

By incurring it the boy has offended against his family ancestors as well as against his village community, if he has one. The error may affect the whole of the boy's subsequent career—a disgrace never wholly forgotten or forgiven. This cult of Ancestor Worship explains many peculiarities of the Japanese character, their committee-mindedness, their fear of being alone, their terror of making a mistake, their feeling of security only when acting as a group. We can understand why their education is designed to turn out citizens according to pattern, the discouragement of individuality going

as far as to crush unusual talent, lest the possessor be tempted to think himself different from the rest. We can see why a child will ruin his health to pass an examination, for to fail would be a reflection on the dead. Above all, it explains those terrible outbursts of cruelty, and sadistic madness. The Japanese racial background presupposes an unusually strong and fierce emotional nature daily subjected to constant supervision from without—not from within. Under unusual circumstances—war, earthquake, or plague—the normal inhibitions are lessened or removed.

DEER TAILS WANTED

A KORERO Report

IF YOU are feeling "run-down, depressed, nervy," as the patent medicine advertisements have it, and retailed chemical compounds have failed to remedy your deplorable state, do not despair. Try, instead, a potion tested by millions of the run-down, depressed, and nervy over thousands of years and, according to the testimony offered in the form of to-day's keen, world-wide demand, found infallible. The method of manufacturing this elixir is simple: it does not require extensive apprenticeship in sooth-saying or other wizardry, and both ingredients and utensils are limited. In fact, you will require only two saucepans (or urns), one fowl, one very thin slice from a dried deer's tail, and perhaps, a certain amount of faith. But the whole secret lies in the dried deer's tail and, as faith in the remedy could come only through legends and history of its efficacy, you would need to be Chinese.

It was an advertisement in a Wellington newspaper that first aroused curiosity and led to the story of an ancient Chinese body-building medicine still used by Chinese communities all over the world. "*Deer tails wanted*," said the advertisement. "*We pay 1s. 6d.-3s. 6d. each, according to the size.*" With a complete ignorance on the subject of uses of deer tails,

suggested as varying from whip handles to paint-brushes, though there was a vague memory of a childhood impression upon learning that the Chinese ate birds' nests and shark fins, and maybe deer tails could form an equally appetising dish. Thus did the advertisement lead to conjecture and the trail of the tail.

The deer tails, for which there is a large market and a mounting export trade lacking the standing of a quotation in the Year-Book, are purchased by Chinese operating laundries and greengrocer shops in Wellington. A surprising number are bought as the result of just such advertisements as that quoted above, but more often than not due care has not been exercised by the vendor, and the tails have deteriorated in condition by the time they reach Wellington; on one occasion, at least, the Post Office complained of the strength of a parcel. So that only a percentage of consignments reaching Wellington are suitable for elevation to the first stage in the treatment.

The tails are dried, much as the Boers sun-dry their beef into strips of *biltong*. But a Wellington winter makes for improvisation and selected tails have usually to be dried by hanging near the coke fires of the laundries. (Next to your shirt?) The dehydrated version,