

# IT WAS AN ANCIENT IDEA

## THAT LOFTY HILLS WERE CHOSEN HOMES OF DIVINE POWER.

### In China These Shrines Are Visited by Vast Numbers—Buddhists Take Little Stock in Their Religion Beyond Having Their Names Registered at the Various Temples.

The ancient idea was that all lofty hills were the chosen homes of divine power. Five mountains, revered by Confucius, 500 B.C., have been celebrated in history and have always received religious honors. They are in Shanghai, Honan, Hunan, Szechuen and Shansi. Pilgrims in great masses visit these shrines. Quite the usual sight is a man dressed in black, with red trimmings, and wearing an apron bearing the characters "To the Southern Mountain to burn incense"; or if he be returning, "Brightness reflected from the Southern Mountain." He has straw sandals on his feet and straw pads on his knees, and carries with both hands a small four-legged stand bearing three sticks of incense. At every third, fifth, or tenth step, as his conscience dictates, he bows to the earth in obeisance; and so he travels, sometimes for hundreds of miles. On arriving at the foot of the mountain he changes his attire, burns incense and cash paper and does obeisance at each shrine in turn until he has reached the mountain top, when, having finished his oblations, his pilgrimage is at an end.

A Japanese professor, writing in a native magazine, in speaking of the relative few Christians in the kingdom compared with fifty millions of Buddhists, points out that the Christians' faith is a reality; professed Buddhists, except in a few cases, have no interest beyond having their name inscribed on temple registers; they do not carry on works—have no fruits of their faith. He took no satisfaction in showing the dark picture, but feels it his duty to challenge self-deceiving optimists who will not face adverse facts. The Buddhists at large will give for repair or extension of a temple; but towards spreading their religion or ministering through it to the poor they will not give.

A Connecticut rector has, in travels, lately inspected the ways and the works of missions in Egypt, India, China, Japan, Korea and the Philippines. The missionaries of all churches are a prime lot—men and women of the very best, fit to shine anywhere in any calling. Their work, too, is pre-eminently successful. Its value in educational and philanthropic directions, through cure and prevention of disease, and through the inculcation of Western civilization, is praised by practically all, even by those who have not yet quite unlearned the old-time sneer at evangelizing effort. And they are still the interpreters, the translators, and the philologists, as from the beginning.

Over thirty years since a band of Chinese were sent to America in charge of Dr. Young Wing, to be educated in high schools and colleges. A wave of reaction in China cut short their stay here, and they were lost to public service. Now, however, in the educational and reform movement, they are being sought out for prominent posts. Over five hundred young Chinese are studying how on this continent, and forty-seven more are coming in charge of one of the old-time students.

There is a tradition connected with the site on which the temple of Solomon was erected. It is said to have been occupied in common by two brothers, one of whom had a family, the other had none. On this spot was sown a field of wheat. On the evening succeeding the harvest—the wheat having been gathered in separate shocks—the elder brother said to his wife, "My younger brother is unable to bear the burden and heat of the day; I will arise, take my shocks and place them with his without his knowledge."

The younger brother, being actuated by the same benevolent motives, said within himself, "My elder brother has a family, and I have none. I will arise, take my shocks and place them with his."

Judge of their mutual astonishment, when, on the following day, they found their respective shocks undiminished. This transpired for several nights, when each resolved in his own mind to stand guard and solve the mystery. They did so, and met each other that night half-way between the respective shocks with their arms full. Upon ground hallowed with such associations the beautiful temple was built.

During a voyage to India, I sat, one dark evening, in my cabin, feeling thoroughly unwell, as the sea was rising fast, and I was a poor sailor. Suddenly the cry of "Man overboard!" made me spring to my feet. I heard a tramping overhead, but resolved not to go on deck, lest I should interfere with the crew in their efforts to save the poor man. "What can I do?" I asked myself, and instantly unhooking my lamp, I held it near the top of my cabin, and close to my bill's-eye window, that its light might shine on the sea, and as near the ship as possible. In half a minute's time I heard the joyful cry, "It's all right; he's safe," upon which I put my lamp in its place. The next day, I was told that my little lamp was the sole means of saving the man's life; it was only by the timely light which shone upon him, that the knotted rope could be thrown so as to reach him.

Before Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Russia, he told the Russian ambassador that he would destroy that empire. The ambassador's reply was, "Man proposes, but God disposes." "Tell your master," thundered the arrogant and self-confident Corsican, "that I am he that disposes," and I am he that disposes." God sent one of His most humble messengers, the crystal snowflake, from heaven to punish the audacious hoaster. Napoleon flung his vast army into Moscow, but in his retreat left on the frozen plains the bulk of it. The official returns of the Russian authorities reported 213,516 French corpses, and 95,816 dead horses.

### GOSSIP OF THE PARISH.

Little Things That Have a Rare Amount of Amusement About Them.

An old Scottish minister had a sermon which he preached on special occasions. Johns—a devoted church worker, was leaving the place, so he attended church on the Sunday before his departure, and once again heard the familiar sermon and text—"Were not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" In the course of time John returned to his native place. He went to church and was not a little surprised to hear the same old minister announced. After the service the minister beckoned John into the vestry, and started conversation about the many changes during his absence.

"There is one thing that has not changed, sir, I notice," said John.

"And what is that?" said the minister, ex-

pecting to hear some complimentary remark. "The price of sparrows," was the calm reply. "Ah, sir, we do enjoy your sermons," remarked an old lady to a new curate. They are so instructive. We never knew what sin was until you came to the parish."

Among Sir Squire Bancroft's "Recollections," recently published, appear several clever retorts. At a public function, a well-known Cardinal helped himself bountifully to cold ham, which was declined by his neighbor, the chief Rabbi, to whom the Cardinal passed the query,—"When will the day come when you, sir, will partake of ham?" The Rabbi replied, "At your Eminence's wedding."

Lady Bancroft lost a parrot and it was caught in the garden of Marlborough House. The Prince of Wales personally informed the Squire and added "and, mind you, I will claim ten shillings reward!" Sir Bancroft replied, "Certainly Sir; it is small but appropriate; being half a sovereign!"

The minister who held a religious meeting in a penitentiary and aroused inmates by announcing as a hymn, "The dying thief rejoiced to see," is equaled by the local preacher whose church got into debt deeply. A congregational meeting was held, and the chairman of the Board of Trustees stated the situation, calling for a special collection to make up the deficit. "I suggest that we sing a hymn," said one of the members.

The number of the song was announced. A smile overpread many faces, however, when they reached the line, "When we asunder part it gives us inward pain." Nevertheless, the "sundering" process was most successful.

A woman who had enjoyed thirty-three years of wedlock, and who was the grandmother of four children, had an old colored woman for a cook. One day when a box of especially beautiful flowers was left for the mistress, the cook said: "Yo' husband send you all the pretty flowers you gits, Missy?"

"Certainly, my husband, Mammy," proudly answered the lady.

"Glory!" exclaimed the cook, "he suttently an holdin' out well!"

Presbyterian Elder: "Nae, my mon, there'll be name o' they new-fangled methods in Heaven."

Listener: "I don't know how you can be sure."

Elder: "Sure! Why, mon, gin they tried it, the whole Presbyterian kirk wad rise up an' gang out in a body!"

### ANTI-SUFFRAGE NOTES.

What is Being Done the World Over in the Movement.

Clementina Fessenden. In marked contrast to the suffragist platform is that of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage league. Its objects are two: To resist the proposal to admit women to the parliamentary franchise and to parliament. To maintain the principle of the representation of women on municipal and other bodies concerned with the domestic and social affairs of the community. Quite enough, you will say, in addition to home duties.

Carl Schurz says: "Is it not certain that so tremendous an addition to the voting force as the granting of unqualified woman suffrage would effect, would involve at least the possibility of a dangerous increase of those evils which the best thought of the country is at present vainly struggling to remedy."

The Secretary of State, U.S., has this strong point for the chivalry of man: "There never was a greater mistake than there never was a false fact stated, than that the women of America need any protection further than the love borne to them by their fellow-countrymen. Do not imperil the advantages which they have; do not attempt in this hasty ill-considered, ill-considered, shallow way to interfere with the relations which are founded upon the laws of nature herself."

Some women in the United States have caught the militant suffrage infection, judging from reports given in a Sioux City paper, when members at a recent meeting pledged themselves to "fight for suffrage by any means, lawful or unlawful, fair or foul."

Marie Corelli, the widely famous authoress, is out of sympathy with the suffragettes. She advised her sex to shun politics, and agrees with the man-given dictum that woman's place is at home taking care of the baby.

Last week Utah was quoted as a suffrage state. But Hon. Moses Hallett, United States district judge for Colorado, thinks: "Our state has tried the female suffrage plan a sufficiently long time to form a fair opinion of its workings. I am not prejudiced in any way, but honestly do not see where the benefit of the experiment has been proved. It has produced no special reforms and it has had no particular purifying effect upon politics. There is a growing tendency on the part of most of the better and more intelligent of the female voters in Colorado to cease exercising the ballot. If it were to be done over again the people of Colorado would defeat woman suffrage by an overwhelming majority."

Mrs. L. H. Harris, in the Saturday Evening Post: "It is ridiculous to claim that, granted the ballot, women would purify politics. They would be far less likely to dissipate than the rank and file of men who go to political conventions, but they have a genius for causing that surpasses the shrewdest manipulations of the ordinary male machine politician, and they would nominate their candidate or break the quorum. They would not be so easily bribed as men are said to be, but the average woman is open to more different kinds of convictions in one politically charged hour than a man would be in a lifetime. No human being could would vote on any but a few primitive moral issues. This uncertainty would be trying to the national nervous system, to say nothing of the effect upon the more important commercial nervous system."

Let us continue to hope that the high treble of the suffragist may never impair the sweet melody of Home, Home, Sweet, Sweet Home.

### Best Selling Books, Canada.

Author	Title	Points
Danger Mark	R. W. Chambers	126
Ballads of a Cheechako	R. W. Service	69
Truxton King	G. B. McCutcheon	69
Ann of Avonlea	L. M. Montgomery	68
Silver Horde	Rex Beach	64
Calling of Dan Matthews	H. B. Wright	57
The Goose Girl	Harold McGrath	46

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# COMMENT ON FUNERALS

## A LAYMEN'S REMARKS ON THE CUSTOMS.

States That Some of the Customs in Some Respects Are Little Better Than Pagan—He Points Out That the Great Evil is the Crowded House Funeral.

Our funeral customs are supposed to be Christian, but in some respects they are little better than pagan. The great evil is the crowded house funeral. In cities it is not so bad, partly because city people are too busy to attend funerals out of curiosity, but chiefly because city people have a wholesome respect for the sanctity and privacy of the home. In the death notices of city papers, the old formula "friends and acquaintances respectfully invited to attend" has been replaced by "funeral private"—sometimes "strictly private," not even the time being announced. And in such cases, of course, relatives and friends whose attendance is desired are notified personally. But in the country, especially in villages and small towns, the funeral is still regarded as a public affair. It must be largely attended, or the relatives are not satisfied. Now if the rubrics are observed, and the burial service said in the church, all would be well. But, instead of this, the relatives insist on a house funeral, not for the sake of privacy, for that is out of the question, but because it is customary, and because it makes the home of some very ordinary family a momentary centre of sympathy, of interest, and of importance. That the accommodation is quite insufficient is looked upon as something that cannot be helped. Here is a case in point:

A widow with two daughters lived in a comfortable five-roomed cottage in a small town. They were not poor people by any means, and had many relatives and connections in the vicinity. A son died in Manitoba, and the body was brought home for burial. When the rector of the parish called to arrange for the funeral, he was quickly apprised that it was to be a function of some importance, one at which he should feel complimented to officiate. Owing to the smallness of the cottage, he suggested that there be a private service for the family, followed by an adjournment to the church. This offer was refused on the ground that the church was "too public." Yet the family demanded that the church choir be summoned to attend and sing two hymns, a request that was honored, as one of the girls sang in the choir not very regularly. About a score of relatives, the parson, the choir, and the undertaker, of themselves made a crowd that filled the small rooms uncomfortably. This, however, would have been supportable, but as many more friends, acquaintances and strangers crowded their way in until the place was jammed. The choir began a hymn; as though this were a pre-arranged signal, a sister of the deceased began to sob hysterically, and another woman screamed. The atmosphere became not merely close, but positively foul and nauseous; perhaps this was a blessing in disguise, for the parson was glad to cut the service short, and escape into God's fresh air outside. And in such circumstances, under the curious eyes of strangers, the family took their last look at the departed.

Another case was that of a prominent Methodist, the father of a large family, who met his death through an accident. Two or three hundred people attended the funeral, and although the house was large, the majority were compelled to remain outside. Some were quiet and reverent; others were frankly gossiping; and the idle men of the town were amusing themselves as they might have done at an auction sale or a baseball match. One of the daughters of the deceased, unable to control herself, came to an open window and screamed for her "dear papa." It was really a painful scene, and one could not but pity the family, the victims of an absurd custom, which made them the target of curious eyes at the very time when decency and common sense would have suggested seclusion.

Death is always sudden, and few people care to plan funerals in advance. When the blow falls, the tendency is to arrange everything according to a code of snobbery, rather than of common sense. Everybody is supposed to give way to the wishes of the bereaved family, and suggestions, even from the clergyman, are treated with contempt. Although it is considered a terrible thing to bury without the services of a minister, yet there is no office wherein the minister is allowed so little authority as in the Burial of the Dead. Everything is arranged to suit the fancy or prejudices of people whose ideas are often inspired by ignorance, and selfishness; the parson is called in much as one might engage a hired fiddler for a dance. Nevertheless, the clergy might do much to instruct their people, by occasionally preaching on the subject of funerals, and by explaining the seamliness and convenience of using the cemetery, in all cases where a funeral is not strictly private.

At the church there is plenty of room—a prime requisite for any ceremony. The minister, the choir, the congregation, all have their accustomed places; there can be no rude jostling, nor crowding in bad air; and the surroundings all make for seemly and reverent behavior. Friends and acquaintances, who attend the funeral from motives of genuine respect, need not feel that they are in the way, or that they are, by force of circumstances, intruding in the house of grief. Those near relations who cannot master their feelings need not attend the public service; but if they do, they are far less exposed to curious observation than in their own homes. At all events, that distressing scene, the last look, enacted in the privacy of the family circle. When the poor cold clay comes to the church for the last time, the coffin should be considered as finally closed; and the thoughts of the relatives should be withdrawn from the bitterness of the final parting here on earth, to the bright hope of immortality, where parting shall be no more. And this is good for the stricken in heart; it is good for everyone.

Not the least advantage of the church service is the opportunity to rise above the doleful hymns and the sorrowful contemplation of what has been lost, to the inspiring strains of hymns that are really Christian, and the sure and certain hope of everlasting life. "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." No doubt, this is to some extent the counsel of perfection. But it should be known that a church funeral, well-managed, is far less distressing to the feelings of relatives than a crowded house funeral. It oc-

cupies no more time; the coffin leaves the house a little earlier, and tarries awhile in the church. It may even reduce the expenses, for many who can attend the church service are spared the time and cost of going to the cemetery.—W. Q. P. Sarnia.

### THE LAND OF RUINS.

Palestine is Full of Them—An Unarranged and Overcrowded Museum.

Above all countries, Palestine is a land of ruins. In Judah whilst for miles there is no appearance of life or habitation, except the occasional goat-herd on the hillside or a gathering of women at the wells, there is yet hardly a hilltop of the many in sight but is covered with the vestiges of some fortress or city. Ruins isolated, ruins superimposed in strata as at Samaria, or most notably in Jerusalem, are ubiquitous, and promising only to the antiquarian, to whom the country cries out for excavation. Canaanitish, Mycenaean, Assyrian, Egyptian, Jewish, Grecian, Roman, Crusading, and Saracenic, all ages and many forms of civilization are represented, many of them in the same place and even in the same building. Do we land at Haifa? Of the history of Carmel above us a few ruins remind us. We reach the Sea of Tiberias and find it surrounded by a ruined mediaeval wall, outside of which are rubbish heaps that are the ruins of the ancient town, while the walls of a Roman city can be traced up the hillside. The Saracenic Castle is of course a ruin, avoided by the Jews of our Lord's time because it had been partly built on ancient graves. The lakeside towns and villages of that date are all but scanty ruins. Opposite are the ruins of Gamala. To the left we pass the ruins of Arbel, ruined waterworks, the blocks that mark two supposed sites of the once important Capernaum, and the ruins of Chorazin. The lake, indeed, is girdled with ruined villages and towns, whereof only two are inhabited. Or do we land at Jaffa? Destroyed by pirates, again destroyed by Vespasian, rebuilt, destroyed by Crusaders and Paynim, no habitable house remained in the fourteenth century, and not until centuries after was it much but a ruin. Driving to Jerusalem a prominent object is the great tower of Ramleh, belonging to the (ruined) fourteenth century mosque. Further on is Gezer, where the Palestine Exploration Fund has discovered traces of seven successive cities on one site; on to Latrun, where the castle of the Knights of St. John was dismantled by Saladin; then to Amwas with its ruined church, Abu Ghosh or Kirjath-Jearim has another ruined twelfth century church, and so on to the oft-ruined Jerusalem. Few are the houses or cottages that have not been constructed out of ruins, and the future ruin of any may bring to light some ancient carving or inscription buried in the walls. The land is an unarranged and over-crowded museum wherein most of the objects are forgotten in the cellars.

### A Solomon in Wisdom.

Two women came before a mandarin in China, each protesting that she was the mother of a little child they had brought. They were so eager and so positive that the mandarin was sorely puzzled. He retired to consult with his clever wife. She deliberated and asked: "Let the servants catch me a large fish in the river, and let it be brought here alive." This was done. "Bring me now the infant," she said, "but leave the two women in the other chamber." This was done too. Then the mandarin's wife caused the baby to be undressed and its clothes to be put on the fish. "Carry the creature outside and throw it into the river in the sight of the women." The servant consigned the fish into the water, where it rolled about and struggled, disgusted by the wrappings. Without a pause one of the women threw herself into the river with a shriek; she must save her child. "Without doubt she is the true mother." She was rescued and the child was given to her. The mandarin nodded his head and thought his wife the wisest woman in the Flowery Kingdom. Meanwhile the false woman crept away and the mandarin's wife forgot all about her in the occupation of attiring the baby in the best silk she could find in her wardrobe.

### Story of the Fool Bible.

In the famous library of Wolfenbittel, in Hesse, is an old German Bible, greatly treasured, but until recently it was not known why it is so valued. The mystery has been solved by the discovery of papers relating to it. It appears that in that passage of Genesis where God tells Eve that Adam shall be her master, and shall rule over her, in place of the word "Herr," which means "master," there appears the word "Narr," which means "fool." The wife was vengeful, and in the silent watches of the night she entered the room where her husband had been setting type, and maliciously changed Herr into Narr. After the book had been printed the mistake was seen, and the printer arrested, but the apprentice testified that he saw the wife steal into the composing-room and alter the word. Afterwards the woman was imprisoned for blasphemy. Orders were given that all the copies of the edition should be destroyed. This was done, with the exception of the one copy now in the Wolfenbittel library.

### Unhappy Are the Literary Homes.

Someone with a passion for antique scandals has been reviewing the private lives of classical English writers, and finds a distressing proportion of celibates and of unhappily mated persons. His list of foremost British authors is so full of matrimonial wrecks that the compiler is forced to wonder whether the rest of us in more prosaic callings have as poor a chance at domestic happiness as poets and playwrights. No fewer than 25 out of 68 well-known authors never were married. A number, including Milton, Bunyan, Southey and Hazlitt, made several matrimonial ventures. Shakespeare, Dryden, Addison, Coleridge, Carlyle, Ruskin and Dickens are the most notable of those unhappily married. Are literary men less capable than lawyers and plumbers of choosing congenial mates? The truth seems to be, that the writer husband is at home so much of the time that he becomes as familiar an object there as the old cane-bottomed chair. Two persons who can survive twenty-four hours of each other's society per day without jars are happily married indeed.

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