

## THE CHINESE COLONY

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### THE AIMS, ASPIRATIONS AND CHARACTERS OF THE TEN MONGOLIANS IN DETROIT.

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Five Attend a Christian Church  
Regularly, and All “Workee  
Allee Time.”

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“Wantee washee?”

Two words only, but full of deep and expressive meaning; two words expressing the heart-seated yearnings of the Mongolian people in America, the aspirations and longing of the Celestial among the “Fangkwi.” They were addressed by Sam Lee, the Chinese laundryman on Larned street, near Shelby, to a reporter of THE EVENING NEWS, who dropped into the establishment in search of information as to the strength and condition of the

### CHINESE COLONY IN DETROIT

“Wantee washee?” Sheht flir’ten cent, collah, fi’cent, cuffee, sev’cent.”

“No, Sam,” replied the reporter; “I want to have a talk with you about the Chinamen in Detroit, and see how you work.”

“Chinamans? Woh’k? All lits. Come ‘long. Thought want washee.”

Sam Lee’s establishment consists of two rooms, the front devoted to ironing and general business; the rear, which is dark, to washing and to the household purposes of the occupant. Both rooms are devoid of furniture and are dirty. Domestic cleanliness is no part of the Chinese creed, and Sam Lee walks in the steps of his forefathers. A couple of ironing boards comprise the furniture; shelves hold the linen ready for delivery, and in a book formed of large sheets of brown paper sewn together are kept, in large, sprawling Chinese characters, the accounts of the laundry. It was an off day with Dam Lee when the reporter called, and he wasn’t busy, except in that he was preparing in a tin pot, heated over a spirit lamp, what bore a very suspicious resemblance to smoking opium. It was a thick viscid, brownish-black mass, very much like fresh

### EXTRACTUM OPIUM

as sold in the drug stores. Some opium pipes were lying about, but before the reporter had time to investigate Same had whipped the pot and pipes away, and locked them up in a cupboard.

“Is that opium, Sam?”

“No. Me no smoke hopyim. Makee plaste. Loomstick up in back.”

But the smell soon told its own tale and convinced the reporter that it was opium, and that Sam had been preparing for a quiet little spree after his own fashion.

Sam said he came from Canton. “Me come Flisco. Who’k ha’hd pay hong. (the trading companies). Bidnit

(business) not vely good. Detoit too muchee washee all 'lenee. Makee cash no can."

Here Sam stopped, saying that he had some work to take out, and the reporter turned his brogans to other quarters. He found the Chinese colony in Detroit composed of

TEN INDIVIDUALS, ALL MALES,

and all pretty much alike in their characteristics. They live in tumble down, dirty places, and are, while at work, dressed in dirty soiled jackets and trousers. A white linen jacket is worn which conceals a portion of the dirty clothing, but the uncleanness is there all the same. They waste no money in furniture, and prefer to have their living apartment in a state of darkness. They work incessantly, and apparently live on the wind, for they are seldom known to buy anything in the shape of food. They are able to, and do, dress well on occasions of ceremony, however. Every Sunday five swell Chinamen walk into the First Presbyterian church, arrayed in blue silk jackets, black velvet shoes (pappooehes) with soles an inch thick, cassimere pants and round black felt hats. These gentlemen wear the euphonious names of Liyung-Heng, Hing Ching, Kong-Hui, Hong-You, and Lung Sing. They are not converts to Christianity, nor do they pretend to be. They go to church decorously, and in the week submit to the teachings of Mr. F. S. Stevens of Farrand, Williams & Co., with the object of learning English. To

"CHIN CHIN HINGLEE"

is the height of every Chinaman's ambition, and to accomplish that end no exertion is deemed too great.

The Chinese laundry firms in Detroit are run under the names of Wah-Hap, on Michigan avenue, near Washington avenue; Tern Gee, Woodward avenue, near Gratiot avenue; Hop-Sing, Larned street, near Brush street; Sam Lee, Larned street near Shelby, and Lung Sing, on Griswold street, next door to the water office. These names are not the actual names of the proprietors, but names assumed as in indicative of good fortune. Thus Wah-Hap's real name is yung-Ching, tern Gee's is Hing Ching, and Sam Lee's is An Hoo Fang. The wash-houses are run by "boss Chinesers," who can speak English. The most extensive is that of Wah-Hap's business. Wah-Hap, who is a dapper, lively little Chinaman, employs three men and four white women, and works incessantly himself. He pays the women good wages, but with his Chinese help he divides on the co-operative principle, a plan generally followed by the "bosses."

"Me give what makee can," said Wah-Hap to the reporter.

"WHO'K LIKE H—L ALLEE TIME, make mo piecee dollah."

"Where did you come from?" asked the reporter.

"China," replied Wah, "me come Hong Kyang seven ye'go. Makee lots cash," (chuckling) "in 'Flisco (San Francisco) Got him in bank too." (chuckling again)

"How do you fad business?"

“Pletty good. Keepee flee China mans; fo’ woman’s, llish, workee allee time. Makee shi’ht so stiff last all week, no can pay. Makee collahs same. Cuffs same. Last too long. Me change that; not so stiff, pay better; come quicker; more wash. Make pletty good bidnit” (business)

In other words, Wah Hap found that it was a mistake to put lasting work into laundry ironing, and that the true doctrine of the washtub is to make shirts just clean enough to soil easily and come back again. Wah-hap is a regular attendant upon the school in connection with the First Presbyterian church, already alluded to above. He has learned to write English with a good deal of facility. His “flat” is quite a neat one, and he is proud of it. He shoed the reporter a letter he had written to a friend, Hop-Was, in Cleveland, in which he had endeavored to express Chinese written sounds (the spoken and written Chinese are entirely distinct languages, the written being never spoken, and the spoken never written) by English syllable equivalents. Hop-Was, he explained, was quite an English scholar, and they corresponded with a view to perfecting themselves in English.

The reporter next called on Lung Sing, and found him making up his accounts. Lung is a little, wizened up, monkey-faced man with a

#### PIG TAIL FULLY FIVE FEET LONG

He had the usual brown-paper ledger before him, and was making entries rapidly in Chinese characters with a pencil of India ink. This he moistened in his mouth, keeping the point

rounded by rubbing it occasionally on a wet stone. He was not communicative, as he explained: “Me no can chin-chin Hinglee. You come Wah-Hap; he talkes plitty good.” Lung, in making up the books, assisted himself in his calculations by a species of abacus, or counting frame, consisting of buttons of wood strung on wires. It is divided into two compartments, one having 13 strings of five buttons each, the other of the same number of strings, but only two buttons. This Lung bandied with great facility. Similar frames were noticed in all the laundries.

Tern Gee is a funny little fellow. He speaks pretty fair English, and is exemplary in his church attendance, but he has the reputations of being too fond of gaming, and being addicted to other peculiarly Chinese excesses. He claims to be the

#### ONLY SCIENTIFIC WASHERMAN

In town, and says his secret of stiffening and polishing could not be bought for a bonanza. He was hard at work when the reporter called putting a shirt into shape. He used an ordinary, old-fashioned fist-iron, and disposed of the front first, stopping every few moments to moisten the linen with what appeared to be a solution of white glue. Having smoothed the front, he rubbed it over with the solution, and polished the front by rubbing it as hard as possible with the heels of the iron. The cuffs were treated in the same way, a final and peculiar twist of the wrist giving them the proper curl, and then the body of the shirt was treated. When finished a strip of cotton, bearing a

cabalistic character, inflecting the name of the owner and the amount of his accounts was thrust through the neck button-hole, and the shirt placed on the shelf. Thirteen cents is the price for laundering a shirt, and Tern Gee says he can turn out over 50 in a day. The reporter didn't believe him, however. Tern Gee doesn't think much of the honesty of Americans. Once he was

#### ROBBED OF \$300

and he has been frequently threatened with violence. Wah-Hap has also been robbed. One night a couple of fellows entered his wash-house, knocked him down and "went through him" for \$76.

#### HOP SING

on Larned street, near Brush, is a Canton Chinaman, whose temper has been soured by continual pestering at the hands of a pretty rough crowd in the neighborhood. He is a hard worker, and is perhaps, a little less cleanly in his establishment than any of his compatriots, saving always Sam Lee. He speaks very poor English, and when at work doesn't want to talk. THE NEWS reporter tried hard to get Hop to talk, but without any more avail than to evoke an occasional grunt. At last, as the reporter was about giving up, Hop turned round and jerked out,

"TOO MUCHEE DAM TALKEE  
TALKEE."

That settled it. The reporter left, leaving Hop Sing to wrestle with an Irish bartender who had just called for his shirts, and whose English was not much worse than Hop's.

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