



RICE PLANTING.

there being but very few miles of railroad. There is an extensive caravan commerce with Russia. On the high, cold plateau between the Altai and Himalaya mountains, the **yak**, a long-haired, ox-like animal, native to the country, is used as a beast of burden.

There are now more than twenty ports open by treaty to commerce, which is considerable between the Chinese and other nations. The chief exports are tea, sugar, silk, porcelain-ware, fine carved and lacquered wares, and straw matting. The export of tea, however, is decreasing, owing to the increased demand for that grown in India and Ceylon. The imports are opium, petroleum, cloths, and metals.

The United States imports from China tea, silk, and straw goods, and returns kerosene and cotton goods. Much of the steamship traffic between the two countries passes through the Suez Canal.

Questions. Is the domestic commerce extensive? How are goods transported? Are there many miles of railroad? How is commerce with Russia conducted? What animal is useful in commerce? How many ports are open to commerce? Is foreign commerce considerable? What are the exports and imports? What is the character of our trade with China? By what route does much of the traffic between China and this country pass?

§ 10. The most habitable portion of China is upon the eastern part of the slope, in the valleys of the great rivers, and upon the alluvial plains formed by them near the sea. Within this limited area, known as **China Proper**, dwells a very large part of the population of the empire which is nearly one-fourth that of the world. Many

tribes in the north and west, in the desert regions, are nomadic, raising horses, goats, and sheep. The **cashmere goat** is valuable for its long, silky wool.

The mariner's compass, gunpowder, porcelain, paper, and the art of printing were known in China hundreds of years before they were in Europe. Education, as understood there, is encouraged and held in great respect; politeness is carried to an extreme; gambling and opium-smoking are prevalent vices.

The prevailing religions are Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The first two are native, while Buddhism was introduced from India.

The Chinese, though not courageous as soldiers, care little for life. Criminals prefer execution to long imprisonment, and death is a common sentence for crime.

The Chinese are unprogressive, as compared with western nations, and, as a people, they are ludicrously conceited and very superstitious. Believing their race the superior one and its ways better than those of the civilized world, they resent and oppose all modern progress, such as the construction of railroads, telegraph lines, etc. It is only within about fifty years that they have consented to hold official intercourse with other nations. When China, with its vast population, adopts modern scientific methods, it will enter upon a wonderful course of prosperity.

Questions. Where is the most habitable portion of China? What is this area called? About what proportion of the human race dwells in the Chinese Empire? What is the character of the tribes in the north and west? For what is the cashmere goat valuable? Name some evidences of ancient Chinese skill in science and art. Mention good and bad features of Chinese