this regard is carried to such an extreme that it is akin to worship.

As early as 1500 the white elephant was the cause of numberless wars between Siam and other outlying kingdoms, and during one conflict over one of the animals five kings and thousands of soldiers were killed. The animals are found by accident when hunting for others, and the discovery is the making of the finder, as he is immediately, no matter how low his condition, made a mandarin, exempted from all taxation for life, and rewarded with a large sum of money. The news of the capture is carried to the capital by a special messenger, and a season of rejoicing begins. A proper place is at once prepared for its reception, and its attendants appointed from the highest nobles in the land. These proceed to the place of capture, conveying choice gifts. If the captive has been bound with ropes, these emissaries change them for others of scarlet or white silk, and rich canopies of silver, white and gold cloth, fans of feathers, coverings and rich robes are all used to protect the newly discovered member of the royal family from the heat, cold or from troublesome insects. If near a navigable stream, a vessel is especially prepared for the purpose, decked with silk, gilt and precious stones, and covered with a canopy copied from that of the royal palace itself. Thus in gorgeous trappings the animal sails down the river, receiving the acclamation of the villages on the way and showers of gifts.

If taken overland, it is escorted by mandarins and nobles and other elephants that conduct it through the farms, the people offering up their possessions with a free hand. When once in the city the entire population enters upon a three days' time of rejoicing. The mandarins of the nation now present their gifts, which are often of the most expensive kind. One lately described was a vase of solid gold that weighed 480 ounces. The animal is placed in the royal stall prepared for it, its surroundings being those of a monarch. One nobleman brushes insects from it; another feeds it with choice fruits. About its tusks are bracelets or bands of solid gold, while the blankets that cover its ugly body are of the richest stuffs that can be obtained. If of a vicious disposition, it is shackled to the ground by a chain that is gilded or plated, and made as rich and expensive as possible.

If the white elephant dies, it is considered a national loss. The body lies in state for some time, and then is placed upon a magnificent funeral pyre composed of the choicest stuffs and woods, the gifts of thousands of mourners. Valuable logs of sandal, and other aromatic woods are used and finally lighted, the fire being kept up by four enormous gilt bellows, one at each corner, that are blown by noblemen. When the body is entirely cremated, it is allowed to lie three days, when the sacred ashes are collected by a mandarin and placed in valuable urns, which are conveyed to the cemetery of the King and buried with much ceremony. This would naturally be the last of the animal, but now architects and builders are gathered, and the outcome of their conference and labor is a mausoleum built over the ashes, of richest design and workmanship, and to this place devoted mourners oft go,

leaving gifts in memory of the great departed. The money value of the white elephant is difficult to determine, and what was paid for the one that is to be exhibited to the Parisians and Londoners before reaching this country, will probably never be known. Fifty thousand dollars is given by Sir John Bowring, an authority on white elephants, as a possible money value of one, but he also leaves us in doubt by saying that a few hairs from the white elephant's tail were worth a fortune.

This recalls a curious incident of Sir John's visit to the king of Siam. He was charged with a state message to the king, and on his return home was presented with a golden box with instructions to present it to her majesty as a gift from the king of Siam. It was delivered to the queen in due time, and when opened found to contain a few hairs from the tail of one of the king's white elephants.

### WISDOMS.

#### OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

Better three hours too soon than one minute too late.

Kindness is the only charm permitted to the aged; it is the quarry of white hair.

We must consider humanity as a man who continually grows old, and always learns.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.

All our infirmities vanity is the dearest. A man will starve his other virtues to keep that alive.

Power turns a deaf ear to the reproaches of those who are without the power of redressing their wrongs.

Virtue will catch as well as vice by contact; and the public stock of, honest, manly principle will daily accumulate.

He seldom lives frugally, who lives by chance. Hope is always liberal, and they that trust her promises make little scruples of reveling to-day on the profits of to-morrow.

Men seem neither to understand their riches nor their strength—the former they believe greater things than they should; of the latter much less. Self-reliance and self-denial will teach a man to drink out of his own cistern, and to eat his own sweet bread, and to learn and labor truly to get his living, and carefully to expend the good things committed to his trust.

### Two Beauties.

#### THE FAT ONE.

This is the fate of a fat beauty: At 12—Plump, fat and ruddy. Weight, seventy pounds.

At 16—Plumper, fatter, exuberant and a bursting bud. Weight, 120 pounds.

At 20—A blossom bloomed, exuberant. Weight, 180 pounds.

At 25—A full-blown Juno. Massive, stately, approaching heroic size. Imposing. Begins to find car seats too small. Wedges when she sits down. Very exuberant. Weight, 180 pounds.

At 30—Matronly. Imposing still, but the finer contour of form swallowed up slightly in adipose. Magnificent but barrel-like.

At 35—Large. Too large. Complexion brick red. Double chin. Short of breath. Weight, 200 pounds.

At 40—Gone. Remains of a once magnificent woman. Vast remains. Imposing ruins. More double chin. Walk a waddle. Sad. Weight, 220 pounds. —New York Graphic.

### THE LEAN ONE.

This is the fate of a thin beauty: At 12—Sickly, pale and uninteresting. Weight, forty pounds.

At 16—Delicate, slender, sprightly and graceful. Weight, eighty pounds.

At 20—A study for a painter. Lithic, sinuous, Grecian in face and mold. Weight, 100 pounds.

At 25—Queerly in form and motion, with a peachy complexion, small delicate hands and wee little feet. Weight, 120 pounds.

At 30—Beginning to fade; veins show on hands, cheek bones just indicated. Weight, 105 pounds.

At 35—Eyes retreating; fine lines on forehead; cheeks concave; form, wiry. Weight, ninety pounds.

At 40—Face hatched shaped; nose and chin very sharp; two holes where the cheeks were; hands like claws; form all gone; a living skeleton. Weight, seventy pounds.

Moral—You buy your wedding ring and takes your choice. —Philadelphia Call.

### Out a Great Deal.

"Have you been out much this season?" asked young Yeast of young Crismonk at the club the other evening.

"Well I should say I had," replied the young blood addressed, earnestly; "I took that little Miss Bangerhar out to a ball the other night and I was out just \$40!"

Yeast thinks it about time for some one to appoint his friend with salt.—Statesman.

The Shakers of South Union, Iowa—one of the thirteen Shaker communities in the United States—own 20,000 acres in one of the best parts of Louisiana.

New-Eng-Machine Invents.

"Found that on one of my hills," he said, as he drew up a chair and sat down.

The ears of the man from the Quaker city began to work, and his heart to thump. The native looked green, and perhaps he didn't know the value of that hill.

"What you got?" asked the broker, as he came from behind his desk.

"Oh, nuthin' much—just a little hunk I found on one of my hills," was the reply.

The broker took the hunk, carefully examined it for a minute, and then quietly remarked:

"Yes, I recognize it. I sold that hunk four weeks ago to salt a hill in the next county! Please put it in your coat-tail pocket and move on. It's too rich for our blood!"—Wall Street News.

A Little Russian's Bath.

A little mouschik is taught to be very clean—once a week. The Russian creed requires him to bathe every Saturday, and he does so religiously, but does not see much water between times, and sleeps by night in the clothes he wears by day. Even the Russians of better families content themselves with a dry polish instead of a washing. Little Ivan's bath would be a trying thing for an English child. First he is steamed till he is half suffocated in a hole under the stove or in one of the vapor baths constructed in rude manner in all Russian villages. Then he crawls out, and mother half drowns him with pailfuls of hot water. Then she pours ice-cold water over him, or sends him out to have a roll in the snow, after which little Ivan dresses, with pride, having had all the cleaning he will get for a week.

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