

THE TIEN TSU HUI The Anti-Foot Binding Society and Its Movement Against the Compression of Female Feet.

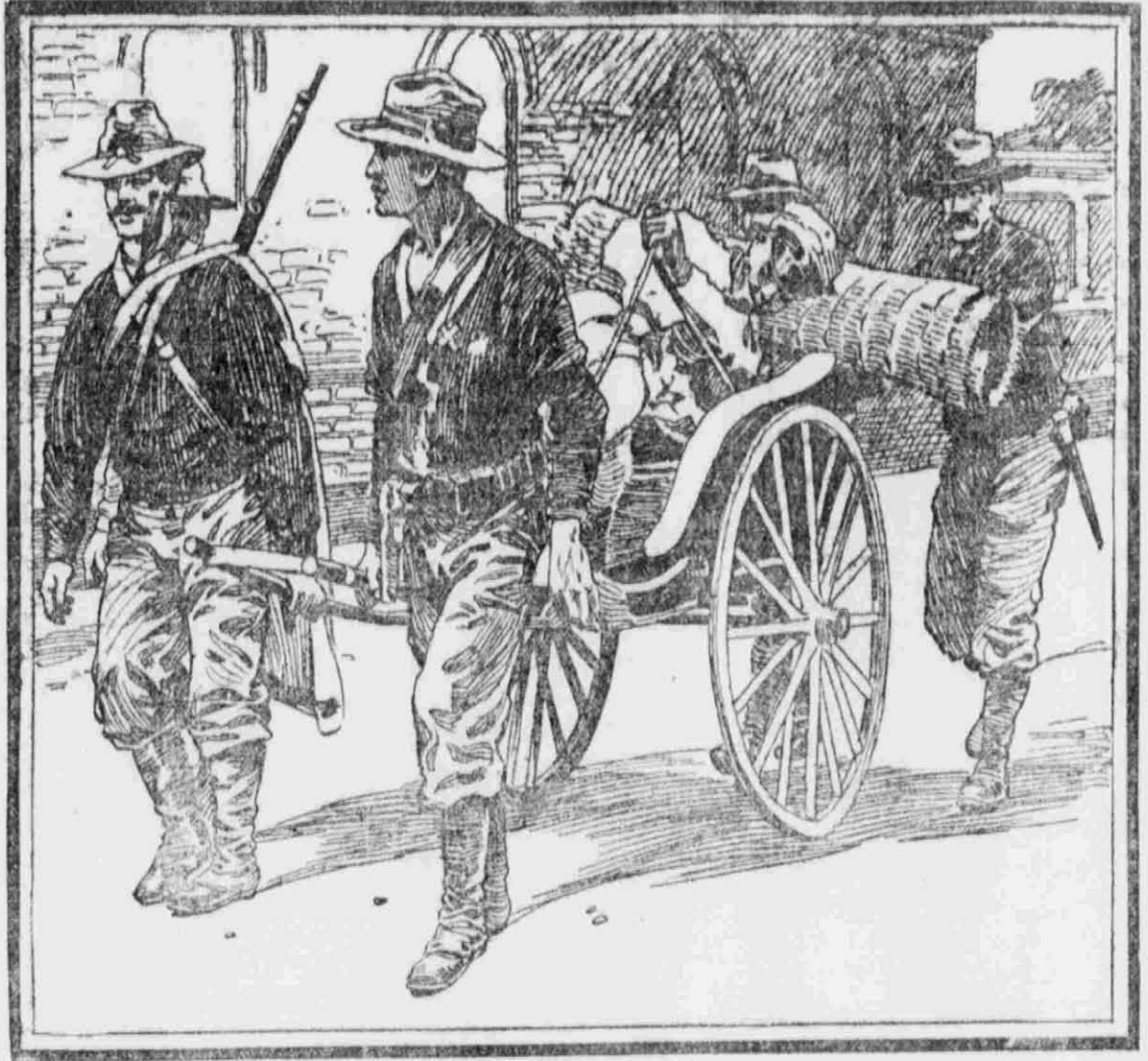
FRANK G. CARPENTER.

A Golden Lily Photographed With the X-Rays—A Realistic Skeleton of the Foot of a Living Chinese Woman—High Officials Who Denounce the Practice—The Opinions of Li Hung Chang and Chang Chi Tung—The Taint of Shanghai who proposes to start an Anti-Corset Society in America—He Says Our Woman Lace Themselves to Death—Queer Methods of Foot Binding—What Foreign Female Doctors Say—Little Feet as Beau Catchers—The Dreadful Chinese Mother-in-law and Her Treatment of American Girls—A Warning to Our Maidens Not to Marry Chinese—Some Terrible Experiences of Foreign Girls Who Loved Celestials and Married Them.

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Shanghai, Sept. 1, 1900.—Shanghai is the headquarters of the Tien Tsu Hui, the anti-foot binding society. This society, founded in 1895, has now its branches all over the empire. It is composed chiefly of missionary women, but it has also many prominent Chinese members, and as soon as the war is over it will be able to push its work as it has not done before.

The Chinese call these small feet golden lilies. One of the recent acts of the society was making a photograph of a golden lily by the X-ray process. A print from the negative lies before me. It represents the bones of the foot of a living Chinese woman, and shows how horribly they are deformed by the compression. The foot has been crushed out of shape. The instep is over the heel, and the sole has been bent up so that the foot is in the form of a bowl.



FROM THE LONDON GRAPHIC. BROTHERS IN ARMS IN THE CHINESE CAMPAIGN.

This interesting picture, which is from a photograph taken by A. Henry Savage London, shows his horrible experiences in Tibet are still fresh in the public mind, shows a number of American marines bringing in a wounded Japanese soldier after the battle of Tien-tsin. The vehicle used is a jirikisha.

and at times it is so great that mothers give their children opium to relieve it. In walking the little ones must walk upon their toes. They are unable to stand still, and are continually taking steps or swaying about. This way has even become a feature of Chinese beauty, and is considered graceful by the men.

At a recent meeting of the Tien Tsu Hui, Dr. Elizabeth Reffender, one of the physicians in charge of a large hospital here at Shanghai, said that this stiff binding was kept on until the children were seven years of age, and that other bandages were then used. She cited some instances of the torture inflicted in this way on children by their mothers-in-law, saying that of all cruel people, she believed the Chinese mother-in-law was the cruellest. She told how under such cruelties the toes of little daughters-in-law often dropped off, and how sometimes half a foot would grow.

Mrs. Reffender said that she had in her employ a woman fifty years old who weighed 140 pounds, and who used a shoe only two and one-half inches long. She said that this woman was in pain all the time, and that when she stood on her feet for an hour or so her feet would bleed.

USE CANES FOR WALKING. Where the feet are very small walking is almost impossible. I have seen scores of Chinese women carried from place to place on the backs of servants, and have met many who could walk only by means of long canes.

I once called upon a Chinese millionaire who introduced me to his mother, an old lady worth at least \$100,000. When she came into the room she had a maid servant on each side of her to uphold her arms. They carried her, in fact, to the chair, and when she sat down her little feet, so small that they could have not more than covered a silver dollar with one of them, just rested on the floor. She wore red satin slippers embroidered with pearls, and her rich satin clothing was fur lined. There were pearls in her ears and her head dress was decorated with diamonds.

SMALL FEET AS BEAU CATCHERS. I have asked many Chinese why foot binding has such a hold on the people and have been always answered that it is because it is the fashion. The men are the cause of it.—A small foot is considered beautiful and a large foot the sign of a servant or plebeian. Hundreds do not want wives with large feet, and the girl whose feet has not been compressed has little chance of making a good match.

I am told that the Chinese nobles will have nothing to do with big-footed women, and that even those who make addresses in favor of anti-foot binding are instance. Consul General Goodnow gave an instance of this the other day when he was chatting with me about the taint of Shanghai. He said:

"I had heard the taint make a speech in favor of anti-foot binding at a meeting of the foreign ladies. In discussing the subject he spoke of them as benefactors of China and lauded them to the skies. A day or so after this I met him at his palace. We had a glass of wine together and the laundress crew quite loquacious. I complimented him on his address and said that I supposed if he took another wife he would choose a woman with big feet."

"No," he replied, "I certainly would not."

"But why not?" said our consul general. "You say that small feet are an outrage."

"I don't know that I said that," said the taster. "But at any rate they are in fashion here and I would not have a big-footed woman. To tell the truth, I really don't think much of your women coming down here and making a fuss about our fashions. Why don't you correct your own evils? Take the matter of corsets. It is far worse to compress the vital organs than to compress the feet. Your women lace themselves to death. I hope that I shall be able to go to America some day as a missionary. If ever I do I shall organize an anti-corset society there."

Here is what one Chinaman says in the North China Daily News about "corsets versus small shoes."

"What is the use of binding the feet? It is of the same use as tightening the waist among our Europeans. Do you tighten the waist for comfort? No. Is it to make one look taller or shorter? No. Then what is it for? It is for beauty. It is to catch the eyes of men. So is foot binding. They are both for the benefit of men. Foot binding does as much harm as waist tightening."

"When so many of your men have written against the harm of waist tightening and not succeeded, how can a few of your women think to put a stop to our ancient custom? You have many medical ladies. Why do they not loosen their waists before they ask our ladies to loosen their feet? Your enlightened Christian ladies should begin at home by forming an anti-waist-tightening society, then we Chinese may follow your example."

In this connection I would say that there is no woman more modest than a Chinese. The ladies usually remain in the backs of the houses. They are not at all forward. They never expose any part of the person except the face and hands. Such things as low necks and short sleeves are not known, and they even tie in the breasts in order that they may not be over-prominent. In many parts of the country the usual dress of a Chinese woman is a pair of trousers or wide pantaloons which come to the feet, and above this a sort of a jacket or close coat which falls to the knees or below. They usually wear good clothes, bright-colored satins and silks beautifully embroidered being much more common with them than with us.

THE DREADFUL MOTHER-IN-LAW. In the above I have referred to the terrible character of the Chinese mother-in-law. She is the worst of her kind, and when her son's wife is a foreigner she often becomes a demon. The close of this war will inaugurate a new regime for China. There will be openings for foreigners in hundreds of ways. The probability is that some of our soldiers will stay here, and some may bring their families to settle in the celestial empire. The new Chinaman will become more popular abroad after a time, and there will be a temptation now and then for an American girl to marry a Chinese and go home with him. The fate of the woman who does this will be horrible in the extreme. She will be treated here as the slave of her Chinese mother-in-law and will be subject to all kinds of indignities.

AMERICAN GIRLS WHO HAVE MARRIED CHINESE.

A number of the missionaries and foreign merchants out here have asked me to warn American girls to have nothing to do with Chinese lovers and to say to those who have married Chinese that they had better remain in the United States. There have been numerous instances in which such wives have found in China a fate equal to death or worse. One was that of a very pretty American girl who married the Chinese interpreter of one of the New York courts. The Chinese had been educated there, and he had been educated there. He was his wife's father and after his marriage he and his wife lived happily and in good style for some time in New York. They had a little boy and when the child was four years old his father proposed to go back to China with his wife, expecting that his knowledge of English would give him a good position here. The American girl the slave of the family and gave her a good beating daily. She threatened to poison her and so terrified her that she lived for a time on raw eggs, breaking the shell, so that she would be sure that poison had not affected them. Her mother-in-law took her clothes from her and gave her a lot

of Chinese rags to wear. This was in Tien Tsin.

After a time the foreigners discovered her condition and persuaded her husband to go to Shanghai, where they got a place for him with the standard Oil company. They raised some money for him and had his rent. He proved to be a valuable asset, and the fact that he had a foreign wife prevented his getting work among the Chinese. His mother followed him to Shanghai and again attempted to mistreat the American girl, but was prevented from doing so by a warning from the foreigners that she would be arrested if her daughter-in-law was injured. The old mother-in-law said the girl could be nothing but a concubine, and all the family agreed in this opinion.

The head of the American Bible Society who told me the above described how he called with his wife one day on this American woman, whom he had been helping. Said he:

"As soon as I entered I noticed she was starving, and upon investigation found that she had been living all winter upon one hot meal a day, eating the best cold, for she had not the fuel to cook it. Shanghai, you know, is almost as cold as New York in the winter, and for months she had had one-half ton of coal. She had but one dress and no underclothing to speak of. I persuaded the mother to others of the foreigners in Shanghai, and we collected some money together and sent the family back to New York. The woman when I last saw her said:

"I was so cold and hungry very much before he brought me here, and I shall do my duty by him when we get back, but I fear that I can never separate him from his horrible people. From now on he will be more of a Chinese than a husband to me."

BEWARE OF THE DIPLOMATS.

I have seen our American girls in Washington making much of the attaches of the Chinese legation. I would advise them neither to flirt with them nor marry them, if they do they will regret it when brought home to China. This has been the case with other girls in the past. A year or so ago one of the Chinese attaches of the legation at London brought back with him a fine-looking, well-educated English girl. He had been legally married to her in London, and until he reached Shanghai he treated her as his wife. He lived with her here but a short time, and when he deserted her he took with him all of her money and every stitch of her clothing, leaving her naked. The result was she was ruined.

A similar instance was that of an English girl who married one of the secretaries of the Chinese legation in London. At the close of his service there he brought her to Nanjing. For some reason or other he lost his position. He had but little money, and he insisted that his wife should go out and work for him. She was a proud girl, and appealed to her consul, who told her that she had lost her nationality by her marriage, and he could do nothing for her. She went away crying. The next day she was seen wading through the mud of the rice fields setting out plants for a few cents per day. Within a week after that she killed herself.

A MISSIONARY WHO MARRIED HER COOK.

While I was at Canton a few weeks ago I found the foreign settlement there much stirred up because one of the medical missionaries, a female doctor, had married her Chinese cook. The woman was about thirty-five and the cook not more than twenty-three. She had fallen in love with him, and had taken him into her office where she was fixing the medicines. When she told her friends that she proposed to marry him they protested, but in her old maidhood she probably thought a Chinese husband better than no husband, and persisted in her determination. Before her boss broke out she was living at Canton, but whether she is there now or not I cannot say. She left the mission upon her marriage. Her husband will undoubtedly take an extra year or so later, and she will probably have the place of a servant.

This is just the situation of an American girl who married a Chinese mer-

chant in the United States and came home with him. Soon after he arrived his father and mother picked out a son and wife for him, and he married her. The Chinese wife became the favorite, and the American girl was substantially a slave. She was too ashamed to complain or run away, and in two years she died.

THE TWO WIVES OF A CHINESE GENERAL.

Just one more instance, one which relates to a leading general of the Chinese army, a man who was recently high in the diplomatic circle of Paris. While there he fell in love with a French girl and married her. He was wealthy, and when he returned to China he installed his wife in a fine house on Bubbling Well road, and she paid her visits in a coach and pair. One day when out walking she saw her own carriage standing before a door in another part of the city. She

went up to the coachman, and in pigeon English said:

"Maroo! what thing you do this side?"

The coachman, pointing to the house, replied:

"Master have go in there. Master's other missy belong this side!"

The French wife was quite angry, and she stepped into the carriage, saying:

"If that is so, my take carriage! Sup-pose master now out, master see walk!" She then went home, and upon investigation found that her husband had another French wife and three children.

WHAT AMERICA HAS AT STAKE IN CHINA.

In confirming the exact extent of America's interests which are now at stake in China, let us note more carefully the returns for 1899 in comparison

with those of 1899. Our direct trade, not including Hongkong, with China was valued in 1899, in exact figures, at \$19,873,249; in 1898 at \$18,172,798, or an increase of \$1,700,451. In this same period it is well to observe that our exports to China increased far more rapidly than our imports from China, thus tending to make the balance of trade in our favor. In 1899 our exports were less than three million dollars; in 1899 they amounted to fourteen and one-half million.

To form a just estimate of our entire commercial exchange with China, the trade of Hongkong should be included. Although this is a British colony, it is essentially a part of China. Ten years ago we bought of, and sold to, China and Hongkong products valued approximately at \$25,000,000; last year we nearly reached the \$40,000,000 mark for the same field, or a remarkable increase of \$15,000,000.—Harper's Weekly.

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