

***Songs of Gold Mountain***

At home I was in poverty,  
    constantly worried about firewood and rice.  
I borrowed money  
    to come to Gold Mountain.  
Immigration officers cross-examined me;  
    no way could I get through.  
Deported to this island,  
    like a convicted criminal.  
Here –  
Mournful sighs fill the gloomy room.  
A nation weak; her people often humiliated  
Like animals, tortured and destroyed at others' whim.

I roam America undocumented.  
White men blackmail me with many demands.  
I say one thing, and they, another;  
I want to complain of injustice, but my tongue stutters.  
At a loss for words –  
I wrack my brain for a solution, to no avail.  
Thrown into a prison cage, I cannot fly away.  
Don't you think this is cruel? Don't you think this is cruel?

The Flowery Flag Nation is deep in frost and heavy with snow.  
No one can withstand its winter without a fur coat.  
Traveling is not at all like staying at home;  
In thin clothing on wintry days, my shoulders and  
    arms shrug and shiver in the cold.  
Even if you are brave and strong,  
The fierce wind will bend your back into a bow.  
Prepare a cotton-padded gown and rush it to me!  
Don't' make this distant traveler wait anxiously for  
    the journeying geese!\*

*\* migratory geese: metaphor for news messengers*

Since my departure in Hong Kong,  
She and I are each in different places.  
A long separation makes a person even more miserable.

How can one ever forget home, sweet home?  
Stranded in a foreign country,  
In dreams my soul encircles my village home.  
Words to wife and children: don't worry, you won't have to wait too long.  
Once I amass the gold, I will be on my way.

Ever since I've arrived in Gold Mountain,  
Not one day have I dared forget my family.  
My mind is chaotic, like hemp fibers, with constant thought of home;  
Each meal is hard to swallow, because of sorrow.  
My dear woman:  
Don't ever think your husband has betrayed your love.  
It's hard enough to share my words with you in dreams;  
My soul is wandering, every night, my tongue tightened.

At the moment, I hardly have enough grub to eat.  
But I won't take it as fate, my final destiny.  
I don't believe I will live like this till my hair turns white;  
It's only the low ebb in my life.  
When luck strikes,  
With the whole world behind me,  
I will be rich in a few years' turn.  
And then, I will buy property and build a Western mansion.

Before your social status is revealed,  
You are first judged by the brilliance of your clothes.  
No need to boast about whatever talents you might have –  
Nowadays, in any situation, the exterior is what counts the most.  
My fellow countrymen:  
One day we might celebrate a happy occasion.  
But if you don't have something presentable to cover your birthday suit,  
Who will choose you to propose a toast in front of everyone?



**They Strip Off the Bark of Trees and  
Dig Up the Grass Roots for Food**

The glowing sun is in the sky and the locusts cover the ground. There is no green grass in the fields and no smoke of cooking from the houses. They caught rats, or spread their nets for birds, or ground the wheat-stalks into powder, or kneaded the dry grass into cakes. Alas! What food was this for men! They were at last reduced to the straits seen in the picture.

Ye who spend large sums every day on your food, will you not give these sufferers a cup of soup?



**They Sell Their Fields and Take  
Their Houses to Pieces (to Sell  
the Materials)**

For a time the sufferers could borrow from one another, but this came to an end. Then they killed their ploughing oxen and pawned their implements of agriculture, their coverlets and clothes; and at last they gave up all thoughts of the future, and fell to selling their furniture and the materials of their houses, and many of their fields, for a mere song, till at last no purchaser could be found.

Think of this, ye who live in high halls and fine houses, and let your hearts move.

Text and illustrations from *The Famine in China*, Committee of the China Famine Relief Fund (London: C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878).

**Primary Source: "Starvation"**

This following excerpt is from a Chinese woman's account of the period ten years after the 1876-1879 famine, when another great famine afflicted North China. When she was older, this woman, Ning Lao Tai Tai, narrated the story of her harsh life. At the time of this story, she is a young woman with two children, married to a man who has turned out to be an opium addict. (By the late 19th century, it is estimated that in some areas of China, as much as 80% of the population of villages were frequent users of opium, and the average is estimated at perhaps 10% of the entire population.) This selection gives us a glimpse into what life was like for Ning Lao Tai Tai in North China in 1887-88.

Day after day I sat at home. Hunger gnawed. What could I do? My mother was dead. My brother had gone away. When my husband brought home food I ate it and my children ate with me. A woman could not go out of the court. If a woman went out to work the neighbors all laughed. They said, "So and so's wife has gone out to service." Or they said, "So and so's daughter has gone out to service." I did not know enough even to beg. So I sat at home and starved. I was so hungry one day that I took a brick, pounded it to bits, and ate it. It made me feel better.

How could I know what to do? We women knew nothing but to comb our hair and bind our feet and wait at home for our men. When my mother had been hungry she had sat at home and waited for my father to bring her food, so when I was hungry I waited at home for my husband to bring me food.

My husband sold everything we had.

There was a fur hat. He wanted to sell it. But I begged him not to sell it.

"Let's keep this." It was my uncle's. "Take my coat." He took the coat and sold it for grain. When he came home for food he drank only two bowls of millet gruel. I wondered why he ate so little. I looked and found that the hat was gone, and knew that he had sold it for opium. Those who take opium care not for food. ...

One year after my mother died I got a stick and a bowl and started out begging. It was the spring of the year and I was twenty-two. It was no light thing for a woman to go out of her home. That is why I put up with my old opium sot so long. But now I could not live in my house and had to come out. When I begged I begged in the parts of the city where I was not known, for I was ashamed. I went with my begging stick (the little stick with which beggars beat off dogs) up my sleeve, that people should not see it. Every day we went out begging. My husband carried the baby and led Mantze. When we came to an open gate I would send her in, for people's hearts are moved by a child. ...

Reprinted with permission from Ida Pruitt, *A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 55, 62.

BANC MSS C-D 321: Lorenzo Sawyer dictations, etc. Transcription

Fol. One, dictation pp. 3-6

“Chinese Question. I do not think it at all desirable that the Chinese should ~~could~~ come here permanently, but my objection is a very different one from the popular objection. It is in the distinction of races. It is a great misfortune to this country that we have ~~a nigger~~ the negro in the country. The Chinese are vastly superior to the negro, but they are a race entirely different from ours and never can assimilate and I don’t think it desirable that ~~we~~ they should and for that reason I don’t think it desirable that they should come here. I think we made a mistake when we opened our door of immigration to them. That is the fundamental basis of my ideas upon the subject, that is to say, the distinction of race. But when you come to drive them out ~~fiereely~~ suddenly, that is another ~~matter~~ question altogether. You cannot do that without destroying and breaking down our own industries. There is scarcely an industry on this coast that would not be ruined were we to drive these men out. Our fruit industry would be ruined and many of our manufacturers also. We are much further advanced in many of our industries than we should be ~~and~~, had it not been for the Chinese, but the cheap labor is no feature that concerns me at all. The steam engine is nothing by cheap labor and you might as well cry out against that ~~as a~~ on that account as against the Chinese. In my view this is not the objection; the objection is the dissimilarity of races, and so far as the mere labor is concerned it is a great advantage to the country. What ~~the~~ we complain of, what the public complain of is really a virtue, their industry their economy their frugality and perseverance. If they would never bring their women here and never multiply and we would never have more than we can make useful, ~~it~~ their presence would always be an advantage to the State. It enables thousands to employ labor who would otherwise have to their own work. It lifts a very large class ~~into~~ to a position superior to what they would otherwise be able to attain, and so long as ~~they~~ the Chinese don’t come here to stop, their labor is highly beneficial to the whole community. There are disadvantages about it, but the difficulty is that they are beginning to get over this idea that they must go back and they ~~are~~ begin to believe that they can be buried here without detriment to their future. Then they will being to multiply here and that is where the danger lies in my opinion. We can’t drive them out suddenly without disturbing all our industries. The fruit interest would go to pieces. The fruit could not possibly be harvested and got to market on such terms as would pay the expenses, and there men who howl about it could not do the work and many of them would not if they could on such terms as would enable ~~them~~ the fruit growers to carry on. We would not have a railroad today if we could have got Chinese labor. ~~But it is a pity that they have~~

**SAN LUIS LAUNDRY.**

**Opposition to Chinese**

**Patronize White Industry!**

**AND**

**SAVE MONEY**

MRS. M. E. BUTHERLAND hereby announces to the people of San Luis Obispo, that she has opened a laundry, on Oros street, just back of, and one block distant from the residence of O. W. Dana, where she is prepared to do all kinds of washing, at rates below Chinese prices.

LARGE PIECES, per dozen, - - - \$1.00  
SMALL PIECES, " - - - 25cts

Orders left at the Telegraph Office will be promptly attended to.

**WARRANTED SATISFACTION GUARANTEED**

301-11

Anti-Chinese Advertisement from August 26, 1876

[http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://sloblogs.thetribunenews.com/slovault/files/2010/05/1876-08-26-racist-ad-326x530.jpg&imgrefurl=http://sloblogs.thetribunenews.com/slovault/2010/05/20/tea-grows-in-china/&usq=\\_yPJDKMQPF65jCtz8p2g7lZPedxg=&h=530&w=326&sz=104&hl=en&start=170&zoom=1&tbnid=Vn51yka0cOIU4M:&tbnh=111&tbnw=68&ei=DqO4TZypKsLLgQeuz5E6&prev=/search%3Fq%3DAdvertisements%2Bgold%2Brush%2Bchinese%2Blaborers%26hl%3Den%26biw%3D1004%26bih%3D533%26gbv%3D2%26tbnm%3Disch0%2C4165&itbs=1&iact=hc&vpx=282&vpy=136&dur=1152&hovh=286&hovw=176&tx=98&ty=188&page=11&ndsp=19&ved=1t:429,r:14,s:170&biw=1004&bih=533](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://sloblogs.thetribunenews.com/slovault/files/2010/05/1876-08-26-racist-ad-326x530.jpg&imgrefurl=http://sloblogs.thetribunenews.com/slovault/2010/05/20/tea-grows-in-china/&usq=_yPJDKMQPF65jCtz8p2g7lZPedxg=&h=530&w=326&sz=104&hl=en&start=170&zoom=1&tbnid=Vn51yka0cOIU4M:&tbnh=111&tbnw=68&ei=DqO4TZypKsLLgQeuz5E6&prev=/search%3Fq%3DAdvertisements%2Bgold%2Brush%2Bchinese%2Blaborers%26hl%3Den%26biw%3D1004%26bih%3D533%26gbv%3D2%26tbnm%3Disch0%2C4165&itbs=1&iact=hc&vpx=282&vpy=136&dur=1152&hovh=286&hovw=176&tx=98&ty=188&page=11&ndsp=19&ved=1t:429,r:14,s:170&biw=1004&bih=533)

**Chinese Laundry**

**LEE HEM, Proprietor,**

Main St. bet. Fifth and Sixth,

**JOPLIN, MISSOURI.**

Washing and Ironing done Neatly and Promptly at the following rates: Cuff, 5cts; Collar, 5cts; Shirt, 10cts. Your patronage respectfully solicited. Nothing but first-class work done.

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*Photo*



<http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/hb096n972q/>  
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*Photo*



**3.2 White and Chinese miners hoping to strike it rich during the California Gold Rush at Auburn Ravine in 1852.**

*(California State Library [Daguerreotype collection #912])*

[http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/three/63\\_02.htm](http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/three/63_02.htm)



[http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00001582\\_16a](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00001582_16a)

In the midst of our annual benediction for blessings there is one blight upon our social structure that mars the harmony of our wonted rejoicings. It is the interfering influence of the Chinese on our labor problem. The white workingman has obstacles sufficient at best in the severe competition of his own kind, but when another race is imported with lesser needs in life, and habits enabling him to undermine the established systems of the country, then indeed is the home laborer placed at a decided disadvantage. And so great has this interference with settled ways and established prices become that the home happiness of the white mechanic is being seriously invaded and his ability to raise his family in comfort interfered with. While on Thanksgiving Day the bells are ringing out from church tower and steeple the notes of joyous greeting, in many an humble household the head of the family will consider the occasion a hollow mockery in that the means for the mid-day meal have been sadly curtailed by the unwelcome invasion of the pig-tailed stranger. The question that he asks from his sorrowing soul, "Is it right for a Chinaman to jeopard a white man's dinner?" is one that must be answered—and if not peaceably, then in blood.

Excerpt from an editorial that accompanies or explains a political cartoon that was published in "The Wasp."

[http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00001580\\_16a](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/images@ViewImage?img=brk00001580_16a)

*Excerpt from letter of Thomas Stillman to his son*

this than \$300. I feel some uneasiness about the war being waged against the employers of Chinese. I cannot dispense with them, they are the only reliable laborers to be had. They work like machines through rain, cold and heat and need no watching. I pay them \$1.25 a day, their foreman gets \$35 a month. His name is Ah Chung and he has been with me four years. I find that I am unable to endure the work. In the first place I cannot get down to it. My knee joints are not supple and my weight is so great that I cannot rise with the force of my extensors—the Chinamen say I am “too muchee old.” What gives me the coup de grace is chronic rheumatism in my right shoulder, last winter it was in my left, but I can oversee all that is going on from the porch of my house and I have a good 18 \_\_\_ binocular field glass—and with it I never saw a Chinaman lean on his tools or pause in his labor until the time comes. I would prefer to employ my own countrymen but they will not work except when starved to it and as soon as they earn a little money they want to tramp—they want a horse to work for them and they will tramp behind him as if they had followed the business all their lives. Chinamen are industrious and ambitious to save their earnings and send it to China where a few thousand will make him rich. The whites complain that they don't spend their money here but send it out of the