

child while on a trip to Sz-chwan Province. He was one of five boys all sold by the parents to furnish funds for opium and gambling, but he was the last one sold - perhaps because unsound. But what interested me was the errand that took him a thousand miles or more from home.

"He was peddling *Chang-hiong kien*, a sort of cloth made from cocoons spun by the wild silk worm, the manufacture of which is the most ancient industry of this region. *Chang-hiong* is the ancient name of this city, which has been famed for many centuries as the place where alone this fabric is made. It is a sort of *khaki* color and very strong and little affected by exposure to moisture. It is regarded as the best thing for shrouds and supposed to last until bodies wrapped in it mold to dust. Of late years, and especially since the establishment of the republic, it has become less popular and hard to sell.

"The eggs are obtained from the Province of Honan (the cradle of the Hokkas, as you will see in my 'Origin and Migrations of the Hokkas') and the worms feed on a variety of trees. The worms are larger, healthier, and spin larger cocoons than the domestic variety.

"Since the cloth declined in value quite a trade has sprung up in the cocoons, which are bought by agents of Japanese firms and shipped to that country, usually in June and July.

"It occurs to me that this material may be adapted to some specialized use by its peculiar qualities. It comes in pieces 8 or 9 yards long and about 15 inches wide, selling at present for about \$7 Mex. The cocoons are boiled and sold partly by weight and partly by number. They might be worth something in U. S. A.

"The business has of late years been carried on mainly by one family or clan. The cocoons are furnished and weavers are paid for making the cloth. Peddlers went in every direction with the cloth and penetrated to distant provinces.

"This city was the center of the human hair industry so prosperous six or eight years ago, and this family went into it largely, collecting hair in a radius of a thousand miles. That business was overdone, though fortunes were made for a while, and this trade in cloth was neglected, and I had supposed was about defunct.

"I will look into this further, if you think it worth while. I understand some hundreds of pieces are still made every year, or can be if the cocoons are not otherwise disposed of."