

CURIOUS TREE OF CHINA.

Products Made from Which Oil for a Variety of Uses is Expresed.

About this time of the year certain provinces of China are beautiful with the white, red and speckled white and red blossoms of a curious tree that is as valuable as it is strange.

The oil tree furnishes an oil from its nuts, which, although it is not edible, provides material for an immense variety of uses, from that of waterproofing to building form.

The nuts appear on the tree about a month after the flowers fall. They grow very much like figs, each fig or lobe containing two kernels or nuts. These nuts are divided into three varieties for market purposes—the yellow, the drab and the white, the latter giving the greatest quantity of oil.

The nuts are gathered in September or October and thrown in big heaps on the ground. Then grass is piled over them until they have rotted, after which it is easy to disengage the kernel from the husk.

The kernels are ground in stone mills. After grinding, the product is steamed in wooden tubs. This makes it soft and mushy and ready to squeeze.

The press with which the squeezing is done is a unique affair and has not been changed in centuries. It consists of a lot of iron hoops that are filled with the mushy ground kernels. A system of weights is used to drive these hoops into each other, and in order to drive the wedges, great battering-rams are used. They swing from the roof of the building and men pull them as far as they will go, and then let them fly at the wedges with immense force.

The oil that is squeezed out with each blow runs into a gutter and thence it is led to the proper receptacles by a series of bamboo pipes.

After the oil is pressed, the stuff that remains is found baked and solid from the immense pressure and this is used for fertilizers, being especially valuable for tobacco plantations.

The oil is used for a multitude of purposes. It is made into boot varnish. It gives a beautiful gloss. For the same reason it makes a valuable furniture varnish. It also gives good light.

Being waterproof, umbrellas and cloths are dressed with it to make them waterproof, and, mixed with soap, it makes a fine ink. This soap is obtained in an interesting way. It is produced by the burning of a peculiar grass known as the lampwick grass, because it resembles that article.

The most peculiar thing for which the tung or tree oil is used, however, is that of building forts and earthen trenches and walls. For this purpose it is mixed with an earth made of lime, sand and clay, and the composition forms a mixture that is almost as tough as granite.

BASKETS FOR THE AUTOS.

Making of Them Is Almost a Special Trade of Itself—Some Cost \$50 a Pair.

Making baskets for automobiles is almost a special trade of itself. A basket weaver of this city was quick to see that the business was likely to be profitable, so he set up a factory and made automobile baskets his sole specialty, says the New York Sun.

This specialty in basket weaving requires peculiar skill, because it is hard to fashion the curves so as to fit snugly in the sinuities of the motor cars. Polish basket weavers who learned and long practiced their trade in Europe seem to have special aptitude for this particular kind of work.

The materials that go into the baskets are reeds, whole or split; white wood, cylindrical bits of birch, leather, brass for the hinges, and rubber or cloth for the water-proof lining. A basket once well made, and coated with shellac, will last almost forever barring accidents, and will ordinarily need no repairs beyond a new coat of shellac at the end of the season.

Some of the largest and best made side baskets sell as high as \$5 a pair. Smaller ones are as low as \$15 a pair, and the average price is about \$20 a pair. Special baskets made to order may be considerably higher than the highest price here indicated.

The long narrow rear baskets for walking sticks and umbrellas may cost anywhere from \$5 to \$25. Especially long baskets for golf sticks are about \$25. Most of the material that goes into these baskets is of native production, though some of the best comes from the orient and some from the West Indies. The majority, however, used to make the baskets with which you are familiar are produced in the United States.

The Servant Question. Mrs. Dora Lyon of the Normal Federation of Women's Clubs, was talking about the servant question. A maid at her hotel, said Mrs. Lyon, told me last night a new sort of girl story. She said that a St. Louis woman engaged a new servant and gave her a number of instructions about her duties. In conclusion she said: "And Hannah, we have breakfast at eight o'clock."

Very wise woman, Hannah answered. If I'm not down by that time don't wait for me. N. Y. Tribune.

The Pope's Pet Dove. Hope's pet dove is a white dove, which was used for the purpose of...

RUBBER GROWING IN SIAM.

Thousands of Plants Recently Set Out Are Expected to Make Large Yield.

The cultivation of rubber in Siam has only recently been started, some thousands of plants having been set out as an experiment. These plants of the Para variety (Hevea brasiliensis) are said to be doing exceedingly well, although I believe they have had no special care, but have been planted indiscriminately in various places and under varying conditions of moisture, sun, etc. It is still too soon to tell what the ultimate result of this venture will be, but I am of the opinion that it will prove highly successful.

There is, however, one thing to fear, namely, the new so-called disease, which I hear has developed in the Para rubber plantations of the Malay peninsula. I can learn nothing definite about this pest, except that it attacks the leaves and is very destructive. I am inclined to the opinion that it is caused by the larvae of some insect.

In this connection it may be interesting to note two of the rubber-producing plants indigenous to Siam. The most important of these is the Ficus elastica, so much used in the United States for ornamental purposes and found in large quantities in the Siamese jungle and throughout India and Indo-China generally.

Rubber is collected from these trees by the simple process of making longitudinal scarifications in the bark, from which the coagulated milk is taken in long strips. It is said that a plant six years old will yield four pounds of rubber annually of a quality which could be sold in London at about 90 cents per pound, but this price appears to me to be a trifle exaggerated.

The other rubber-producing plant of known commercial value is a creeper of great size, probably one of the Urtica (either U. esculenta or U. elastica), although from certain descriptions I am sometimes inclined to believe it to be a Millettia. It is most difficult to obtain any reliable information on the subject, from a botanical point of view, and it is quite possible that both are indigenous to Siam. These creepers, whatever they may be, yield a fair quality of rubber, produced by cutting them into sections two or three feet long and collecting the juice, which is subsequently boiled for an hour in water and immediately precipitated into a viscous mass, which has to be dried by smoking over a fire before it can be handled. The bark is also used, and upon being pounded and boiled gives about ten per cent. of a rather inferior rubber.

It is said that these creepers grow with astonishing rapidity, and that two or three weeks after being cut down they show a growth of six or seven feet. I believe that both the F. elastica and these creepers could be cultivated with profit in the Philippine Islands. PAUL NASH.

OPPORTUNITIES IN BRAZIL.

New Lines of Construction That Will Probably Offer Openings for Skilled Labor.

The construction of the great Rio de Janeiro harbor works, about which I have repeatedly reported, and the demolition and reconstruction of a number of streets in the city, already commenced, ought to furnish an exceptional opportunity to American building contractors—the American iron and steel industry, the building hardware trade, plumbing and other similar trades and industries related to architectural construction of private and public buildings.

The new dock works will necessitate the construction of a large number of big warehouses, and along the new avenues planned hundreds of modern four and five-story houses will take the place of the present old, low shabby-looking buildings.

The reconstruction will begin immediately. Modern architectural schemes, modern architectural buildings, and the steel and iron constructions are almost unknown here. There is no reason why they should not become appropriate and popular. I consider this a great chance for American industries and suggest that competent agents of the respective branches of industry should come down here and investigate the field. I hope to send details later. EUGENE SEEGER.

New German Product.

Artificial silk appears to be an article of manufacture with a great future. The Associated Factories of Artificial Silk, a corporation here, which was formed in 1901, is reported now to manufacture five times as much artificial silk as in 1900. The exports of artificial silk from Germany to the United States, as far as I am able to find, for the year ended June 30, 1903, amounted to \$1,000,000, of which \$481,330 was exported from this district and \$518,670 from that of Aix in Chautauque. I also find that \$2,000,000 worth was shipped to the United States during that period from Lyons, France, and \$3,000,000 from Brno, Bohemia. Making exports to the United States amounting to \$13,000,000 for that year. THE HARTMAN BROTHERS.

They Quit Even.

A bald-headed man met a bald-headed man on the street one day. The red-headed man said to the bald-headed man: "Bald there don't seem to have been much hair where you came from."

"Oh, yes," replied the bald-headed man, "there was plenty of hair, but it was all red and I wouldn't have it."—Lippincott's Magazine.

GRAPE JUICE PREPARATIONS.

Products of Turkey Which May Be Worthy of Imitation in the United States.

I desire to call the attention of American grape growers to several Turkish preparations from grape juice which strike me as worthy of consideration, possibly of imitation. Basduk—Freshly expressed grape juice is evaporated down to the consistency of molasses. A considerable amount of flour or starch is mingled with it and the mixture is spread in thin sheets upon cotton cloth and exposed for two days to the sunshine. After drying, these are then removed from the cotton (a damp cloth being applied to the reverse side in order to loosen the sheets) and for three months they are preserved in tightly closed jars. After this period there seems to be no risk of decomposition in the product, which resembles leather in pliability and appearance, the color being that of the grapes employed at the outset.

Kesme—This preparation differs from the preceding in that coarse wheat grits are employed instead of flour or starch, and the resultant product is obtained in cakes half an inch thick, after drying on metal plates. It is less tough than the basduk and more savory.

Sujuk (rojik, in Armenian)—The meats of waddies are strung closely together on pieces of stout twine a yard long. These strings are immersed in the mixture of grape molasses and flour described above, and after receiving a coating about one-fourth of an inch in thickness are withdrawn and hung up to dry.

The last two are preserved for a few months in jars, as in the case of the basduk. These three preparations are excellent articles of food, the last two being especially savory. They offer much nutriment in a compact form, and are exceptionally well adapted for the needs of the oriental traveler.

In these days of "grape cures," when unfermented grape juice is prepared on a large scale for the use of invalids and the anemic during the months when fresh grapes are not easily obtained, it might be well to consider whether these condensed forms of grape juice might not be advantageously introduced into American dietaries.

Personally, I have found these grape preparations attractive and satisfactory additions to the supplies of my household. THOMAS H. NORTON.

RIVER SEINE HAS PIRATES.

And the Freebooters Keep the Paris Gendarmes Busy Hunting Them Down.

A black and stormy night—the whole sky flapping with wind—we hunted the pirate of the Seine. In a slim sloop launch we slipped down from the old bridge of Sevres, past Billancourt and under the dark mass of the viaduct, relays a writer in Outlook.

There were five of us in the launch. Four were men of the river police—I was a mere guest of theirs, welcome for the sake of my company and cigars. We were after thieves of all sorts, manufacturers, wharf robbers, pickpockets of cables and rags, pirates and puffers. Notably, however, we were hunting the men with the nets.

It was two o'clock in the morning when we shot the bridge at Point-du-Jour and crept toward Menton. We had just passed the Paplars at Billancourt when the sergeant hushed us down. We carried no lights and the launch went almost noiselessly through the fog and storm of the night. We heard only a faint, hollow, regular fall of oars, soft but regular. Over near the Isle de Robinson dark forms hovered on the water. At a venture you might have guessed there were two skiffs and six or eight men. One of the boats glided into midstream. There were two men at the oars. A third fellow was standing.

Suddenly there came a swirl as the net was cast, and then—in a track of light the launch drove down on the skiff. So sudden and unexpected was the capture of our light, so unlooked for our appearance that the poachers squealed as though they had seen a ghost. One of the oarsmen flung himself overboard and swam for shore.

The sergeant's revolver barked as he fired in the air—but the swimmer came not back. The other two poachers were mid-mannered men. We towed them to the Breaker-day. It was the first time in their journey to New California I understand, for they were old and sinful.

King Smashes Planos.

The inventor of a firm which manufactures musical instruments, announced that he had been notified by a letter from the South Sea Islands which stated that King Olofin was wanted another place. That is, he had been ordered in the last six months. Does he use him for fuel for his musical instruments? Well, I guess not. He has a musical soul at least, it was developed when he first tried the instrument. Wagner, Beethoven and the rest of them don't please the king very much, but strange to say he likes ractime. N. Y. Evening Journal.

Azores Whale-Fishery.

Under date of March 17, 1904, United States Consul K. M. Bartlett, of Cadiz, Spain, reports that whale fishing in the Azores yielded \$29,199 during the year 1903. The fishery of Graciosa island caught a whale from which \$3,475 worth of ambergris was extracted, and those of St. Jorge island another from which \$54 worth of ambergris was obtained. In the fishery 97 boats were employed, manned by 665 men. The number of whales caught was 99.

MEXICO'S STANDING ARMY.

An Establishment That Has Been Created Since Diaz Became President.

Wide diffused as is the periodical literature of to-day and varied as are the subjects of which it treats, how little do we know about the actual social, domestic and political conditions of the countries in which we have not traveled? How strong the tendency to look upon our next-door neighbor as just a little less civilized than we! How many in the United States know anything about the organization of the Mexican army, the excellent police force of the country, the progress the nation has made in the last 20 years, the working of the government machinery, which stands for the greater part of the progress made in this time? Certainly a very small number. Yet all these things and more, we should know before we venture to either praise or blame any country, says Modern Mexico.

The most interesting feature in connection with the modern progress of Mexico is the army. The present chief executive found it a disorganized body of guerrillas led by a few ambitious men who were, in too many cases, not overscrupulous as to the means they used to secure their positions and to attain their political aims. In a few years this disorganized body has been organized and disciplined, and the military school has supplied it with trained, educated and intelligent officers, many of whom would be a credit to any military organization. But, above all, the government has done away with the old spirit of political ambition to be attained through revolution. The nation is now almost a unit in its adherence to peace and the policy of the present chief executive.

The soldiers of the standing army, of which there are 26,000, are subject to strict daily routine of military exercise to fit them for actual war, or for military expeditions which the government has for the past few years been forced to take to keep in subjection some of the more rebellious tribes which only within the past year have been brought under complete government control.

Everywhere the government has now established primary schools for the education of the regular soldier, and all who have not attained a certain educational standard are required to attend a course laid down for these schools. In addition to this, inducements in the way of promotions are held out to those who, more ambitious than their fellows, carry their studies further than the law actually requires.

Not only has the army been disciplined, but it has been reformed with men and equipments in modern arms, uniforms, etc. From being a lawless body it has come to stand for law and order of the country.

Instead of being made up largely of robber chiefs and their followers, its mission now is to hunt down any one who sets himself to examine the established order of things. It is an organization possessed of a spirit to be found in no other Latin-American country.

Mexico possesses one of the finest military museums of any country in the world, and a journey for it is a journey through it. It will repay even the casual passer-by to see the various exhibits upon the shelves of their libraries.

Every town and village throughout Mexico has stationed within it some of the regular standing forces, generally these belong to the "Carrancistas" or mounted police, who serve much the same purpose as the mounted police of Canada. Early in his career as governor of the Mexican nation Gen. Diaz bought off many of the robber chiefs and made them leaders of a rural police force, called "Carrancistas." These were used to hunt the other robbers, who preferred an independent life to accepting a salary from the government. This was the origin of the famous rurales, or interior soldier-police. To this force was due, to a great extent, the early pacification and security of the country, and its members are still the guardians of the peace in the interior.

Politeness of American Children.

In Mexico a group of lads from 7 to 12 will meet and each boy will decorously lift his hat, and salutations of extreme courtesy will be exchanged, and then come the boyish chatter, the run and the laughter, the same as anywhere. Boys here treat their elders with respect. An old man or woman is not the butt of the youth of Mexico, rather for the old people are reserved the shadiest seats under the trees in the park. A Mexican boy or girl on entering a room walks around among the company, shaking hands with them, and on leaving the room does the same. Urbanity is taught in the public schools as arithmetic is at home. There is no one jostled on the street; the best seat in the horse car is promptly given up to ladies, who never fail gracefully to acknowledge the favor. I have never failed to see a Mexican gentleman fail to give his seat to a woman, whether she was richly or poorly dressed. Rural Home.

Limited Guaranty.

Customer: I think this is what my daughter told me to get. You guarantee it to be one of the popular songs of the day? Music Dealer: Yes, sir, but of course, I can't guarantee its popularity among your neighbors after your daughter has learned to sing it.—Chicago Tribune.

Hair Transplanted.

Hair may be transplanted, and, in favorable circumstances, will grow as well in its new as in its original situation.

SOME VALUABLE VOLUMES.

Copies of Dickens Works That Worth One Thousand Dollars Each.

The costliest books ever printed are now being published at Cambridge, Mass. The typographical work being done by the University Press plant and the binding at the Boston Bindery, in the vicinity of Harvard College. They comprise the complete works of Charles Dickens and will cost \$1,000 each, reports the New York Times of recent date. There are 130 volumes to a set, making the total cost to each subscriber \$130,000. Only ten sets are to be issued, however, and all have already been sold. J. Pierpont Morgan and the duke of Westminster being among those to whose libraries these expensive volumes will be added.

There is one feature of these costly volumes which makes them of unusual interest to all who have to do with the printing or collecting of books. They are being printed on real parchment, such as was used four centuries ago. The permanent qualities of parchment are known and appreciated everywhere, but all efforts to do successful printing on that material in recent years have failed. Since the secret died with the printers of 400 years ago all attempts to successfully print a book on parchment have proved failures until the process was re-discovered at the University Press and a successful experiment made in the case of these rare and costly volumes.

A set of books of this character cannot be produced in a day or a year for that matter. Although only 1,300 volumes in all are to be issued, eight years will be required to complete the work upon them.

The books will be bound in the most perfect levant with exquisite colors inlaid in beautiful designs. Much of the ornamentation will be done in solid gold. The entire edition is hand-illustrated by expert American, French and Italian artists, who have used the most enchanting colors in weaving dainty and fanciful designs upon the parchment pages.

The Boston Bindery has been at work upon several other costly and attractive volumes during the past few months. Among them were the beautiful presentation copies sent by the famous Ancient and Honorable Artillery company of Boston to King Edward and President Roosevelt, containing the history of that organization.

Another elegant volume recently turned out was the book published by Yale university and sent to the king of Portugal as an expression of the university's appreciation of a gift from the Portuguese ruler. This was a very beautiful and attractive volume, which will prove an ornament to even a king's library.

One of the most interesting of the many rare books issued from this establishment was one of almost infinite size, bound for a professor at Harvard college, who designed it to be a wedding present for his bride. It is a revision of the ordinary man to walk through this bindery and inspect the expensive books being paid for in dollars of costly satin and exquisite hand leather for men and women of wealth who live to see gorgeous and rare volumes upon the shelves of their libraries.

The owner and manager of the bindery was brought up in a circle which gave him excellent preparation for his life work. Norman H. White, who is yet in his early thirties, was prominent at Harvard college as a fraternity man and an athlete and a leader. He has traveled extensively, and while in London discovered at the British museum the little book which Henry VIII. wore in his waist. This was a small book made of wood and now shows its weathered and worn surface to our famous books as a library relic.

Overworked.

Smith was out there evening with a box of photographs under his arm and a big parcel of books under the other.

"Hello, Smith," said Brown, "going in for housekeeping?" I thought I knew you were married.

"What are you doing with that chocolate and meat?"

"Going to my girl."

"Do you have to furnish the family with meat already?"

"Oh, no, the chocolate is a present for the girl, and the meat is for the dog. I have to square myself with both of them."—Stray Stories.

Times Have Changed.

Allen Barr's advance to a duel a hundred years ago the summer because he was afraid he might think he was a coward and be old too. Today the whole country would laugh at any political leader who would challenge an opponent, and would regard the acceptance of the challenge as an act of moral cowardice more worthy of condemnation than physical cowardice.—Youth's Companion.

Flattering.

Jack: That's a fine dog you have, Jim. Do you want to sell him? Jim: I'll sell him for \$10. "Is he intelligent?" "Oh, no, he's not. Why, that dog knows as much as I do."

"You don't say so? Well, I'll give you half a dollar for him, Jim." New Yorker.

Another Fish Story.

First Fish: My ears are burning awfully! Second Fish: Somebody must be lying about you, frightfully.—Yonkers Statesman.

UNIQUE COLLEGE CUSTOMS.

Institutions of Learning in the West Have Some Surprising Performances.

There are certain college customs which are universal, but each university has certain institutions peculiar to itself, and among the great western universities of the United States there have grown up some that are also very unique. One of the most surprising, says the Chicago Inter Ocean, is the barber's day of the University of Michigan. Some years ago the sophomores, before Easter, caught a few freshmen and gave them hair cuts. The freshmen paid them back in kind, and there grew up an annual festival of a week when the two lower classes go about with razors to remove the locks of their rivals. The week is celebrated just before the Easter holidays, and most of the members of the two lower classes leave for their homes during this festival. This year there were only 20 men out of the two classes that escaped the operation, which is performed with more zeal than skill.

Far out at Leland Stanford in California, they have what is called a "pig ugly." On a night in the spring all the men come out with ancient top hats on, and then begins a battle royal with the object of breaking as many of the hats as possible. The battered stovepipes are kept by the students as souvenirs, and in every room in the university can be found the remains of what was once a title.

A club recently formed at the University of Missouri is, however, the strangest of all collegiate organizations. It is called the Hobo club, and its avowed purpose is the encouragement of the state of hoboism. The first convention was held three weeks ago in a little town some 50 miles distant from the university and each member came on foot or by freight, attired in nondescript garments, like a true follower of the road. It is specified in the constitution that a member will be expelled if he spends any money on his way to these conventions and being the wags, all the students became tramps in every sense of the word. The club now has a membership of 200 and the novelty is so taking that the students of forming other chapters at different universities and holding each year a "hobo" convention.

CRUISER TOOK HIS EGGS.

Lighthouse Keeper Had Some That Were Suffering to Go to Market and He Schemed.

"Because of the anxiety of a lighthouse keeper to market his eggs, the dignity of the Dominion government of Canada has received a severe jar," said H. J. Kirkpatrick, of Vancouver, to a Seattle Pacific Intelligencer man recently.

The offending keeper is the one who tells the light on Rock Island—a man named Lee—in the Gulf of Georgia.

It is a lonely spot, wind swept and dreary, but behind his lighthouse the keeper has a small garden, where he raises chickens with no fear of marauding neighbors. Recently the steamer Phoenix was passing during a howling gale and reported a distress signal from the lighthouse. It was impossible to land to carry supplies to the supposed distressed keeper.

"The Dominion government at Ottawa was not fond of what it promptly recognized as a hoax, and that the lighthouse keeper was sent to investigate the supposed distress signal. He found the lighthouse keeper waiting for a favor, and he was sent to see a doctor, but the lighthouse keeper found the lighthouse was all right, and he was sent to the lighthouse keeper's house.

"We've asked the captain and you have your chickens and the other fact."

"It was this was rather a peculiar case, but I don't think it is worth the trouble to stop here. Now you know what happens to eggs when they are kept too long. I just had to get them off, and the distress signal was the only way to get a steamer to stop."

The Keelhaul took the eggs to Vancouver, but I am wondering what sort of a letter that keeper gets from the department of marine and fisheries when the people at Ottawa learn the facts."

Circus Men Favor Small Towns.

"Small towns for circuses," said M. J. Dowling, the press agent of the attraction which will give the Louisville circus a bare more profitable than any other in the size of Louisville. The reason for it is that the country, far miles around, sends in its inhabitants whenever a circus is in a small town, and the expenses are very much reduced. Practically no tickets are given away, taxes and licenses are low, and the rent of the grounds is light. In a town the size of Louisville, even the water that your stock drinks costs you, and the grounds also cost money. For my part, I must prefer staying in a small town as the troubles are much less numerous. Louisville Courier-Journal.

Matter of Opinion.

"I've had a commandment from Miss Cutting," said young Sappington. "Indeed?" she explained. "What amanda did you borrow it from?" "I—aw, made it up myself." "Why, aw, 'obhis bibe the moon?" "I suppose you think," she said, slowly, "it is because they had a man in them, but it might be well for you to remember that opinions differ. Mr. Sappington." Chicago Daily News.