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CHALKING CHINAMEN.

How the Custom House Agents inspect the
Chinese.

THE San Francisco Chronicle of a
recent date says:

The landing of a thousand Chinamen on the Pacific Mail wharf creates a scene of most amazing confusion and disorder, and presents many curious studies in life—studies brilliant only in physical color; dreary and blank enough otherwise. The City of Tokio arrived on Sunday with 1,040 Chinese steerage passengers, and having passed quarantine was at once placed alongside the wharf and commenced unloading passengers. The Chinamen are discharged from a freight port-hole down a gang-plank and into an improvised pen, where their persons and baggage are searched by the Custom House officers. The pen begins at the gangplank and includes a space on the wharf about one hundred feet long and twenty-five feet wide, running parallel with the length of the wharf. On one side of the pen is the bay; the other three sides are fenced in by an iron fence, outside of which and at a distance from it of six feet a rope is stretched. This rope prevents outside Chinamen from coming too near the pen and receiving contraband goods from the passengers. In the end of the pen farthest from the gangplank is a gate, guarded by two officers, between whom the Chinamen pass after their backs and baggage are properly chalked by the examining officers. Two hundred and fifty Chinamen are taken from the ship into the pen at a time. When all is ready they begin to crowd out of the porthole, which is so low that they must stoop to pass through and on to the gangplank. They crowd from the inside so in their eagerness to land that the porthole is frequently blocked and impassable, until after a vast amount of pulling and hauling one of the wedged-in mass is extricated, and the gorge being broken, those behind fairly pop out like a champagne cork from the impelling force behind. Each one has his baggage lashed to either end of a bamboo pole and slung across his shoulder, which makes the work of breaking a "deadlock" all the harder. Half way down the gangplank each Chinaman is stopped by a special police officer, to whom some kind of a ticket is delivered.

At the foot of the gangplank a costless and perspiring custom house officer grasps the stumbling, overburdened Chinaman by the arm or shoulder and gives him an energetic push towards the further end of the pen. Sometimes the Chinaman is strong enough, or well enough balanced on his feet, to retain his equilibrium under the circumstances, but generally he is not, and sprawls out on the wharf and is buried under his bags and baggage. This always gains the officer a round of applause from the crowd around the outside of the pen. As they leave the gangplank officers excitedly direct the Chinamen to the lower end of the pen, packing them as close together as their baggage will permit them to stand. Each Chinaman carries his bedding, extra clothes, shoes, hats, etc.; his extra household goods, including tin cooking utensils, dried vegetables of various kinds, drugs, medicines, smoking outfit, and a strange and varied assortment of articles of all kinds and shapes, packed in baskets, chests, trunks, bags, bamboo and straw matting, and in every imaginable character of baggage. As the baggage is tumbled and dumped on the wharf the Chinamen are directed to open it, and,

as in its most compact form it leaves not an inch of space uncovered, the untying, opening and distributing process results in articles becoming buried, overlaid, hidden, lost, and utterly and seemingly inextricably mixed. When thirty or forty Chinamen have been crowded into the end of the pen nearest the gate, the corps of twenty custom house inspectors begin the process of "going through" the outspread baggage. What was confusion now becomes chaos. The officers walk over the baggage, open bags and trunks, dive their arms into the interior of packages and scatter their contents in bewildering drifts. While this is going on more of the allotted two hundred and fifty are being packed in the pen. Every Chinaman gesticulates and talks; every officer explores, sweats and comments. Hustled on the wharf, into this scene of wild confusion, the Chinaman, without the remotest idea of what it is all about, is jerked to the edge of the mass of squirming fellow-countrymen, unlashes his baggage, opens it, sees it scattered, collects what he can of it, stands upright to be searched from his outer garments to the skin; is chalked on his back and told to "git."

The search of their person and baggage is very thorough, yet few articles are confiscated. Two officers move about with large bags, into which some of the confiscated articles—some of them—are thrust. An occasional piece of silk, a bundle of fans, a few packages of tobacco, or a few silk handkerchiefs constitute the general run of discovered contraband articles. The search for opium is unusually strict, even the shoes on the Chinamen's feet being examined. A Chronicle reporter on Sunday noticed an inspector take off one Chinaman's shoe, look into it, and was about to give it back to its owner when something about it attracted his attention. He weighed it in his hand a moment and then took out his knife and tried to dig into the sole of the shoe, which appeared to be an unusually fine one. The owner saw this with dismay, but suddenly seemed to comprehend the meaning of it, explained to the officer in pantomime how the shoe's interior could be investigated without its utter annihilation, but the officer, taking both shoes, went to the edge of the wharf and proceeded with gimlets, corkscrews and knife to carefully dissect the shoes. Finding nothing in them, he tossed them into the bay, to the astonishment of the bare-footed owner. Some of the Chinamen had boxes containing expensive and beautifully prepared confectionery. One inspector, happening upon a box of this character, took a handful and passed them over a fence to a lady friend. Another inspector did the same with some handkerchiefs. Another donated to himself a box of toilet powder, while a third, happening to find three silk handkerchiefs in a Chinaman's bundle, handed them to another inspector, who pocketed them instead of putting them in the bag. A moment afterwards the reporter asked the inspector who had found the handkerchiefs: "What is done with the articles taken from the Chinamen?"

"We put them in the bags those men hold there, and they are afterwards sold at auction," replied the inspector, definitely and promptly.

As the Chinamen gather up and repack such of their goods as they can find, they are hustled out of the gate into a scene equally confusing, but more friendly. Friends and relatives meet them and put them and their baggage into the waiting express wagons; they are driven to Chinatown and absorbed into the dingy sponge. After one batch of 250 have been examined the wharf inside the pen limits is strewn with odd tin utensils, tobacco, dried vegetables, fans, torn matting, caps and bamboo poles. These are kicked off into the bay, for the inspectors are too pressed for time to allow the Chinamen to claim them and gather them up. Then another batch is poured out of the porthole, go stumbling down the gangplank and are spread out and "inspected." The fact that the inspector cannot understand the comments of the Chinamen, nor they the remarks of the inspector, doubtless accounts, in a large measure, for the absence of any rebellion on the one side, or ill-nature on the other. About one in ten of the Chinamen have their thin, bony legs covered with stockings, but this scarcity of

covering of the lower extremity is averaged by the amount of clothing around their bodies which are swathed in from four to six padded silk garments. Inside the pen the reporter noticed several intelligent-looking Chinamen wearing silver badges, denoting them to be agents of the several Chinese companies. The reporter spoke to one of these and asked him why he did not go on board the ship and explain to the passengers the inspection they would be subjected to, and other matters which would have the effect of avoiding a great deal of the confusion. The agent replied that a recent order of the steamship company or the custom house forbade them from boarding the ship until the passengers were all landed. The reporter asked the question for the reason that it was plain to see that the Chinamen had no idea of what was expected of them.

They staggered on the wharf under their loads, and were pushed and jammed around by the inspectors, without a suspicion or previous information of what the official pushing and jamming all tended to. They looked like a drove of bewildered cattle in the receiving yard of a slaughter house, and if they hesitated in a dazed, uncertain way for a moment, looking for some friendly counsel or waiting for a directing word, they suffered the penalty of their innocent ignorance by an unceremonious but official clutch and bounce, all in a heap atop of some other equally obtuse and struggling passenger. If a Chinaman staggered and fell on the gangplank his basket of household goods and gods, scattered in all directions, were kicked after him, some falling on the wharf and some in the bay. The unlucky wretch would take the loss of his goods hardly, but the inspectors were too busy to treat him otherwise. Of course the agents of the Six Companies helped their countrymen as much as they could. In the excitement and hurry of their first energetic reception by the muscular inspector at the foot of the gangplank they would unknowingly drop bundles, which some inspector would pick up and heave into the midst of the confused mass of baggage, Chinamen and inspectors. If the bundle hit a Chinaman on the head the crowd on the wharf cheered. The agents would then run after the baggage so happily thrown and endeavor to find it and return it to its owner. The entire lot of 1,040 passengers were inspected, chalked and passed out of the pen in about three hours.

An Immigrant's Bath.

"THERE is the honest immigrant," said the tall, thin passenger. "I believe he is going to wash his face."

And really it did look as though that was the man's mad intention. He had gone to a clear pool of water beside the track, and was apparently getting ready for his ablutions.

"See him peel off his raiment," said the man on the wood-box.

"He hasn't very much to peel off," the fat passenger said.

"Wait," said the tall thin passenger, he hasn't got started yet."

The immigrant first unwrapped a comforter from his neck and then slowly took off a gray overcoat with a short waist and long skirts, reaching to his heels. Then he unwound a red woolen comforter from his neck, and took off a short pea-jacket of heavy blue cloth. Then he unwrapped a gray comforter from his neck, and took off a leather jacket, very tight-fitting and very greasy. He then unwound a long flannel scarf from his neck and took off a black vest, and then he released his neck from the folds of a gray woolen comforter, and then he took off a red vest and unwound another comforter, and then he took off another vest and a flannel scarf that was tied around his neck, and another vest, and another comforter and another scarf and another vest and another comforter and another vest—

"That man robbed a clothing house," said the cross passenger.

The immigrant calmly unwrapped from his neck a long woolen comforter—

"I wonder," said the fat passenger, "if he got through the custom house in that way?"

And he took off another vest—

"Why!" exclaimed the tall, thin,

passenger, "he is no bigger than I am." And then he unrolled another comforter from his neck—

"By George!" exclaimed the man on the wood-box, "he'll get down to his bones in two more 'peels.'"

And the immigrant calmly unbuttoned another vest—

Suddenly the whistle of the train was heard in the distance, and another of the party of immigrants shrieked to the would-be-bather:

"Jarliche Jans Krund Bjorneske Bjornesakessen! Hodflikklendienen dgakrominieke thorlikjd sounden de smockerick ach eada trainege ausgekomiekl!"

And then the race began. The train came along, waited three minutes, and sped away, and long, long after we left the station we could look back and see that rash immigrant from the land of Njordvalden shooting himself into a job lot of parti-colored vests, and hauling upon himself an avalanche of comforters, in the vain hope of snowing himself under in time to catch the next train.

"I have often wondered," the jester said, musing, "why the immigrants never bathe from the time they leave Castle Garden until they get to their homes in the far West. I understand it now. That man, in his laudable desire to wash up, will lose a whole week before he can dress himself. And even then he had not got undressed far enough down to wash his neck."

"Wauseon!" shouted the brakeman.

"Was he on?" queried the fat passenger. "Was he on what? He wasn't on the train by twenty miles, but he was on a whole Chatham street bankrupt stock of vests and comforters, and don't you forget it. What was he on, anyhow?"

How She Cured Him of Swearing.

The husband of a Nashville lady was, before his marriage, a furious swearer. Through his wife's influence he left off this bad habit, except one favorite cuss word, which clung to him under all circumstances, and which, to the great annoyance of the good wife, he would unconsciously use everywhere—the word "damn."

Several months since he arose one cold morning, before the servant came in to make the wood fire, and, after a long effort, and the fruitless burning of many matches, turned and said: "Sallie, this damn fire won't burn." To this the good wife earnestly said: "Yes, the damn wood is too green, and the damn servant has forgotten to bring up any damn kindling to start the damn fire with." He looked at his wife in absolute dismay, but at once saw the point and said nothing.

A longer period than usual passed without the favorite expletive being used, but later on he wanted a basket, and said after looking for it: "Sallie, where has the damn basket got to?" The wife, quietly, as if putting a child to sleep, said: "Ask the damn cook to get you the damn basket—damn her, she keeps it." As before, he said nothing, but months have passed, and if he damns anything it is not where she is. She says it was like taking quinine, and she always went and washed out her mouth afterwards, but he is cured.

Then and Now.

Wendell Phillips, in a lecture delivered in New York, cited some striking facts to show how wonderful has been the advance in journalism of late years. When the battle of Waterloo took place the London Times devoted only one-third of a column to a description of it; whereas a full-page history of the recent Ute massacre of ten persons in California was given to the readers of our great dailies. Mr. Phillips could find no detailed account in any of the files of the Boston papers of 1835, of the mobbing of William Lloyd Garrison, which occurred in that year, and was an event "which shook the city while it lasted." President Harrison had been dead ten days in 1841 before the news reached Springfield, Ill., and then Abraham Lincoln would not believe it because it seemed impossible for it to have come in so short a time. Now you can buy in the afternoon a newspaper in which you "may read the

words Queen Victoria spoke to her parliament since the sun rose in England."

To illustrate the degree of enlightenment afforded by newspapers, Mr. Phillips said: "The man who reads the paper has a telegraph wire that connects him with the world, and the man that does not read might as well be Robinson Crusoe on his island."

Table D'Hote Abroad.

Breakfast on the continent always means only bread and coffee; to the laboring people it means a bowl of broth and a bit of bread, or bread alone. The American, however, will find himself served with butter and eggs or meat, unless he has previously ordered a "plain breakfast," when he will receive the usual bread and coffee. The noted table d'hote is perhaps the least susceptible of change. It usually is served at 6 o'clock—an hour when the day's toil is over and the meal can be taken at leisure.—It is the social meal of the day, and all the guests of the hotel are expected to meet at the table. It requires never less than an hour, oftener two, and unless your company is entertaining, it is a long and dreary process. Perhaps you have been told that there will be ten or fifteen courses, and if uninitiated, you have your mind made up that for once you will have your usual "square meal," but when the waiter, with necktie and shirt front of immaculate whiteness, brings you a small piece of bread and a dish of slightly colored water called soup, you proceed with quiet resignation, with the belief that you will have dinner presently; but your curiosities is only the more aroused when the plates are changed, and, after a long, dreary waiting, you receive a very small bit of fish, then the table is cleared again, and you are served with a bit of chicken; like a true American, you have dispatched your bread long enough since, and you take chicken and "play it alone;" but you conclude it is "passing strange" when you learn that buttered chestnuts and nothing else, or a bit of cheese alone, will be served as a course, and so you continue for an hour or two in patient expectation of the meal that never comes. My Yankee friend puts it exactly right when he said: "There is a mouthful to eat and then a square acre of silence." I shall always respect the American who, the other day, when he had borne patiently until the meal was half over, thundered out to the waiter, "Good gracious! Life is too short to be wasted in this manner, sir! For heaven's sake bring me something to eat."

Ostriches.

A large business is done at Cape Colony in the way of farming ostriches for their plucking. It is only twelve years since the business was started in Cape Colony, and the industry is most profitable. Last year ostrich feathers to the value of \$2,500,000 were exported from the Cape. A guaranteed good pair of birds, aged four years, can be purchased for \$1,000, and these bring in the first year \$100 for feathers. If the breeder has ordinary luck they ought to hatch twenty chicks, which when six months old are worth from \$40 to \$50 each. Thus, in the first year, the farmer is often repaid for the whole outlay. The first plucking takes place when the birds are about twelve months old, the feathers being then worth about \$2.50. The next plucking realizes about \$7.50, and so on, increasing in value as the bird ages. Ostriches require very little room, the breeding birds being kept in small paddocks of about four or five acres in extent, and they feed upon Indian corn, or almost any kind of grain.

The United States Treasury building in Washington contains over \$1,400,000 of unclaimed interest upon Government bonds. This sum is growing larger every day. This money can be drawn by applying for it to the Secretary of the Treasury by those entitled to it, stating the number of the registered bond upon which the interest is due and unpaid. There are thousands of persons who have bought bonds and not knowing how to get the interest on them, prefer to lose the same rather than expose the fact that they have the bonds. Others have interest due them and actually forget the fact, and it lies in the Treasury vaults waiting for them to apply for it. Should one of the clerks in the bond division inform a person to whom interest is due of the fact, and the same be discovered, he would be instantly discharged.