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DUCKS IN CHINA.

The Way They Are Raised and How They Are Got to Market.

What would an American duck farmer think of swimming his flock to market? That is the regular method employed by the poultrymen who live along the great waterways of China. The Chinese are very fond of duck. Nearly every farmer keeps a few for his own use, but along the rivers raising them for market is a profitable business.

In American ducks raised for market have very little water in which to swim and play. The poultrymen do not think it is good for them to have much exercise. It hardens their muscles and makes their flesh tough and not so good to eat.

So instead of swimming all day in ponds or lakes or streams the ducks are kept shut up in small pens, where they have no room to waddle about and can only stand still and eat and grow fat. Then, when they are in prime condition, they are killed and dressed and shipped to market in barrels, and their feathers make an additional source of income to the poultryman.

The Chinaman, however, is quite content to let his ducks have as much exercise as they like, and they get a great deal hunting for their food, of which they receive only small supplies from the poultryman.

One result is that the Chinese duck is a good, strong swimmer, and that is a fortunate circumstance for the poultryman when it comes time to go to market.

He does not live on a railroad. If he did, he would not be likely to use it, for to him it is a newfangled device for the spread of evil. He knows, too, a more economical method than putting his ducks in crates and paying freight on one of the river boats. Time does not mean much to him, and he can afford to spend a few days, if necessary, in going to market.

When he picks out the ducks he means to sell, the Chinese farmer ties the leg of one to that of another with a stout cord and continues the process until the whole lot is bound together. Sometimes there are hundreds thus fastened in one flock.

It is not easy to make such a flock swim together or follow the direction desired. The farmer takes his boat and starts to drive them, sculling behind or drifting on the current and beating the water with long bamboo poles to make them swim along and go the right way. If the farmer has a large family and two or three boats, so that his sons can help, he can usually manage to get his ducks to market without outside aid, but if he is not so fortunate he will join with other duck raisers and herd the flocks in combination.

Thus it not infrequently happens that thousands of ducks will be swimming along the Yangtze, apparently in one flock, with a dozen or more sampans drifting behind them, filled with men, women and boys, thrashing the water with bamboos to hurry on the ducks.

It is hard enough to make a flock of hungry, foolish ducks swim on about their business when there is plenty of room and no interference, but that seldom happens on a Chinese river. Usually these streams swarm with clumsy, unwieldy junks, and on the Yangtze there is a great deal of steamer traffic.

The friendly junkmen will almost always help the duck herders to keep the flocks clear of the boats by beating the water with bamboos, but steamers have neither time nor inclination for such bother, and so it sometimes happens that a flock is cut in two by a steamer. Then there is a great deal of trouble and excited talk before the flock can be reunited and got peacefully on its way again.

Sometimes also it happens that ducks of one flock get mixed up with those of another, and then there is a dreadful tangle and snarl. But the patient Chinese get them separated into the proper flocks again at last, and all go cheerfully together to market.—Youth's Companion.

The Buccaneers.

Originally buccaneers were peaceful English, French and Dutch settlers in the Spanish West Indies, and they received their name on account of their custom of drying their meat, in the Indian fashion, on a buccan, or hurdle. The Spaniards resented strongly the intrusion of these foreigners and made many attempts to oust them, but the buccaneers were a hardy set of men and crack shots with the musket, so they successfully resisted all the Spaniards' attacks and obstinately remained in the islands. What it was that caused the buccaneers to abandon their comparatively peaceful mode of living and take to piracy it is hard to say. Possibly the constant harrying to which they were subjected by the Spaniards prompted them to retaliate; but, whatever the reason, their depredations soon rendered the passage of the Caribbean sea an undertaking of extreme danger to merchantmen, and the word buccaneer has come down as a synonym for robbery, murder and all the vices.

Cannibalism.

Polack relates an argument with a Whangaroa chief on the subject of cannibalism. "If I do not eat my enemy when I catch him," argued the Maori, "he will not show the same self denial when he catches me. In short, what in nature is there that is alive that will not eat readily of its kind? There," continued the subtle diglatory, pointing to a hawk, "the kahu will eat other birds, and the larger species will devour him." A hog passing by closed the argument. "Would you eat that pig?" I nodded significantly in the affirmative. "Well," continued the apolo-

gist for cannibalism, "bait him and see if he will refuse a piece of yourself."—Auckland News.

DESERT SHEEP HERDERS.

Their Lonely, Dreary Life Tends to Drive Them Crazy.

Do you realize what it means to watch 5,000 sheep alone in the desert? You have read weird, ghoulish stories of the horror of the solitary lighthouse keeper's life, but compared to the days of the Mexican shepherd those of the average keeper of the light are filled with gaiety and noise. Even with their one or two dogs the shepherds often go insane, and were it not for the company of their shaggy collies the lunacy among them would rise to an almost incredible percentage, if we are to believe those who have followed the sheep in the desert and therefore may be supposed to know.

Once in old Santa Fe, N. M., I met a man who for twelve years had followed the sheep. His work was done. All day long he sat in a chair in the rear of a little dobe store, crouched over, gibbering to himself, bleating—an idiot. He still saw his sheep swaying like a great white wave among the sagebrush, and ever in his ears sounded the killing monotone of their bleats. One boy, though fifteen years of age, is mentally no further advanced than the average child of five. His father is a shepherd, his mother died when he was four years old, and his father took him out upon the range. All his life has been spent among the sheep. He is one with them today.

How is it possible, then, you ask, that men are to be found willing to watch them? It is very easy. Sheep herding is a lazy job at best, and the "greaser" is the laziest creature on earth. For \$20 a month he is willing to sit in the sand and listen to the never ending bleating until the little mind he has given way and they fetch him in from the range insane. He is glad to take the chance for \$20 a month.

The greaser is not the only shepherd in the west. On the vast ranges of Nevada and Wyoming you may run across an occasional college man tending the sheep. Once, indeed, a college professor, ill of consumption, undertook to follow 5,000 bleaters for the summer. In autumn they found him insane, on his hands and knees among the sheep, bleating with them. Day after day his eyes beheld only a brilliant turquoise sky, in which hangs a sun of brass; an ocean sweep of sage flecked sand and a slowly moving, compact mass of sheep. His ears hear no sound save the steady "Baa, baa," day and night, affecting him as the Chinese criminal of ancient days was affected by the regular tap, tap of a hidden drum.

And yet so long as the desert continues to provide food for the "bleaters" so long will shepherds go mad among the flocks, and for ten years the desert's greatest value to man has been the food it has offered the sheep, nor yet is the store depleted.—Pilgrim.

The Wickedness of Growing Old.
Here are the three deadly symptoms of old age: Selfishness, stagnation, intolerance.

If we find them in ourselves we may know we are growing old, even if we are on the merry side of thirty. But, happily, we have three defenses, which are invulnerable. If we use them we shall die young if we live to be a hundred. They are: Sympathy, progress, tolerance.

The first is the hardest to most of us, because our own little prison of the actual is so immensely important to us. There is no denying the fact that when you have a toothache yourself it is hard to have to consider other people's aches. But it can be done, though it generally involves physical effort, for we must bestir ourselves and act. The mere feeling of sympathy expressed by action is a poor, useless thing, but the soul, determined not to grow old, can force the body to such physical effort, though there is no denying that it is hard work.—Harper's Bazar.

Smothered Him.

The Hon. Patrick A. Collins some years ago was presiding over a Democratic convention in Massachusetts, in which was an Irish delegate from his own end of Boston, the proprietor of half a dozen saloons and a thick, old fashioned brogue. He was very anxious, for some reason, to get the floor and jumped up every time he thought he saw a chance for it until he had become a nuisance to the whole convention. At last, just as a committee was about to report, he jumped up again right in front. "Mr. President," he shouted, "Mr. President," Collins rapped sternly with his gavel, but did not otherwise recognize him. "Mr. President," he continued, "Mr. President."

Again Collins rapped vigorously, this time turning his keen eyes upon the obstreperous delegate with a withering glance. But instead of withering it so exasperated the delegate that he shook his fist at the presiding officer and yelled, "You, Pat Collins, I want the floor!" Collins leaned right over the table at that, shook his gavel at the disturber and quietly but fiercely said, "Sit down, you terrier!" The "terrier" promptly took his seat, while the convention howled with delight.

When to Cut Weeds.

She—When should a young widow discard her weeds? He—Oh, I don't know, but I suppose she should cut them out just as soon as she wants to raise a second crop of orange blossoms.—Baltimore Herald.

Decision of character will often give to an inferior mind command over a superior.—Wirt.

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