sea-slug, is a marine substance procured from the Polynesian Islands; it is sought after under the same idea of its invigorating qualities, and being cheaper than the birdsnest is a more common dish; when cooked it resembles pork-rind in appearance and taste. Sharks' fins and fish-maws are imported and boiled into gelatinous soups that are nourishing and palatable; and the sinews, tongues, palates, udders, and other parts of different animals are sought after as delicacies. A large proportion of the numerous made dishes seen at great feasts consists of such odd articles, most of which are supposed to possess some peculiar strengthening quality.

The art of cooking has not reached any high degree of perfection. Like the French, it is very economical, and consists of stews and fried dishes more than of baked or roasted. Salt is proportionately dear from its preparation being a government monopoly, and this has led to a large use of onions for seasoning. The articles of kitchen furniture are few and simple; an iron boiler, shaped like the segment of a sphere, for stewing or frying, a portable earthen furnace, and two or three different shaped earthenware pots for boiling water or vegetables constitute the whole establishment of thousands of families. A few other utensils, as tongs, ladles, forks, sieves, mills, etc., are used to a greater or less extent, though the variety is quite commensurate with the simple cookery. Both meats and vegetables, previously hashed into mouthfuls, are stewed or fried in oil or fat; they are not cooked in large joints or steaks for the table of a household. Hogs are baked whole for sacrifices and for sale in cookshops, but before being eaten are hashed and fried again. Cutting the food into small pieces secures its thorough cooking with less fuel than it would otherwise require, and is moreover indispensable for eating with chopsticks. Two or three vegetables are boiled together, but meat soups are seldom seen; and the immense variety of puddings, pastry, cakes, pies, custards, ragouts, creams, etc., made in western lands is almost unknown in China.1

CHAPTER XIV.

SOCIAL LIFE AMONG THE CHINESE.

The preceding chapter, in a measure, exhibits the attainments the Chinese have reached in the comforts and elegances of living. These terms, as tests of civilization, however, are so comparative that it is rather difficult to define them; for the notions which an Englishman, an Egyptian, and a Chinese severally might have of comfort and elegance in the furniture and arrangement of their houses are almost as unlike as their languages. If Fisher's *Views of China* be taken as a guide, one can easily believe that the Chinese need little from abroad to better their condition in these particulars; while if one listen to the descriptions of some persons who have resided among them, it will be concluded that they possess neither comfort in their houses, civility in their manners, nor cleanliness in their persons. In passing to an account of their social life, this variety of tastes should not be overlooked; and if some points appear objectionable when taken alone, a little further examination will, perhaps, show that they form part of a system which requires complete reconstruction before it could be happily and safely altered.

The observations of a foreigner upon Chinese society are likely to be modified by his own feelings, and the way in which he has been treated by natives there; but their behavior to him might be very unlike what would be deemed good breeding among themselves. If a Chinese feared or expected something from a foreigner, he would act toward him more politely than if the contrary were the case; on the one hand better, on the other worse, than he would toward one of his own countrymen in like circumstances. In doing so, it may be remarked with
regret that he would only imitate the conduct of a host of foreigners who visit China, and whose coarse remarks, rude actions, and general supercilious conduct toward the natives ill comport with their superior civilization and assumed advantages. One who looked at the matter reasonably would not expect much true politeness among a people whose conceit and ignorance, selfishness and hauteur, were nearly equal; nor be surprised to find the intercourse between the extremes of society present a strange mixture of brutality and commiseration, formality and disdain. The separation of the sexes modifies and debases the amusements, even of the most moral, leads the men to spend their time in gambling, devote it to the pleasures of the table, or dawdle it away when the demands of business, study, or labor do not arouse them. Political parties, which exert so powerful an influence upon the conduct of men in Christian countries, leading them to unite and communicate with each other for the purpose of watching or resisting the acts of government, do not exist; and where there is a general want of confidence, such institutions as insurance companies, savings or deposit banks, corporate bodies to build a railroad or factory, and associations of any kind in which persons unite their funds and efforts to accomplish an object, are not to be expected; they do not exist in China, nor did they in Rome or ancient Europe. Nor will any one expect to hear that literary societies or voluntary philanthropic associations are common. These, as they are now found in the west, are the products of Christianity alone, and we must wait for the planting of the tree before looking for its fruit. The legal profession, as distinct from the possession of office, is not an occupation in which learned men can obtain an honorable livelihood; the priesthood is confined to monasteries and temples, and its members do not enter into society; while the practice of medicine is so entirely empirical and strange that the few experienced practitioners are not enough to redeem the class. These three professions, which elsewhere do so much to elevate society and guide public opinion, being wanting, educated men have no stimulus to draw them out into independent action. The competition for literary degrees and official rank, the eager pursuit of trade, or the dull
routine of mechanical and agricultural labor, form the leading avocations of the Chinese people. Unacquainted with the intellectual enjoyments found in books and the conversation of learned men, and having no educated taste, as we understand that term (while, too, he cannot find such a thing as virtuous female society), the Chinese resorts to the dice-box, the opium-pipe, or the brothel for his pleasures, though even there with a loss of character among his peers.

The separation of the sexes has many bad results, only partially compensated by some conservative ones. Woman owes her present elevation at the west to Christianity, not only in the degree of respect, support, freedom from servile labor, and education which she receives, but also in the reflex influences she exerts of a purifying, harmonizing, and elevating character. Where the requirements of the Gospel exert no force, her rights are more or less disregarded, and if she become as debased as the men, she can exert little good influence even upon her own family, still less upon the community. General mixed society can never be maintained with pleasure unless the better parts of human nature have the acknowledged preëminence, and where she, who imparts to it all its gracefulness and purity, is herself uneducated, unpolished, and immodest, the common sense of mankind sees its impropriety. By advocating the partition of the sexes, legislators and moralists in China have acted as they best could in the circumstances of the case, and by preventing the evils beyond their remedy, provided the best safeguards they could against general corruption. In her own domestic circle a Chinese female, in the character and duties of daughter, wife, or mother, finds as much employment, and probably as many enjoyments, as the nature of her training has fitted her for. She does not hold her proper place in society simply because she has never been taught its duties or exercised its privileges.

In ordinary cases the male and female branches of a household are strictly kept apart; not only the servants, but even brothers and sisters do not freely associate after the boys commence their studies. At this period of life, or even earlier, an anxious task devolves upon parents, which is to find suitable
partners for their children. Betrothment is entirely in their hands, and is conducted through the medium of a class of persons called mei-jin, or go-betweens, who are expected to be well acquainted with the character and circumstances of the parties. Mothers sometimes contract their unborn progeny on the sole contingency of a difference of sex, but the usual age of forming these engagements is ten, twelve, or older, experience having shown that the casualties attending it render an earlier period undesirable.

There are six ceremonies which constitute a regular marriage, though their details vary much in different parts of the Empire: 1. The father and elder brother of the young man send a go-between to the father and brother of the girl, to inquire her name and the moment of her birth, that the horoscope of the two may be examined, in order to ascertain whether the proposed alliance will be a happy one. 2. If the eight characters\(^1\) seem to augur aright, the boy's friends send the mei-jin back to make an offer of marriage. 3. If that be accepted, the second party is again requested to return an assent in writing. 4. Presents are then sent to the girl's parents according to the means of the parties. 5. The go-between requests them to choose a lucky day for the wedding. 6. The preliminaries are concluded by the bridegroom going or sending a party of friends with music to bring his bride to his own house. The match-makers contrive to multiply their visits and prolong the negotiations, when the parties are rich, to serve their own ends.

In Fuhkien parents often send pledges to each other when their children are mere infants, and registers containing their names and particulars of nativity are exchanged in testimony of the contract. After this has been done it is impossible to retract the engagement, unless one of the parties becomes a leper or is disabled. When the children are espoused older, the boy sometimes accompanies the go-between and the party carrying the presents to the house of his future mother-in-law, and receives from her some trifling articles, as melon-seeds, fruits, etc., which

\(^1\) Compare p. 628.
he distributes to those around. Among the presents sent to the
girl are fruits, money, vermicelli, and a ham, of which she gives
a morsel to each one of the party, and sends its foot back. These
articles are neatly arranged, and the party bringing them is re-
ceived with a salute of fire-crackers.

From the time of engagement until marriage a young lady is
required to maintain the strictest seclusion. Whenever friends
call upon her parents she is expected to retire to the inner apart-
ments, and in all her actions and words guard her conduct with
careful solicitude. She must use a close sedan whenever she
visits her relations, and in her intercourse with her brothers and
the domestics in the household maintain great reserve. Instead
of having any opportunity to form those friendships and ac-
quaintances with her own sex which among ourselves become
a source of so much pleasure at the time and advantage in after
life, the Chinese maiden is confined to the circle of her relations
and her immediate neighbors. She has few of the pleasing re-
membrances and associations that are usually connected with
school-day life, nor has she often the ability or opportunity to
correspond by letter with girls of her own age. Seclusion at this
time of life, and the custom of crippling the feet, combine to
confine women in the house almost as much as the strictest laws
against their appearing abroad; for in girlhood, as they know
only a few persons except relatives, and can make very few ac-
quaintances after marriage, their circle of friends contracts rather
than enlarges as life goes on. This privacy impels girls to learn
as much of the world as they can, and among the rich their
curiosity is gratified through maid-servants, match-makers, ped-
dlers, visitors, and others. Curiosity also stimulates young ladies
to learn something of the character and appearance of their in-
tended husbands, but the rules of society are too strict for young
persons to endeavor to form a personal attachment, though it is
not impossible for them to see each other if they wish, and there
are, no doubt, many contracts suggested to parents by their
children.

The office of match-maker is considered honorable, and both
men and women are employed to conduct nuptial negotiations.
Great confidence is reposed in their judgment and veracity, and
as their employment depends somewhat upon their tact and character, they have every inducement to act with strict propriety in their intercourse with families. The father of the girl employs their services in collecting the sum agreed upon in the contract, which, in ordinary circumstances, varies from twenty-five to forty dollars, increasing to a hundred and over according to the condition of the bridegroom; until that is paid the marriage does not take place. The presents sent at betrothment are sometimes costly, consisting of silks, rice, cloths, fruits, etc.; the bride brings no dower, but both parents frequently go to expenses they can ill afford when celebrating the nuptials of their children, as the pride of family stimulates each party to make undue display.

The principal formalities of a marriage are everywhere the same, but local customs are observed in some regions which are quite unknown and appear singular elsewhere. In Fuhkien, when the lucky day for the wedding comes, the guests assemble in the bridegroom's house to celebrate it, where also sedans, a band of music, and porters are in readiness. The courier, who acts as guide to the chair-bearers, takes the lead, and in order to prevent the onset of malicious demons lurking by the road, a baked hog or large piece of pork is carried in front, that the procession may safely pass while these hungry souls are devouring the meat. Meanwhile the bride arrays herself in her best dress and richest jewels. Her girlish tresses have already been bound up, and her hair arranged by a matron, with due formality; an ornamental and complicated head-dress made of rich materials, not unlike a helmet or corona, often forms part of her coiffure. Her person is nearly covered by a large mantle, over which is an enormous hat like an umbrella, that descends to the shoulders and shades the whole figure. Thus attired she takes her seat in the red gilt marriage sedan, called hwa kiao, borne by four men, in which she is completely concealed. This is locked by her mother or some other relative, and the key given to one of the bridemen, who hands it to the bridegroom or his representative on reaching his house.

The procession is now rearranged, with the addition of as many red boxes and trays to contain the wardrobe, kitchen
utensils, and the feast, as the means of the family or the extent of her paraphernalia require. As the procession approaches the bridegroom's house the courier hastens forward to announce its coming, whereupon the music strikes up, and fire-crackers salute her until she enters the gate. As she approaches the door the bridegroom conceals himself, but the go-between brings forward a young child to salute her, while going to seek the closeted bridegroom. He approaches with becoming gravity and opens the sedan to hand out his bride, she still retaining the hat and mantle; they approach the ancestral tablet, which they reverence with three bows, and then seat themselves at a table upon which are two cups of spirits. The go-between serves them, though the bride can only make the motions of drinking, as the large hat completely covers her face. They soon retire into a chamber, where the husband takes the hat and mantle from his wife, and sees her, perhaps, for the first time in his life. After he has considered her for some time, the guests and friends enter the room to survey her, when each one is allowed to express an opinion: the criticisms of the women are severest, perhaps because they remember the time they stood in her unpleasant position. This cruel examination being over, she is introduced to her husband's parents, and then salutes her own. Such are some of the customs among the Fuhkienese. Other usages followed in marriages and betrothals have been carefully described by Doolittle, with particular reference to the same people, and by Archdeacon John H. Gray, alluding to other parts of the Empire. 1

The bridegroom, previous to the wedding, receives a new name or "style," and is formally capped by his father in presence of his friends, as an introduction to manhood. He invites the guests, sending two red cakes with each invitation, and to him each guest, a few days before the marriage, returns a present or a sum of money worth about ten or fifteen cents, nominally equal to the expenses he will be considered as occasioning. Another invitation is sent the day after to a feast, and the bride also calls on the ladies who attended her wedding,

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1 Social Life of the Chinese, Chapters II. and III.; China, Chap. VII.; also Fourteen Months in Canton, by Mrs Gray.
from whom she receives a ring or some other article of small value. The gentlemen also make the bridegroom a present of a pair of lanterns to hang at his gateway. On the night of the wedding they sometimes endeavor to get into the house when the pair is supposed to be asleep, in order to carry off some article, which the bridegroom must ransom at their price.

Among the poor the expenses of a wedding are much lessened by purchasing a young girl, whom the parents bring up as a daughter until she is marriageable, and in this way secure her services in the household. A girl already affianced is for a like reason sometimes sent to the boy's parents, that they may support her. In small villages the people call upon a newly married couple near the next full moon, when they are received standing near the bedside. The men enter first and pay their respects to the bride, while her husband calls the attention of his visitors to her charms, praises her little feet, her beautiful hands, and other features, and then accompanies them into the hall, where they are regaled with refreshments. After the men have retired the women enter and make their remarks upon the lady, whose future character depends a good deal upon the manner in which she conducts herself. If she shows good temper, her reputation is made. Many a prudent woman on this occasion says not a word, but suffers herself to be examined in silence in order that she may run no risk of offending.\(^1\) Far different is this introduction to married life from the bridal tour and cordial greetings of friends which ladies receive in western lands during the honeymoon!

The bridal procession is a peculiar feature of Chinese social life. It varies in its style, nature of the ornaments, and the whole get-up in all parts of the land, but is always as showy as the means of the parties will allow. It is composed of bearers of lanterns and official tablets, musicians, relatives of the bride and groom and their personal friends, fringed stands with roofs carried on thills to hold the bride's effects, all centering around her sedan. In Peking such a procession will sometimes be stretched out half a mile, and the sedan borne by a dozen or

\(^1\) *Chinese Repository*, Vols. IV., p. 568, and X., pp. 65-70; *Annales de la Foi*, No. XL., 1835.
more bearers. The coolies are dressed in red, and they and their burdens are usually provided by special shopmen, who purvey on such occasions. The tablets of literary rank held by members of the family, wooden dragons' heads, titular lanterns, and other official insignia are borne in state, an evidence of its high standing. In some places an old man, elegantly dressed, heads the procession, bearing a large-umbrella to hold over the bride when she enters and leaves her sedan; behind him come bearers with lanterns, one of which carries the inscription, "The phoenixes sing harmoniously." To these succeed the music and the honorary tablets, titular flags, state umbrella, etc., and two stout men as executioners dressed in a fantastic manner, wearing long feathers in their caps, and lictors, chain-bearers, and other emblems of office. Parties of young lads, prettily dressed and playing on drums, gongs, and flutes, or carrying lanterns and banners, occasionally form a pleasing variety in the train, which is continued by the trays and covered tables containing the bride's trousseau, and ended with the sedan containing herself.

The ceremonies attending her reception at her husband's house are not uniform. In some parts she is lifted out of the sedan, over a pan of charcoal placed in the court, and carried into the bed-chamber; in other places she enters and leaves her sedan on rugs spread for her use, and walks into the chamber. After a brief interval she returns into the hall, bearing a tray of betel-nut for the guests, and then worships a pair of geese brought in the train with her husband, this bird being an emblem of conjugal affection. On returning to her chamber the bridegroom follows her and takes off the red veil, after which they pledge each other in wine, the cups being joined by a thread. While there a matron who has borne several children to one husband comes in to pronounce a blessing upon them and make up the nuptial bed. The assembled guests then sit down to the feast and ply the sin lang, 'new man' or bridegroom, pretty well with liquor; the Chinese on such occasions do not, however, often overpass the rules of sobriety. The sin fujin, 'new lady,' or bride, and her mother-in-law also attend to those of her own sex who are present in other apartments,
but among the poor a pleasanter sight is now and then seen in all the guests sitting at one table.

In the morning the pair worship the ancestral tablets and salute all the members of the family; among the poor this important ceremony occurs very soon after the pair have exchanged their wine-cups. The pledging of the bride and groom in a cup of wine, and their worship of the ancestral tablets and of heaven and earth, are the important ceremonies of a wedding after the procession has reached the house. Marriages are celebrated at all hours, though twilight and evening are preferred; the spring season, or the last month in the year, are regarded as the most felicitous nuptial periods. From the way in which the whole matter is conducted there is some room for deception by sending another person in the sedan than the one betrothed, or the man may mistake the name of the girl he wishes to marry. Mr. Smith mentions one of his acquaintances, who, having been captivated with a girl he saw in the street, sent a go-between with proposals to her parents, which were accepted; but he was deeply mortified on receiving his bride to find that he had mistaken the number of his charmer, and had received the fifth daughter instead of the fourth.

The Chinese do not marry another woman with these observances while the first one is living, but they may bring home concubines with no other formality than a contract with her parents, though it is considered somewhat discreditable for a man to take another bedfellow if his wife have borne him sons, unless he can afford each of them a separate establishment. It is not unfrequent for a man to secure a maid-servant in the family with the consent of his wife by purchasing her for a concubine, especially if his occupation frequently call him away from home, in which case he takes her as his travelling companion and leaves his wife in charge of the household. The fact that the sons of a concubine are considered as legally belonging to the wife induces parents to betroth their daughters early, and thus prevent their entering a man's family in this inferior capacity. The Chinese are sensible of the evils of a divided household; and the laws place its control in the hands of the wife. If she have no sons of her own, she looks out for a likely boy among her clansmen.
to adopt, knowing that otherwise her husband will probably bring a concubine into the family. It is difficult even to guess at the extent of polygamy, for no statistics have been or can be easily taken. Among the laboring classes it is rare to find more than one woman to one man, but tradesmen, official persons, landholders, and those in easy circumstances frequently take one or more concubines; perhaps two-fifths of such families have them. Show and fashion lead some to increase the number of their women, though aware of the discord likely to arise, for they fully believe their own proverb, that "nine women out of ten are jealous." Yet it is probably true that polygamy finds its greatest support from the women themselves. The wife seeks to increase her own position by getting more women into the house to relieve her own work and humor her fancies. The Chinese illustrate the relation by comparing the wife to the moon and the concubines to the stars, both of which in their appropriate spheres wait upon and revolve around the sun.

If regard be had to the civilization of the Chinese and their opportunities for moral training, the legal provisions of the code to protect females in their acknowledged rights and punish crimes against the peace and purity of the family relation reflect credit upon their legislators. In these laws the obligation of children to fulfil the contract made by their parents is enforced, even to the annulling of an agreement made by a son himself in ignorance of the arrangements of his parents. The position of the tsî, or wife taken by the prescribed formalities, and that of the tsieh, or women purchased as concubines, are accurately defined, and the degradation of the former or elevation of the latter so as to interchange their places, or the taking of a second tsî, are all illegal and void. The relation between the two is more like that which existed between Sarah and Hagar in Abraham’s household, or Zilpah and Bilhah and their mistresses in Jacob’s, than that indicated by our terms first and second wife, of which idea the Chinese words contain no trace. The degrees of unlawful marriages are comprehensive, extending even to the prohibition of persons having the same sing, or family name, and to two brothers marrying sisters. The laws forbid the marriage of a brother’s widow, of a father’s or grandfather’s
wife, or a father's sister, under the penalty of death; and the like punishment is inflicted upon whoever seizes the wife or daughter of a freeman and carries them away to marry them.

These regulations not only put honor upon marriage, but render it more common among the Chinese than almost any other people, thereby preventing a vast train of evils. The tendency of unrestrained desire to throw down the barriers to the gratification of lust must not be lost sight of; and as no laws on this subject can be effectual unless the common sense of a people approve of them, the Chinese, by separating the sexes in general society, have removed a principal provocation to sin, and by compelling young men to fulfil the marriage contracts of their parents have also provided a safeguard against debanchery at the age when youth is most tempted to indulge, and when indulgence would most strongly disline them to marry at all. They have, moreover, provided for the undoubted succession of the inheritance by disallowing more than one wife, and yet have granted men the liberty they would otherwise take, and which immemorial usage in Asiatic countries has sanctioned. They have done as well as they could in regulating a difficult matter, and better, on the whole, perhaps, than in most other unchristianized countries. If any one supposes, however, that because these laws exist sins against the seventh commandment are uncommon in China, he will be as mistaken as those who infer that because the Chinese are pagans nothing like modesty, purity, or affection exists between the sexes.

When a girl "spills the tea"—that is, loses her betrothed by death—public opinion honors her if she refuse a second engagement; and instances are cited of young ladies committing suicide rather than contract a second marriage. They sometimes leave their father's house and live with the parents of their affianced husband as if they had been really widows. It is considered derogatory for widows to marry; though it may be that the instances quoted in books with so much praise only indicate how rare the practice is in reality. The widow is occasionally sold for a concubine by her father-in-law, and the grief and contumely of her degradation is enhanced by separation from her children, whom she can no longer retain. Such cases are, however, not
common, for the impulses of maternal affection are too strong to be thus trifled with, and widows usually look to their friends for support, or to their own exertions if their children be still young; they are assisted, too, by their relatives in this laudable industry and care. It is a lasting stigma to a son to neglect the comfort and support of his widowed mother. A widower is not restrained by any laws, and weds one of his concubines or whomsoever he chooses; nor is he expected to defer the nuptials for any period of mourning for his first wife.

The seven legal reasons for divorce, viz., barrenness, lasciviousness, jealousy, talkativeness, thievery, disobedience to her husband’s parents, or leprosy, are almost nullified by the single provision that a woman cannot be put away whose parents are not living to receive her back again. Parties can separate on mutual disagreement, but the code does not regulate the alimony; and a husband is liable to punishment if he retain a wife convicted of adultery. If a wife merely elopes she can be sold by her husband, but if she marry while absent she is to be strangled; if the husband be absent three years a woman must state her case to the magistrates before presuming to remarry.

In regard to the general condition of females in China the remark of De Guignes is applicable, that “though their lot is less happy than that of their sisters in Europe, their ignorance of a better state renders their present or prospective one more supportable; happiness does not always consist in absolute enjoyment, but in the idea which we have formed of it.”¹ She does not feel that any injustice is done her by depriving her of the right of assent as to whom her partner shall be; her wishes and her knowledge go no farther than her domestic circle, and where she has been trained in her mother’s apartments to the various duties and accomplishments of her sex, her removal to a husband’s house brings to her no great change.

This, however, is not always the case, and the power accorded to the husband over his wife and family is often used with great tyranny. The young wife finds in her new home little of the

¹ *Voyages à Peking*, Tome II., p. 288.
sympathy and love her sisters in Christian lands receive. Her mother-in-law is not unfrequently the source of her greatest trials, and demands from her both the submission of a child and the labor of a slave, which is not seldom returned by disobedience and bitter revilings. If the husband interferes she has less likelihood of escaping his exactions; though in the lower walks of life his cruelty is restrained by fear of losing her and her services, and in the upper diverted by indifference as to what she does, in the pursuit of other objects. If the wife behave well till she herself becomes a mother and a mother-in-law, then the tables are turned; from being a menial she becomes almost a goddess. Luhchan, a writer on female culture, mentions the following indirect mode of reproving a mother-in-law: "Loh Yang travelled seven years to improve himself, during which time his wife diligently served her mother-in-law and supported her son at school. The poultry from a neighbor's house once wandered into her garden, and her mother-in-law stole and killed them for eating. When she sat down to table and saw the fowls she would not dine, but burst into tears, at which the old lady was much surprised and asked the reason. 'I am much distressed that I am so poor and cannot afford to supply you with all I wish I could, and that I should have caused you to eat flesh belonging to another.' Her parent was affected by this, and threw away the dish."

The evils attending early betrothment induce many parents to defer engaging their daughters until they are grown, and a husband of similar tastes can be found; for even if the condition of the families in the interval of betrothment and marriage unsuitably change, or the lad grows up to be a dissipated, worthless, or cruel man, totally unworthy of the girl, still the contract must be fulfilled, and the worst party generally is most anxious for it. The unhappy bride in such cases often escapes from her present sufferings and dismal prospects by suicide. A case occurred in Canton in 1833 where a young wife, visiting her parents shortly after marriage, so feelingly described her sufferings at the hands of a cruel husband to her sisters and friends that she and three of her auditors joined their hands together and drowned themselves in a pond, she to escape present misery and they
to avoid its future possibility. Another young lady, having heard of the worthless character of her intended, carried a bag of money with her in the sedan, and when they retired after the ceremonies were over thus addressed him: "Touch me not; I am resolved to abandon the world and become a nun. I shall this night cut off my hair. I have saved $200, which I give you; with the half you can purchase a concubine, and with the rest enter on some trade. Be not lazy and thriftless. Hereafter, remember me." Saying this, she cut off her hair, and her husband and his kindred, fearing suicide if they opposed her, acquiesced, and she returned to her father's house. Such cases are common enough to show the dark side of family life, and young ladies implore their parents to rescue them in this or some other way from the sad fate which awaits them. Sometimes girls become skilled in female accomplishments to recommend themselves to their husbands, and their disappointment is the greater when they find him to be a brutal, depraved tyrant. A melancholy instance of this occurred in Canton in 1840, which ended in the wife committing suicide. Her brother had been a scholar of one of the American missionaries, and took a commendable pride in showing specimens of his sister's exquisite embroidery, and not a few of her attainments in writing, which indicated their reciprocal attachment. The contrary happens too, sometimes, where the husband finds himself compelled to wed a woman totally unable to appreciate or share his pursuits, but he has means of alleviating or avoiding such misalliances which the weaker vessel has not. On the whole, as we have said, one must admit that woman holds a fairly high position in China. If she suffers from the brutality of her husband, the tyranny of her mother-in-law, or the overwork of household, field, or loom, she is as often herself blameworthy for indolence, shiftlessness, gadding, and bad temper. The instances which are given by Gray in his account of marital atrocities prove the length to which a man will wreak his rage on the helpless, but they are the exception to the general testi-

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2 China, Chap. VII.
mony of the people themselves. So far as general purity of society goes, one may well doubt whether such abominable conduct as is legalized among Mormons in Utah is any improvement on the hardships of woman among the Chinese.

Pursuing this brief account of the social life of the Chinese, the right of parents in managing their children comes into notice. It is great, though not unlimited, and in allowing them very extensive power, legislators have supposed that natural affection of the parents, a desire to continue the honorable succession of the family, together with the influence of proper education, were as good securities against paternal cruelty and neglect as any laws which could be made. Fathers give their sons the ju ming, or 'milk name,' about a month after birth. The mother, on the day appointed for this ceremony, worships and thanks the goddess of Mercy, and the boy, dressed and having his head shaved, is brought into the circle of assembled friends, where the father confers the name and celebrates the occasion by a feast. The milk name is kept until the lad enters school, at which time the shu ming, or 'school name,' is conferred upon him, as already mentioned. The shu ming generally consists of two characters, selected with reference to the boy's condition, prospects, studies, or some other event connected with him; sometimes the milk name is continued, as the family have become accustomed to it. Such names as Ink-grinder, Promising-study, Opening-olive, Entering-virtue, Rising-advancement, etc., are given to young students at this time. Though endearing or fanciful names are often conferred, it is quite as common to vilify very young children by calling them dog, hog, puppy, flea, etc., under the idea that such epithets will ward off the evil eye. Girls have only their milk and marriage names; the former may be a flower, a sister, a gem, or such like; the latter are terms like Emulating the Moon, Orchis Flower, the Jasmine, Delicate Perfume, etc. A mere number at Canton, as A-yat, A-sam, A-luk (No. 1, No. 3, No. 6), often designates the boys till they get their book names.¹

¹ Doolittle's *Handbook*, Vol. III., p. 660, gives a list of names collected at Fuhchau, which are applicable to other provinces.
The personal names of the Chinese are written contrariwise to our own, the sing, or surname, coming first, then the ming, or given name, and then the complimentary title; as Liang Wántai siensüng, where Liang, or 'Millet,' is the family name, Wántai, or 'Terrace of Letters,' the given name, and siensüng, Mr. (i.e., Master), or 'Teacher.' A few of the surnames are double, as Sz'ma Tsien, where Sz'ma is the family name and Tsien the official title. A curious idea prevails among the people of Canton, that foreigners have no surname, which, as Pliny thought of the inhabitants of Mt. Atlas, they regard as one of the proofs of their barbarism; perhaps this notion came by inference from the fact that the Manchus write only their given name, as Kíshen, Kíying, Ílipu, etc. When writing Chinese names in translations and elsewhere, some attention should be paid to these particulars; the names of Chinese persons and places are constantly appearing in print under forms as singular as would be William henry harrison, Rich-Ard-Ox-Ford, or Phila Delphcia-city in English. The name being in a different language, and its true nature unknown to most of those who write it, accounts for the misarrangement.

In Canton and its vicinity the names of people are abbreviated in conversation to one character, and an A prefixed to it; —as Tsinteh, called A-teh or A-tsín. In Amoy the A is placed after, as Chin-a; in the northern provinces no such usage is known. Some families, perhaps in imitation of the imperial precedent, distinguish their members from others in the clan by adopting a constant character for the first one in the ming, or given name; thus a family of brothers will be named Lin Tung-pei, Lin Tung-fung, Lin Tung-peh, where the word Tung distinguishes this sept of the clan Lin from all others. There are no characters exclusively appropriated to proper names or different sexes, as George, Agnes, etc., all being chosen out of the language with reference to their meanings. Consequently, a name is sometimes felt to be incongruous, as Naomi, when saluted on her return to Bethlehem, felt its inappropriateness to her altered condition, and suggested a change to Mara. Puns on names and sobriquets are common, from the constant contrast of the sounds of the characters with circumstances sug-
gesting a comparison or a play upon their meanings; sly jokes are also played when writing the names of foreigners, by choosing such characters as will make a ridiculous meaning when read according to their sense and not their sound.

When a man marries he adopts a third name, called tsz', or 'style,' by which he is usually known through life; this is either entirely new or combined from previous names. When a girl is married her family name becomes her given name, and the given name is disused, her husband's name becoming her family name. Thus Wa Salah married to Wei San-wei drops the Salah, and is called Wei Wa shi, i.e., Mrs. Wei [born of the clan] Wa, though her husband or near relatives sometimes retain it as a trivial address. A man is frequently known by another compellation, called pich tsz', or 'second style,' which the public do not presume to employ. When a young man is successful in attaining a degree, or enters an office, he takes a title called kwan ming, or 'official name,' by which he is known to government. The members or heads of licensed mercantile companies each have an official name, which is entered in their permit, from whence it is called among foreigners their chop name. Each of the heads of the co-hong formerly licensed to trade with foreigners at Canton had such an official name. Besides these various names, old men of fifty, shopkeepers, and others take a hao, or 'designation;' tradesmen use it on their signboards as the name of their shop, and not unfrequently receive it as their personal appellation. Of this nature are the appellations of the tradesmen who deal with foreigners, as Cuthsing, Chanlung, Linchony, etc., which are none of them the names of the shopmen, but the designation of the shop. It is the usual way in Canton for foreigners to go into a shop and ask "Is Mr. Wanglik in?" which would be almost like one in New York inquiring if Mr. Alhambra or Mr. Atlantic-House was at home, though it does not sound quite so ridiculous to a Chinese. The names taken by shopkeepers allude to trade or its prospects, such as Mutual Advantage, Obedient Profit, Extensive Harmony, Rising Goodness, Great Completeness, etc.; the names of the partners as such are not employed to form the firm. Besides this use of the hao, it is
also employed as a brand upon goods; the terms Hoyuen, Kinghing, Yuenki, meaning 'Harmonious Springs,' 'Cheering Prospects,' 'Fountain's Memorial,' etc., are applied to particular parcels of tea, silk, or other goods, just as brands are placed on lots of wine, flour, or pork. This is called tse'-hao, or 'mark-designation,' but foreigners call both it and the goods it denotes a chop.

When a man dies he receives another and last, though not necessarily a new name in the hall of ancestors; upon emperors and empresses are bestowed new ones, as Benevolent, Pious, Discreet, etc., by which they are worshipped and referred to in history, as that designation which is most likely to be permanent.

In their common intercourse the Chinese are not more formal than is considered to be well-bred in Europe; it is on extraordinary or official occasions that they observe the precise etiquette for which they are famous. The proper mode of behavior toward all classes is perhaps more carefully inculcated upon youth than it is in the west, and habit renders easy what custom demands. The ceremonial obeisance of a court or a levee, or the salutations proper for a festival, are not carried into the everyday intercourse of life; for as one chief end of the formalities prescribed for such times is to teach due subordination among persons of different rank, they are in a measure laid aside with the robes which suggested them. True politeness, exhibited in an unaffected regard for the feelings of others, cannot, we know, be taught by rules; but a great degree of urbanity and kindness is everywhere shown, whether owing to the naturally placable disposition of the people or to the effects of their early instruction in the forms of politeness. Whether in the crowded and narrow thoroughfares, the village green, the market, the jostling ferry, or the thronged procession—wherever the people are assembled promiscuously, good humor and courtesy are observable; and when altercations do arise wounds or serious injuries seldom ensue, although from the furious clamor one would imagine that half the crowd were in danger of their lives.

Chinese ceremonial requires superiors to be honored according
to their station and age, and equals to depreciate themselves while lauding those they address. The Emperor, considering himself as the representative of divine power, exacts the same prostration which is paid the gods; and the ceremonies which are performed in his presence partake, therefore, of a religious character, and are not merely particular forms of etiquette, which may be altered according to circumstances. There are eight gradations of obeisance, commencing with "the lowest form of respect, called kung shao, which is merely joining the hands and raising them before the breast. The next is tso yih, bowing low with the hands thus joined. The third is ta tsien, bending the knee as if about to kneel; and kweii, an actual kneeling, is the fourth. The fifth is ko tao (kotow), kneeling and striking the head on the ground, which when thrice repeated makes the sixth, called san kao, or 'thrice knocking.' The seventh is the luh kao, or kneeling and knocking the head thrice upon the ground, then standing upright and again kneeling and knocking the head three times more. The climax is closed by the sun kwei kiu kao, or thrice kneeling and nine times knocking the head. Some of the gods of China are entitled to the san kao, others to the luh kao, while the Emperor and Heaven are worshipped by the last. The family now on the throne consider this last form as expressing in the strongest manner the submission and homage of one state to another." 1

The extreme submission which the Emperor demands is taken by and transferred to his officers of every grade in a greater or less degree; the observance of these forms is deemed, therefore, of great importance, and a refusal to render them is considered to be nearly equivalent to a rejection of their authority.

Minute regulations for the times and modes of official intercourse are made and promulgated by the Board of Rites, and to learn and practise them is one indispensable part of official duty. In court the master of ceremonies stands in a conspicuous place, and with a loud voice commands the courtiers to rise and kneel, stand or march, just as an orderly sergeant directs the drill of

1 Memoir of Dr. Morrison, Vol. II., p. 142.
recruits. The same attention to the ritual is observed in their mutual intercourse, for however much an inferior may desire to dispense with the ceremony, his superior will not fail to exact it. In the salutations of entrée and exit among officers these forms are particularly conspicuous, but when well acquainted with each other, and in moments of conviviality, they are in a great measure laid aside; but the juxtaposition of art and nature among them, at one moment laughing and joking, and the next bowing and kneeling to each other as if they had never met, sometimes produces amusing scenes to a foreigner. The entire ignorance and disregard of these forms by foreigners unacquainted with the code leaves a worse impression upon the natives at times, who ascribe such rudeness to hauteur and contempt.

Without particularizing the tedious forms of official etiquette, it will be sufficient to describe what is generally required in good society. Military men pay visits on horseback; civilians and others go in sedans or carts; to walk is not common. Visiting cards are made of vermilioned paper cut into slips about eight inches long and three wide, and are single or folded four, six, eight, or more times, according to the position of the visitor. If he is in recent mourning, the paper is white and the name written in blue ink, but after a stated time this is indicated by an additional character. The simple name is stamped on the upper right corner, or if written on the lower corner, with an addition thus, “Your humble servant (lit., ‘stupid younger brother’) Pí Chí-wän bows his head in salutation.” On approaching the house his attendant hands a card to the doorkeeper, and if he cannot be received, instead of saying “not at home,” the host sends out to “stay the gentleman’s approach,” and the card is left. If contrariwise the sedan is carried through the doorway into the court, where he comes forth to receive his guest; as the latter steps out each one advances just so far, bowing just so many times, and going through the ceremonies which they mutually understand and expect, until both have taken their seats at the head of the hall, the guest sitting on the left of the host, and his companions, if he have any, in the chairs on each side. The inquiries made after the mutual welfare of friends and each
other are couched in a form of studied landation and depreciation, which when literally translated seem somewhat affected, but to them convey no more than similar civilities do among ourselves—in truth, perhaps not so much of sincere good-will. For instance, to the remark, "It is a long time since we have met, sir," the host replies (literally), "How presume to receive the trouble of your honorable footsteps; is the person in the chariot well?"—which is simply equivalent to, "I am much obliged for your visit, and hope you enjoy good health."

Tea and pipes are always presented, together with betel-nut or sweetmeats on some occasions, but it is not, as among the Turks, considered disrespectful to refuse them, though it would be looked upon as singular. If the guest inquire after the health of relatives he should commence with the oldest living, and then ask how many sons the host has; but it is not considered good breeding for a formal acquaintance to make any remarks respecting the mistress of the house. If the sons of the host are at home they are generally sent for, and make their obeisance to their father’s friend by coming up before him and performing the kotow as rapidly as possible, each one making haste, as if he did not wish to delay him. The guest raises them with a slight bow, and the lads stand facing him at a respectful distance. He will then remark, perhaps, if one of them happen to be at his studies, that "the boy will perpetuate the literary reputation of his family" (lit., ‘he will fully carry on the fragrance of the books’); to which his father rejoins, "The reputation of our family is not great (lit., ‘hills and fields’ happiness is thin’); high expectations are not to be entertained of him; if he can only gain a livelihood it will be enough." After a few such compliments the boys say shao pei, ‘slightly waiting on you,’ i.e., pray excuse us, and retire. Girls are seldom brought in, and young ladies never.

The periphrases employed to denote persons and thus avoid speaking their names in a measure indicate the estimation in which they are held. For instance, "Does the honorable great man enjoy happiness?" means "Is your father well?" "Distinguished and aged one what honorable age?" is the mode of
asking how old he is; for among the Chinese, as it seems to
have been among the Egyptians, it is polite to ask the names and
ages of all ranks and sexes. "The old man of the house," "excellent honorable one," and "venerable great prince," are
terms used by a visitor to designate the father of his host. A
child terms his father "family's majesty," "old man of the
family," "prince of the family," or "venerable father." When
dead a father is called "former prince," and a mother "vener-
able great one in repose;" and there are particular characters to
distinguish deceased parents from living. The request, "Make
my respects to your mother"—for no Chinese gentleman ever
asks to see the ladies—is literally, "Excellent-longevity hall place
in my behalf wish repose," the first two words denoting she who
remains there. Care should be taken not to use the same ex-
pressions when speaking of the relatives of the guest and one's
own; thus, in asking, "How many worthy young gentlemen
[sons] have you?" the host replies, "I am unfortunate in having
had but one boy," literally, "My fate is niggardly; I have only
one little bug." This runs through their whole Chesterfieldian
code. A man calls his wife tsien nui, i.e., 'the mean one of the
inner apartments,' or 'the foolish one of the family;' while
another speaking of her calls her 'the honorable lady,' "worthy
lady," "your favored one," etc.

Something of this is found in all oriental languages; to be-
come familiar with the right application of these terms in Chi-
nese, as elsewhere in the east, is no easy lesson for a foreigner.
In their salutations of ceremony they do not, however, quite
equal the Arabs, with their kissing, bowing, touching foreheads,
stroking beards, and repeated motions of obeisance. The Chi-
nese seldom embrace or touch each other, except on unusual
occasions of joy or among family friends; in fact, they have
hardly a common word for a kiss. When the visitor rises to de-
part he remarks, "Another day I will come to receive your in-
structions;" to which his friend replies, "You do me too much
honor; I rather, ought to wait on you to-morrow." The com-
mon form of salutation among equals is for each to clasp his own
hands before his breast and make a slight bow, saying, Tsing!
Tsing! i.e., 'Hail! Hail!' This is repeated by both at the
same time, on meeting as well as separating. The formalities of leave-taking correspond to those of receiving, but if the parties are equal, or nearly so, the host sees his friend quite to the door and into his sedan.

Officers avoid meeting each other, especially in public, except when etiquette requires them. An officer of low rank is obliged to stop his chair or horse, and on his feet to salute his superior, who receives and returns the civility without moving. Those of equal grades leave their places and go through a mock struggle of deference to get each first to return to it. The common people never presume to salute an officer in the streets, nor even to look at him very carefully. In his presence, they speak to him on their knees, but an old man, or one of consideration, is usually requested to rise when speaking, and even criminals with gray hairs are treated with respect. Officers do not allow their inferiors to sit in their presence, and have always been unwilling to concede this to foreigners; those of the lowest rank consider themselves far above the best of such visitors, but this affectation of rank is already passing away. The converse, of not paying them proper respect, is more common among a certain class of foreigners.

Children are early taught the forms of politeness toward all ranks. The duties owed by younger to elder brothers are peculiar, the firstborn having a sort of birthright in the ancestral worship, in the division of property, and in the direction of the family after the father's decease. The degree of formality in the domestic circle inculcated in the ancient Book of Rites is never observed to its full extent, and would perhaps chill the affection which should exist among its members, did not habit render it easy and proper; and the extent to which it is actually carried depends a good deal upon the education of the family. In forwarding presents it is customary to send a list with the note, and if the person deems it proper to decline some of them, he marks on the list those he takes and returns the rest; a douceur is always expected by the bearer, and needy fellows some-

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1 Chinese Chrestomathy, Chap. V., Sec. 12, p. 182. This phrase is the origin of the word chinchin, so often heard among the Chinese.
times pretend to have been sent with some insignificant present from a grandee in hopes of receiving more than its equivalent as a cumshaw from the person thus honored. De Guignes mentioned one donor who waited until the list came back, and then sent out and purchased the articles which had been marked and sent them to his friend.

Travellers have so often described the Chinese formal dinners, that they have almost become one of their national traits in the view of foreigners; so many of these banquets, however, were given by or in the name of the sovereign, that they are hardly a fair criterion of usual private feasts. The Chinese are both a social and a sensual people, and the pleasures of the table form a principal item in the list of their enjoyments; nor are the higher delights of mental recreation altogether wanting, though this part of the entertainment is according to their taste and not ours. Private meals and public feasts among the higher classes are both dull and long to us, because ladies do not participate; but perhaps we judge more what our own tables would be without their cheerful presence, while in China each sex is of the opinion that the meal is more enjoyable without interference from the other.

An invitation to dinner is written on a slip of red paper like a visiting-card, and sent some days before. It reads, “On the — day a trifling entertainment will await the light of your countenance. Tsan San-wei’s compliments.” Another card is sent on the day itself, stating the hour of dinner, or a servant comes to call the guests. The host, dressed in his cap and robes, awaits their arrival, and after they are all assembled, requests them to follow his example and lay aside their dresses of ceremony. The usual way of arranging guests is by twos on each side of small uncovered tables, placed in lines; an arrangement as convenient for serving the numerous courses which compose the feast, and removing the dishes, as was the Roman fashion of reclining around a hollow table; it also allows a fair view of the musical or theatrical performances. On some occasions, in the sunny south, however, a single long or round table is laid out in a tasteful manner, having pyramids of cakes alternating with piles of fruits and dishes of preserves, all covered more or
less with flowers, while the table itself is partly hidden from view by nosegays and leaves. If the party be large, ten minutes or more are consumed by the host and guests going through a tedious repetition of requests and refusals to take the highest seats, for not a man will sit down until he sees the host occupying his chair.

On commencing, the host, standing up, salutes his guests, in a cup, apologizing for the frugal board before them, his only desire being to show his respects to them. At a certain period in the entertainment, they reply by simultaneously rising and drinking his health. The Western custom of giving a sentiment is not known; and politeness requires a person when drinking healths to turn the bottom of the tiny wine-cup upward to show that it is drained. Glass dishes are gradually becoming cheap and common among the middle class, but the table furniture still, mainly consists of porcelain cups, bowls, and saucers of various sizes and quality, porcelain spoons shaped like a child's pap-boat, and two smooth sticks made of bamboo, ivory, or wood, of the size of quills, well known as the chop-sticks, from the native name kwai tsz', i.e., 'nimble lads.' Grasping these implements on each side of the forefinger, the eater pinches up from the dishes meat, fish, or vegetables, already cut into mouthfuls, and conveys one to his mouth. The bowl of rice or millet is brought to the lips, and the contents shovelled into the mouth in an expeditious manner, quite suitable to the name of the tools employed. Less convenient than forks, chop-sticks are a great improvement on fingers, as every one will acknowledge who has seen the Hindus throw the balls of curried rice into their mouths.

The succession of dishes is not uniform; soups, meats, stews, fruits, and preserves are introduced somewhat at the discretion of the major-domo, but the end is announced by a bowl of plain rice and a cup of tea. The fruit is often brought in after a recess, during which the guests rise and refresh themselves by walking and chatting, for three or four hours are not unfrequently required even to taste all the dishes. It is not deemed impolite for a guest to express his satisfaction with the good fare before him, and exhibit evidences of having stuffed himself
to repletion; nor is it a breach of manners to retire before the dinner is ended. The guests relieve its tedium by playing the game of chai mei, or morra (the micare digitis of the old Romans), which consists in showing the fingers to each other across the table, and mentioning a number at the same moment; as, if one opens out two fingers and mentions the number four, the other instantly shows six fingers, and repeats that number. If he mistake in giving the complement of ten, he pays a forfeit by drinking a cup. This convivial game is common among all ranks, and the boisterous merriment of workmen or friends at their meals is frequently heard as one passes through the streets in the afternoon. The Chinese generally have but two meals a day, breakfast at nine and dinner at four, or thereabouts.

The Chinese are comparatively a temperate people. This is owing principally to the universal use of tea, but also to taking their arrack very warm and at their meals, rather than to any notions of sobriety or dislike of spirits. A little of it flushes their faces, mounts into their heads, and induces them when flustered to remain in the house to conceal the suffusion, although they may not be really drunk. This liquor is known as toddy, arrack, saki, tsiu, and other names in Eastern Asia, and is distilled from the yeasty liquor in which boiled rice has fermented under pressure many days. Only one distillation is made for common liquor, but when more strength is wanted, it is distilled two or three times, and it is this strong spirit alone which is rightly called sanshu, a word meaning 'thrice fired.' Chinese moralists have always inveighed against the use of spirits, and the name of 1-tih, the reputed inventor of the deleterious drink, more than two thousand years before Christ, has been handed down with opprobrium, as he was himself banished by the great Yu for his discovery.

The Shu King contains a discourse by the Duke of Chau on the abuse of spirits. His speech to his brother Fung, B.C. 1120, is the oldest temperance address on record, even earlier than the words of Solomon in the Proverbs. "When your reverend

1 Compare the China Review, Vol. IV., p. 400.
father, King Wăn, founded our kingdom in the western region, he delivered announcements and cautions to the princes of the various states, their officers, assistants, and managers of affairs, morning and evening, saying, 'For sacrifices spirits should be employed. When Heaven was sending down its [favoring] commands and laying the foundations of our people's sway, spirits were used only in the great sacrifices. [But] when Heaven has sent down its terrors, and our people have thereby been greatly disorganized, and lost their [sense of] virtue, this too can be ascribed to nothing else than their unlimited use of spirits; yea, further, the ruin of the feudal states, small and great, may be traced to this one sin, the free use of spirits.' King Wăn admonished and instructed the young and those in office managing public affairs, that they should not habitually drink spirits. In all the states he enjoined that their use be confined to times of sacrifices; and even then with such limitations that virtue should prevent drunkenness.'

The general and local festivals of the Chinese are numerous, among which the first three days of the year, one or two about the middle of April to worship at the tombs, the two solstices, and the festival of dragon-boats, are common days of relaxation and merry-making, only on the first, however, are the shops shut and business suspended. Some persons have expressed their surprise that the unceasing round of toil which the Chinese laborer pursues has not rendered him more degraded. It is usually said that a weekly rest is necessary for the continuance of the powers of body and mind in man in their full activity, and that decrepitude and insanity would oftener result were it not for this relaxation. The arguments in favor of this observation seem to be deduced from undoubted facts in countries where the obligations of the Sabbath are acknowledged, though where the vast majority cease from business and labor, it is not easy for a few to work all the time even if they wish, owing to the various ways in which their occupations are involved with those of others; yet, in China, people who appa-

rently tax themselves uninterruptedly to the utmost stretch of body and mind, live in health to old age. A few facts of this sort incline one to suppose that the Sabbath was designed by its Lord as a day of rest for man from a constant routine of relaxation and mental and physical labor, in order that he might have leisure for attending to the paramount duties of religion, and not alone as a day of relaxation and rest, without which they could not live out all their days. Nothing like a seventh day of rest, or religious respect to that interval of time, is known among the Chinese, but they do not, as a people, exercise their minds to the intensity, or upon the high subjects common among Western nations, and this perhaps is one reason why their yearly toil produces no disastrous effects. The countless blessings which flow from an observance of the fourth commandment can be better appreciated by witnessing the wearied condition of the society where it is not acknowledged, and whoever sees such a society can hardly fail to wish for its introduction.

Converts to Christianity in China, who are instructed in its strict observance, soon learn to prize it as a high privilege; and its general neglect among the native Roman Catholics has removed the only apparent difference between them and the pagans. The former prime minister of China once remarked that among the few really valuable things which foreigners had brought to China, the rest of the Sabbath day was one of the most desirable; he often longed for a quiet day.¹

The return of the year is an occasion of unbounded festivity and hilarity, as if the whole population threw off the old year with a shout, and clothed themselves in the new with their change of garments. The evidences of the approach of this chief festival appear some weeks previous. The principal streets are lined with tables, upon which articles of dress, furniture, and fancy are disposed for sale in the most attractive manner. Necessity compels many to dispose of certain of their treasures or superfluous things at this season, and sometimes exceedingly curious bits of bric-a-brac, long laid up in families, can be pro-

¹ Nevius, China and the Chinese, pp. 399-408.
cured at a cheap rate. It is customary for superiors to give their dependents and employees a present, and for shopmen to send an acknowledgment of favors to their customers; one of the most common gifts among the lower classes is a pair of new shoes. Among the tables spread in the streets are many provided with pencils and red paper of various sizes, on which persons write sentences appropriate to the season in various styles, to be pasted upon the doorposts and lintels of dwellings and shops,¹ or suspended from their walls. The shops also put on a most brilliant appearance, arrayed in these papers interspersed among the kin hwa, or ‘golden flowers,’ which are sprigs of artificial leaves and flowers made in the southern cities of brass tinsel and fastened upon wires; the latter are designed for an annual offering in temples, or to place before the household tablet. Small strips of red and gilt paper, some bearing the word fuh, or ‘happiness,’ large and small vermilion candles, gaily painted, and other things used in idolatry, are likewise sold in great quantities, and with the increased throng impart an unusually lively appearance to the streets. Another evident sign of the approaching change is the use of water upon the doors, shutters, and other woodwork of houses and shops, washing chairs, utensils, clothes, etc., as if cleanliness had not a little to do with joy, and a well-washed person and tenement were indispensable to the proper celebration of the festival. Throughout the southern rivers all small craft, tankia-boats, and lighters are beached and turned inside out for a scrubbing.

A still more praiseworthy custom attending this season is that of settling accounts and paying debts; shopkeepers are kept busy waiting upon their customers, and creditors urge their debtors to arrange these important matters. No debt is allowed to overpass new year without a settlement or satisfactory arrangement, if it can be avoided; and those whose liabilities altogether exceed their means are generally at this season obliged to wind up their concerns and give all their available property into the hands of their creditors. The consequences of this general pay-

¹ A like custom existed among the Hebrews, now continued in the modern mezuzah. Deut. vi. 9. Jahn’s Archaeology, p. 38.
day are a high rate of money, great resort to the pawnbrokers, and a general fall in the price of most kinds of produce and commodities. Many good results flow from the practice, and the conscious sense of the difficulty and expense of resorting to legal proceedings to recover debts induces all to observe and maintain it, so that the dishonest, the unsuccessful, and the wild speculator may be sifted out from amongst the honest traders.

De Guignes mentions one expedient to oblige a man to pay his debts at this season, which is to carry off the door of his shop or house, for then his premises and person will be exposed to the entrance and anger of all hungry and malicious demons prowling around the streets, and happiness no more revisit his abode; to avoid this he is fain to arrange his accounts. It is a common practice among devout persons to settle with the gods, and during a few days before the new year, the temples are unusually thronged by devotees, both male and female, rich and poor. Some persons fast and engage the priests to intercede for them that their sins may be pardoned, while they prostrate themselves before the images amidst the din of gongs, drums, and bells, and thus clear off the old score. On new year's eve the streets are full of people hurrying to and fro to conclude the many matters which press upon them. At Canton, some are busy pasting the five slips upon their lintels, signifying their desire that the five blessings which constitute the sum of all human felicity (namely, longevity, riches, health, love of virtue, and a natural death) may be their favored portion. Such sentences as "May the five blessings visit this door," "May heaven send down happiness," "May rich customers ever enter this door," are placed above them; and the doorposts are adorned with others on plain or gold sprinkled red paper, making the entrance quite picturesque. In the hall are suspended scrolls more or less costly, containing antithetical sentences carefully chosen. A literary man would have, for instance, a distich like the following:

May I be so learned as to secrete in my mind three myriads of volumes:
May I know the affairs of the world for six thousand years.
A shopkeeper adorns his door with those relating to trade:

May profits be like the morning sun rising on the clouds.
May wealth increase like the morning tide which brings the rain.
Manage your occupation according to truth and loyalty.
Hold on to benevolence and rectitude in all your trading.

The influence of these mottoes, and countless others like them which are constantly seen in the streets, shops, and dwellings throughout the land, is inestimable. Generally it is for good, and as a large proportion are in the form of petition or wish, they show the moral feeling of the people.

Boat-people in Kwangtung and Fukien provinces are peculiarly liberal of their paper prayers, pasting them on every board and oar in the boat, and suspending them from the stern in scores, making the vessel flutter with gaiety. Farmers stick theirs upon barns, trees, wattles, baskets, and implements, as if nothing was too insignificant to receive a blessing. The house is arranged in the most orderly and cleanly manner, and purified with religious ceremonies and lustrations, firing of crackers, etc., and as the necessary preparations occupy a considerable portion of the night, the streets are not quiet till dawn. In addition to the bustle arising from business and religious observances, which marks this passage of time, the constant explosion of fire-crackers, and the clamor of gongs, make it still more noisy. Strings of these crackling fireworks are burned at the doorposts, before the outgoing and incoming of the year, designed to expel and deter evil spirits from the house. The consumption is so great as to cover the streets with the fragments, and farmers come the week after into Canton city and sweep up hundreds of bushels for manure.

The first day of the year is also regarded as the birthday of the entire population, for the practice among the Hebrews of dating the age from the beginning of the year, prevails also in China; so that a child born only a week before new year, is considered as entering its second year on the first day of the first month. This does not, however, entirely supersede the observance of the real anniversary, and parents frequently make a solemnity of their son's birthday. A missionary thus describes the cele-
bration of a son's sixth birthday at Ningpo. "The little fellow was dressed in his best clothes, and his father had brought gilt paper, printed prayers, and a large number of bowls of meats, rice, vegetables, spirits, nuts, etc., as an offering to be spread out before the idols. The ceremonies were performed in the apartment of the Tao Mu, or 'Bushel Mother,' who has special charge of infants before and after birth. The old abbot was dressed in a scarlet robe, with a gilt image of a serpent fastened in his hair; one of the monks wore a purple, another a gray robe. A multitude of prayers, seemingly a round of repetitions, were read by the abbot, occasionally chanting a little, when the attendants joined in the chorus, and a deafening clamor of bells, cymbals, and wooden blocks, added force to their cry; genuflexions and prostrations were repeatedly made. One part of the ceremony was to pass a live cock through a barrel, which the assistants performed many times, shouting some strange words at each repetition; this act symbolized the dangers through which the child was to pass in his future life, and the priests had prayed that he might as safely come out of them all, as the cock had passed through the barrel. In conclusion, some of the prayers were burned and a libation poured out, and a grand symphony of bell, gong, drum, and block, closed the scene." ¹

A great diversity of local usages are observed at this period in different parts of the country. In Amoy, the custom of "surrounding the furnace" is generally practised. The members of the family sit down to a substantial supper on new year's eve, with a pan of charcoal under the table, as a supposed preservative against fires. After the supper is ended, the wooden lamp-stands are brought out and spread upon the pavement with a heap of gold and silver paper, and set on fire after all demons have been warned off by a volley of fire-crackers. The embers are then divided into twelve heaps, and their manner of going out carefully watched as a prognostic of the kind of weather to be expected the ensuing year. Many persons wash their bodies in warm water, made aromatic by the infusion of leaves, as a

¹ Presbyterian Missionary Chronicle, 1846.
security against disease; this ceremony, and ornamenting the ancestral shrine, and garnishing the whole house with inscriptions, pictures, flowers, and fruit, in the gayest manner the means of the family will allow, occupy most of the night.

The stillness of the streets and the gay inscriptions on the closed shops on new year's morning present a wonderful contrast to the usual bustle and crowd, resembling the Christian Sabbath. The red papers of the doors are here and there interspersed with the blue ones, announcing that during the past year death has come among the inmates of the house; a silent but expressive intimation to passers that some who saw the last new year have passed away. In certain places, white, yellow, and carnation colored papers are employed, as well as blue, to distinguish the degree of the deceased kindred. Etiquette requires that those who mourn remain at home at this period. By noontide the streets begin to be filled with well-dressed persons, hastening in sedans or afoot to make their calls; those who cannot afford to buy a new suit hire one for this purpose, so that a man hardly knows his own domestics in their finery and robes. The meeting of friends in the streets, both bound on the same errand, is attended with particular demonstrations of respect, each politely struggling who shall be most affectionately humble. On this day parents receive the prostrations of their children, teachers expect the salutations of their pupils, magistrates look for the calls of their inferiors, and ancestors of every generation, and gods of various powers are presented with the offerings of devotees in the family hall or public temple. Much of the visiting is done by cards, on which is stamped an emblematic device representing the three happy wishes—of children, rank, and longevity; a common card suffices for distant acquaintances and customers. It might be a subject of speculation whether the custom of visiting and renewing one's acquaintances on new year's day, so generally practised among the Dutch and in America, was not originally imitated from the Chinese; but as in many other things, so in this, the westerns have improved upon the easterns, in calling upon the ladies. Persons, as they meet, salute each other with
Kung-hi! Kung-hi! 'I respectfully wish you joy!'—or Sin-hi! Sin-hi! 'May the new joy be yours,' either of which, from its use at this season, is quite like the Happy New Year! of Englishmen.

Toward evening, the merry sounds proceeding from the closed doors announce that the sacrifice provided for presentation before the shrines of departed parents is cheering the worshippers; while the great numbers who resort to gambling-shops show full well that the routine of ceremony soon becomes tiresome, and a more exciting stimulus is needed. The extent to which play is now carried is almost indescribable. Jugglers, mountebanks, and actors also endeavor to collect a few coppers by amusing the crowds. Generally speaking, however, the three days devoted to this festival pass without turmoil, and business and work then gradually resume their usual course for another twelvemonth.

The festival of the dragon-boats, on the fifth day of the fifth month, presents a very different scene wherever there is a serviceable stream for its celebration. At Canton, long, narrow boats, holding sixty or more rowers, race up and down the river in pairs with huge clamor, as if searching for some one who had been drowned. This festival was instituted in memory of the statesman Küh Yuen, about 450 B.C., who drowned himself in the river Mih-lo, an affluent of Tungting Lake, after having been falsely accused by one of the petty princes of the state. The people, who loved the unfortunate courtier for his fidelity and virtues, sent out boats in search of the body, but to no purpose. They then made a peculiar sort of rice-cake called tsung, and setting out across the river in boats with flags and gongs, each strove to be first on the spot of the tragedy and sacrifice to the spirit of Küh Yuen. This mode of commemorating the event has been since continued as an annual holiday. The bow of the boat is ornamented or carved into the head of a dragon, and men beating gongs and drums, and waving flags, inspirit the rowers to renewed exertions. The exhilarating exercise of racing leads the people to prolong the festival two or three days, and generally with commendable good humor, but their eagerness to beat often breaks the boats, or leads them
into so much danger that the magistrates sometimes forbid the races in order to save the people from drowning.\footnote{Compare Morrison's Dictionary under Thung; Doolittle, Social Life, Vol. II., pp. 55-60; Notes and Queries on China and Japan, Vol. II., p. 157.}

The first full moon of the year is the feast of lanterns, a childish and dull festival compared with the two preceding. Its origin is not certainly known, but it was observed as early as A.D. 700. Its celebration consists in suspending lanterns of different forms and materials before each door, and illuminating those in the hall, but their united brilliancy is dimness itself compared with the light of the moon. At Peking, an exhibition of transparencies and pictures in the Board of War on this evening attracts great crowds of both sexes if the weather be good. Magaillans describes a firework he saw, which was an arbor covered with a vine, the woodwork of which seemed to burn, while the trunk, leaves, and clusters of the plant gradually consumed, yet so that the redness of the grapes, the greenness of the leaves, and natural brown of the stem were all maintained until the whole was burned. The feast of lanterns coming so soon after new year, and being somewhat expensive, is not so enthusiastically observed in the southern cities. At the capital this leisure time, when public offices are closed, is availed of by the jewellers, bric-a-brac dealers, and others to hold a fair in the courts of a temple in the Wai Ching, where they exhibit as beautiful a collection of carvings in stone and gems, bronzes, toys, etc., as is to be seen anywhere in Asia. The respect with which the crowds of women and children are treated on these occasions reflects much credit on the people.

In the manufacture of lanterns the Chinese surely excel all other people; the variety of their forms, their elegant carving, gilding, and coloring, and the laborious ingenuity and taste displayed in their construction, render them among the prettiest ornaments of their dwellings. They are made of paper, silk, cloth, glass, horn, basket-work, and bamboo, exhibiting an infinite variety of shapes and decorations, varying in size from a small hand-light, costing two or three cents, up to a magnificent chandelier, or a complicated lantern fifteen feet in diameter, contain-
ing several lamps within it, and worth three or four hundred dollars. The uses to which they are applied are not less various than the pains and skill bestowed upon their construction are remarkable. One curious kind is called the tsao-ma-tăng, or 'horse-racing lantern,' which consists of one, two, or more wire frames, one within the other, and arranged on the same principle as the smoke-jack, by which the current of air caused by the flame sets them revolving. The wire framework is covered with paper figures of men and animals placed in the midst of appropriate scenery, and represented in various attitudes; or, as Magaillans describes them, "You shall see horses run, draw chariots and till the earth; vessels sailing, kings and princes go in and out with large trains, and great numbers of people, both afoot and a horseback, armies marching, comedies, dances, and a thousand other divertissements and motions represented."

One of the prettiest shows of lanterns is seen in a festival observed in the spring or autumn by fishermen on the southern coasts to propitiate the gods of the waters. An indispensable part of the procession is a dragon fifty feet or more long, made of light bamboo frames of the size and shape of a barrel, connected and covered with strips of colored cotton or silk; the extremities represent the gaping head and frisking tail. This monster symbolizes the ruler of the watery deep, and is carried through the streets by men holding the head and each joint upon poles, to which are suspended lanterns; as they follow each other their steps give the body a wriggling, waving motion. Huge models of fish, similarly lighted, precede the dragon, while music and fireworks—the never-failing warning to lurking demons to keep out of the way—accompany the procession, which presents a very brilliant sight as it winds in its course through the dark streets. These sports and processions give idolatry its hold upon a people; and although none of them are required or patronized by government in China as in other heathen countries, most of the scenes and games which please the people are recommended by connecting with them the observances or hopes of religion and the merrymaking of the festive board.

In the middle of the sixth moon lanterns are hung from the
top of a pole placed on the highest part of the house. A single
small lantern is deemed sufficient, but if the night be calm, a
greater display is made by some householders, and especially in
boats, by exhibiting colored glass lamps arranged in various
ways. The illumination of a city like Canton when seen from
a high spot is made still more brilliant by the moving boats on
the river. On one of these festivals at Canton, an almost total
eclipse of the moon called out the entire population, each one
carrying something with which to make a noise, kettles, pans,
sticks, drums, gongs, guns, crackers, and what not to frighten
away the dragon of the sky from his hideous feast. The advanc-
ing shadow gradually caused the myriads of lanterns to show
more and more distinctly and started a still increasing clamor,
till the darkness and the noise were both at their climax; silence
gradually resumed its sway as the moon recovered her fulness.

The Chinese are fond of processions, and if marriages and
funerals be included, have them more frequently than any other
people. Livery establishments are opened in every city and town
where processions are arranged and supplied with everything
necessary for bridal and funeral occasions as well as religious
festivals. Not only are sedans, bands of music, biers, framed
and gilded stands for carrying idols, shrines, and sacrificial
feasts, red boxes for holding the bride’s trousseau, etc., supplied,
but also banners, tables, stands, curiosities, and uniforms in
great variety. The men and boys required to carry them and
perform the various parts of the ceremony are hired, a uniform
hiding their ragged garments and dirty limbs. Guilds often go
to a heavy expense in getting up a procession in honor of their
patron saint, whose image is carried through the streets attended
by the members of the corporation dressed in holiday robes and
boots. The variety and participators of these shows are exceed-
ingly curious and characteristic of the people’s taste. Here are
seen splendid silken banners worked with rich embroidery,
alternating with young girls bedizened with paint and flowers,
and perched on high seats under an artificial tree or apparently
almost in the air, resting upon frames on men’s shoulders; bands
of music; sacrificial meats and fruits adorned with flowers;
shrines, images, and curious rarities laid out upon red pavilions;
boys gaily dressed in official robes and riding upon ponies, or harnessed up in a covered framework to represent horses, all so contrived and painted that the spectator can hardly believe they are not riding Lilliputian ponies no bigger than dogs. A child standing in a car and carrying a branch on its shoulder, on one twig of which stands another child on one foot or a girl holding a plate of cakes in her hand, on the top of which stands another miss on tiptoe, the whole borne by coolies, sometimes add to the diversion of the spectacle and illustrate the mechanical skill of the exhibitors. Small companies dressed in a great variety of military uniforms, carrying spears, shields, halberds, etc., now and then volunteer for the occasion, and give it a more martial appearance. The carpenters at Canton are famous for their splendid processions in honor of their hero, Lu Pan, in which also other craftsmen join; for this demi-god corresponds to the Tubal-cain of Chinese legends, and is now regarded as the patron of all workmen, though he flourished no longer ago than the time of Confucius. Besides these festivities and processions, there are several more strictly religious, such as the annual mass of the Buddhists, the supplicatory sacrifice of farmers for a good crop, and others of more or less importance, which add to the number of days of recreation.

Theatrical representations constitute a common amusement, and are generally connected with the religious celebration of the festival of the god before whose temple they are exhibited. They are got up by the priests, who send their neophytes around with a subscription paper, and then engage as large and skilful a band of performers as the funds will allow. There are few permanent buildings erected for theatres, for the Thespian band still retains its original strolling character, and stands ready to pack up its trappings at the first call. The erection of sheds for playing constitutes a separate branch of the carpenter's trade; one large enough to accommodate two thousand persons can be put up in the southern cities in a day, and almost the only part of the materials which is wasted is the rattan which binds the posts and mats together. One large shed contains the stage, and three smaller ones before it enclose an area, and are furnished with rude seats for the paying spectators. The
subscribers' bounty is acknowledged by pasting red sheets containing their names and amounts upon the walls of the temple. The purlieus are let as stands for the sale of refreshments, for gambling tables, or for worse purposes, and by all these means the priests generally contrive to make gain of their devotion. 1

Parties of actors and acrobats can be hired cheaply, and their performances form part of the festivities of rich families in their houses to entertain the women and relatives who cannot go abroad to see them. They are constituted into separate corporations or guilds, and each takes a distinguishing name, as the 'Happy and Blessed company,' the 'Glorious Appearing company,' etc.

The performances usually extend through three entire days, with brief recesses for sleeping and eating, and in villages where they are comparatively rare, the people act as if they were bewitched, neglecting everything to attend them. The female parts are performed by lads, who not only paint and dress like women, but even squeeze their toes into the "golden lilies," and imitate, upon the stage, a mincing, wriggling gait. These fellows personate the voice, tones, and motions of the sex with wonderful exactness, taking every opportunity, indeed, that the play will allow to relieve their feet by sitting when on the boards, or retiring into the green-room when out of the acts. The acting is chiefly pantomine, and its fidelity shows the excellent training of the players. This development of their imitative faculties is probably still more encouraged by the difficulty the audience find to understand what is said; for owing to the differences in the dialects, the open construction of the theatre, the high falsetto or recitative key in which many of the parts are spoken, and the din of the orchestra intervening between every few sentences, not one quarter of the people hear or understand a word.

The scenery is very simple, consisting merely of rudely painted mats arranged on the back and sides of the stage, a few tables, chairs, or beds, which successively serve for many

1 Gray's China (Vol. II., p. 273) contains a cut of a mat theatre from a native drawing. See also Doolittle, Social Life, Vol. II., pp. 292-299.
uses, and are brought in and out from the robing-room. The orchestra sits on the side of the stage, and not only fill up the intervals with their interludes, but strike a crashing noise by way of emphasis, or to add energy to the rush of opposing warriors. No falling curtain divides the acts or scenes, and the play is carried to its conclusion without intermission. The dresses are made of gorgeous silks, and present the best specimens of ancient Chinese costume of former dynasties now to be seen. The imperfections of the scenery require much to be suggested by the spectator’s imagination, though the actors themselves supply the defect in a measure by each man stating what part he performs, and what the person he represents has been doing while absent. If a courier is to be sent to a distant city, away he strides across the boards, or perhaps gets a whip and cocks up his leg as if mounting a horse, and on reaching the end of the stage cries out that he has arrived, and there delivers his message. Passing a bridge or crossing a river are indicated by stepping up and then down, or by the rolling motion of a boat. If a city is to be impersonated, two or three men lie down upon each other, when warriors rush on them furiously, overthrow the wall which they formed, and take the place by assault. Ghosts or supernatural beings are introduced through a wide trap-door in the stage, and, if he thinks it necessary, the impersonator cries out from underneath that he is ready, or for assistance to help him up through the hole.

Mr. Lay describes a play he saw, in which a medley of celestial and terrestrial personages were introduced. “The first scene was intended to represent the happiness and splendor of beings who inhabit the upper regions, with the sun and moon and the elements curiously personified playing around them. The man who personated the sun held a round image of the sun’s disk, while the female who acted the part of the moon had a crescent in her hand. The actors took care to move so as to mimic the conjunction and opposition of these heavenly bodies as they ‘revolve round in their apparent orbs. The Thunderer wielded an axe, and leaped and dashed about in a variety of extraordinary somersaults. After a few turns the monarch, who had been so highly honored as to find a place,
through the partiality of a mountain nymph, in the abodes of the happy, begins to feel that no height of good fortune can secure a mortal against the common calamities of this frail life. A wicked courtier disguises himself in a tiger’s skin, and in this garb initiates the animal itself. He rushes into the retired apartments of the ladies, frightens them out of their wits, and throws the heir-apparent into a moat. The sisters hurry into the royal presence, and casting themselves on the ground divulge the sad intelligence that a tiger has borne off the young prince, who it appears was the son of the mountain nymph aforesaid. The loss the bereaved monarch takes so much to heart, that he renounces the world and deliberates about the nomination of a successor. By the influence of a crafty woman he selects a young man who has just sense enough to know that he is a fool. The settlement of the crown is scarcely finished when the unhappy king dies, and the blockhead is presently invested with the crown, but instead of excelling in his new preferment the lout bemoans his lot in the most awkward strains of lamentation, and cries, ‘O dear! what shall I do?’ with such piteous action, and yet withal so truly ludicrous, that the spectator is at a loss to know whether to laugh or to weep. The courtier who had taken off the heir and broken the father’s heart finds the new king an easy tool for prosecuting his traitorous purposes, and the state is plunged into the depths of civil discord at home and dangerous wars abroad.

“In the sequel a scene occurred in which the reconciliation of this court and some foreign prince depends upon the surrender of a certain obnoxious person. The son-in-law of the victim is charged with the letter containing this proposal, and returns to his house and disguises himself for the sake of concealment. When he reaches the court of the foreign prince he discovers that he has dropped the letter in changing his clothes, and narrowly escapes being taken for a spy without his credentials. He hurries back, calls for his garments, and shakes them one by one in an agony of self-reproach, but no letter appears. He sits down, throwing himself with great violence upon the chair, with a countenance inexpressibly full of torture and despair: reality could have added nothing to the imitation. But
while every eye was riveted upon him, he called the servant-maid and inquired if she knew anything about the letter; she replied she overheard her mistress reading a letter whose contents were so and so. The mistress had taken her seat at a distance from him and was nursing her baby; and the instant he ascertained the letter was in her possession, he looked toward her with such a smile upon his cheek, and with a flood of light in his eye, that the whole assembly heaved a loud sigh of admiration; for the Chinese do not applaud by clapping and stamping, but express their feelings by an ejaculation that is between a sigh and a groan. The aim of the husband was to wheedle his wife out of the letter, and this smile and look of affection were merely the prelude; for he takes his chair, places it beside her, lays one hand softly on her shoulder, and fondles the child with the other in a style so exquisitely natural and so completely English, that in this dramatic picture it was seen that nature fashioneth men’s hearts alike. His addresses were, however, ineffectual, and her father’s life was not sacrificed.”

The morals of the Chinese stage, so far as the sentiments of the pieces are concerned, are better than the acting, which sometimes panders to depraved tastes, but no indecent exposure, as of the persons of dancers, is ever seen in China. The audience stand in the area fronting the stage, or sit in the sheds around it; the women present are usually seated in the galleries. The police are at hand to maintain order, but the crowd, although in an irksome position, and sometimes exposed to a fierce sun, is remarkably peaceable. Accidents seldom occur on these occasions, but whenever the people are alarmed by a crash, or the stage takes fire, loss of life or limb generally ensues. A dreadful destruction took place at Canton in May, 1845, by the conflagration of a stage during the performances, by which more than two thousand lives were sacrificed; the survivors had occasion to remember that fifty persons had been killed many years before in the same place, and while a play was going on, by the falling of a wall.¹

Active, manly plays are not popular in the south, and instead

of engaging in a ball-game or regatta, going to a bowling alley or fives' court, to exhibit their strength and skill, young men lift beams headed with heavy stones, like huge dumb-bells, to prove their muscle, or kick up their heels in a game of shuttlecock. The out-door amusements of gentlemen consist in flying kites, carrying birds on perches and throwing seeds high in the air for them to catch, sauntering through the fields, or lazily boating on the water. Pitching coppers, fighting crickets or quails, tossing up several balls at once, kicking large leaden balls against each other, snapping sticks, chucking stones, or guessing the number of seeds in an orange, are plays for lads.

Gambling is universal. Hucksters at the roadside are provided with a cup and saucer, and the clicking of their dice is heard at every corner. A boy with but two cash prefers to risk their loss on the throw of a die to simply buying a cake without trying the chance of getting it for nothing. Gaming-houses are opened by scores, their keepers paying a bribe to the local officers, who can hardly be expected to be very severe against what they were brought up in and daily practise; and women, in the privacy of their apartements, while away their time at cards and dominoes. Porters play by the wayside when waiting for employment, and hardly have the retinue of an officer seen their superiors enter the house, than they pull out their cards or dice and squat down to a game. The most common game of luck played at Canton is called fan tan, or 'quadrating cash.' The keeper of the table is provided with a pile of bright large cash, of which he takes a double handful, and lays them on the table, covering the pile with a bowl. The persons standing outside the rail guess the remainder there will be left after the pile has been divided by four, whether one, two, three, or nothing, the guess and stake of each person being first recorded by a clerk; the keeper then carefully picks out the coins four by four, all narrowly watching his movements. Cheating is almost impossible in this game, and twenty people can play at it as easily as two. Chinese cards are smaller and more numerous than our own; but the dominoes are the same.

Combats between crickets are oftenest seen in the south,
where the small field sort is common. Two well-chosen combatants are put into a basin and irritated with a straw until they rush upon each other with the utmost fury, chirruping as they make the onset, and the battle seldom ends without a tragical result in loss of life or limb. Quails are also trained to mortal combat; two are placed on a railed table, on which a handful of millet has been strewn, and as soon as one picks up a kernel the other flies at him with beak, claws, and wings, and the struggle is kept up till one retreats by hopping into the hand of his disappointed owner. Hundreds of dollars are occasionally betted upon these cricket or quail fights, which, if not as sublime or exciting, are certainly less inhuman than the pugilistic fights and bullock-baits of Christian countries, while both show the same brutal love of sport at the expense of life.

A favorite amusement is the flying of kites. They are made of paper and silk, in imitation of birds, butterflies, lizards, spectacles, fish, men, and other objects; but the skill shown in flying them is more remarkable than the ingenuity displayed in their construction. The ninth day of the ninth moon is a festival devoted to this amusement all over the land. Doolittle
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describes them as sometimes resembling a great bird, or a serpent thirty feet long; at other times the spectator sees a group of hawks hovering around a centre, all being suspended by one strong cord, and each hawk-kite controlled and moved by a separate line. On this day he estimates that as many as thirty thousand people assemble on the hills around Fuhchau to join

in this amusement if the weather be propitious. Many of the kites are cut adrift under the belief that, as they float off, they carry away with them all impending disasters.

The Chinese game of chess is very ancient, for Wu Wang (B.C. 1120) is the reputed inventor, and its rules of playing are so unlike the Indian game as to suggest an independent origin, which is confirmed by the peculiar feature of the *hiai ho*, or river, running across the board. There are seventy-two squares,
of which eight are run together to form the river, leaving thirty-two on each side; but as the men stand on the intersection of the lines, there are ninety positions for the sixteen pieces used by each player, or twenty-six more than in the European game. The pieces are arranged for playing as in the diagram above.

The pieces are like chequer-men in shape, each of the seven kinds on each side having its name cut on the top, and distinguished by its red or black colors. The four squares near each edge form the headquarters of the tsiang, or 'general,' out of which he and his two sz' or 'secretaries,' cannot move. On each side of the headquarters are two elephants, two horses, and two chariots, whose powers are less than our bishop, knight, and castle, though similar; the chariot is the most powerful piece. In front of the horses stand two cannoniers, which capture like our knight but move like our castle. Five pao, soldiers or pawns, guard the river banks, but cannot return when once across it in pursuit of the enemy, and get no higher value when they reach the last row. Each piece is put down in the point where it captured its man, except the cannoniers; as the general cannot be taken, the object of each player is to checkmate him in his headquarters, therefore, by preventing his moving except into check. The want of a queen and the limited moves of the men restrict the combinations in the Chinese game more than in western chess, but it has its own elements of skill. Literary men and women play it much, and usually for small stakes. There is another game played less frequently but one of the most ancient in the Empire. It is called wci ki, which may be rendered 'blockade chess,' and was common in the days of the sages, perhaps even earlier than chess. The board contains three hundred and twenty-four squares, eighteen each way, and the number of pieces is three hundred, though both the number of points and of pieces may be less than this size of the full game. The pieces are black and white and stand on the crossings of the lines, three hundred and sixty-one in number. The object of the opponents is to surround each other's men and take up the crossings they occupy, or neutralize their power over those near them.
CHINESE CHESS.

Each player puts down a piece anywhere on the board, and continues to do so alternately, capturing his adversary’s positions until all the crossings are occupied and the game is ended.¹

If this sketch of the customs and amusements of the Chinese in their social intercourse and public entertainments is necessarily brief, it is perhaps enough to exhibit their character. Dr. Johnson has well remarked that no man is a hypocrite in his amusements. The absence of some of the violent and gladiatorial sports of other countries, and of the adjudication of doubtful questions by ordeals or duels; the general dislike of a resort to force, their inability to cope with enemies of vastly less resources and numbers, and the comparative disesteem of warlike achievements, all indicate the peaceful traits of Chinese character. Duels are unknown, assassinations are infrequent, betting on horse-races is still to begin, and running annuck à la Malay is unheard of. When two persons fall out upon a matter, after a vast variety of gesture and huge vociferation of opprobrium, they will blow off their wrath and separate almost without touching each other. Some contrarieties in their ideas and customs from those practised among ourselves have frequently been noticed by travellers, a few of which are grouped in the following sketch:

On asking the boatman in which direction the harbor lay, I was answered west-north, and the wind, he said, was west-south; he still further perplexed my ideas as to our course by getting out his compass and showing me that the needle pointed south. It was really a needle as to size, weight, and length, about an inch and a half long, the south end of it painted red, and all the time quivering on the pivot. His boat differed from our vessels, too, in many ways: the cooking was done in the stern and the passengers were all accommodated in the bow, while the sailors slept on deck and had their kits stowed in lockers amidships.

On landing, the first object that attracted my attention was a military officer wearing an embroidered petticoat, who had a string of beads around his neck and a fan in his hand. His insignia of rank was a peacock’s feather pointing downward instead of a plume turning upward; he had a round knob or button on the apex of his sugar-loaf cap, instead of a star on his breast or epaulettes on his shoulders; and it was with some dismay that I saw him mount his horse on the right side. Several scabards hung from his belt, which

¹ Temple Bar, Vol. XLIX., p. 45.
I naturally supposed must be dress swords or dirks; but on venturing near through the crowd I was undeceived by seeing a pair of chopsticks and a knife-handle sticking out of one, and soon his fan was folded up and put in the other. I therefore concluded that he was going to a dinner instead of a review. The natives around me shaved the hair from the front half of their heads and let it grow long behind: many of them did not shave their faces, and others employed their leisure in diligently pulling the straggling hairs down over their mouths. We arrange our toilets differently, thought I; but could easily see the happy device of chopsticks, which enabled those gentlemen to put their food into the mouth endwise under this natural fringe. A group of hungry fellows, around the stall of a travelling cook, further exhibited the utility of these know-lad's, or 'nimble lads' (as I afterward learned chopsticks were called), for each had put his bowl of rice to his lips, and was shovelling in the contents till the mouth would hold no more. "We keep our bowls on the table," said I, "do our cooking in the house, and wait for customers to come there instead of travelling around after them;" but these chopsticks serve for knife, fork, and spoon in one.

On my way to the hotel I saw a group of old people and graybeards. A few were chirruping and churling to larks or thrushes, which they carried perched on a stick or in cages; others were catching flies or hunting for crickets to feed them, while the remainder of the party seemed to be delightfully employed in flying fantastic paper kites. A group of boys were gravely looking on and regarding these innocent occupations of their seniors with the most serious and gratified attention. A few of the most sprightly were kicking a shuttlecock back and forth with great energy, instead of playing rounders with bat and ball as boys would do.

As I had come to the country to reside for some time, I made inquiries respecting a teacher, and happily found one who understood English. On entering he stood at the door, and instead of coming forward and shaking my hands, he politely bowed and shook his own, clasping them before his breast. I looked upon this mode as an improvement on our custom, especially when the condition of the hands might be doubtful, and requested him to be seated. I knew that I was to study a language without an alphabet, but was not prepared to see him begin at what I had always considered to be the end of the book. He read the date of its publication, "the fifth year, tenth month, and first day." "We arrange our dates differently," I observed, and begged him to read—which he did, from top to bottom, and proceeding from right to left. "You have an odd book here," remarked I, taking it up; "what is the price?" "A dollar and eight-thirds," said he, upon which I counted out three dollars and two-thirds and went on looking at it. The paper was printed only on one side; the running title was on the edge of the leaves instead of the top of the page; the paging was near the bottom, the number and contents of the chapters were at their ends, the marginal notes on the top, where the blank was double the size at the foot, and a broad black line across the middle of each page, like that seen in some French newspapers, separated the two works composing the volume, instead of one being printed after the other. The back was open and the sewing outside, and the name neatly written on the bottom edge. "You have given me too much," said he, as he
handed me back two dollars and one-third, and then explained that eight-thirds meant eight divided by three, or only three-eighths. A small native vocabulary which he carried with him had the characters arranged according to the termination of their sounds, ming, sing, king, being all in a row, and the first word in it being seen. "Ah! my friend," said I, "English won't help me to find a word in that book; please give me your address." He accordingly took out a red card, big as a sheet of paper, on which was written Ying San-yuen in large characters, and pointed out the place of his residence, written on the other side. "I thought your name was Mr. Ying; why do you write your name wrong end first?" "It is you who are in the wrong," replied he; "look in your yearly directory, where alone you write names as they should be written, putting the honored family name first."

I could only say, "Customs differ;" and begged him to speak of ceremony, as I gave him back the book. He commenced, "When you receive a distinguished guest, do not fail to place him on your left, for that is the seat of honor; and be careful not to uncover the head, as that would be an unbecoming act of familiarity." This was a little opposed to my established notions; but when he reopened the volume and read, "The most learned men are decidedly of the opinion that the seat of the human understanding is in the belly," I cried out, "Better say it is in the feet!" and straightway shut up the book, dismissing him for another day; for this shocked all my principles of correct philosophy, even if King Solomon was against me.

On going abroad I met so many things contrary to my early notions of propriety that I readily assented to a friend's observation, that the Chinese were our antipodes in many things besides geographical position. "Indeed," said I, "they are so; I shall expect shortly to see a man walking on his head. Look! there's a woman in trousers and a party of gentlemen in petticoats; she is smoking and they are fanning themselves." However, on passing them I saw that the latter had on tight leggings. We soon met the steward of the house dressed in white, and I asked him what merry-making he was invited to: with a look of concern he told me he was returning from his father's funeral. Instead of having a scrape on his head he wore white shoes, and his dress was slovenly and neglected. My companion informed me that in the north of China it was common for rich people at funerals to put a white harness on the mules and shroud the carts in coarse cotton; while the chief mourners walked next to the bier, making loud cryings and showing their grief by leaning on the attendants. The friends rode behind and the musicians preceded the coffin—all being unlike our sable plumes and black crapes.

We next went through a retired street, where we heard sobbing and crying inside a court, and I inquired who was dead or ill. The man, suppressing a smile, said, "It is a girl about to be married, who is lamenting with her relatives and fellows as she bids adieu to the family pates and laries and her paternal home. She has enough to cry about, though, in the prospect of going to her mother-in-law's house."

I thought, after these unlucky essays, I would ask no more questions, but use my eyes instead. Looking into a shop, I saw a stout fellow sewing lace on a bonnet for a foreign lady; and going on to the landing-place, behold, all the ferry-boats were rowed by women, and from a passage-boat at the wharf I
saw all the women get out of the bow to go ashore. "What are we coming to next?" said I; and just then saw a carpenter take his foot-rule out of his stocking to measure some timber which an apprentice was cutting with a saw whose blade was set nearly at right angles with the frame. Before the door sat a man busily engaged in whitening the thick soles of a pair of cloth shoes. "That's a shoewhite, I suppose," said I; "and he answers to the shoeblack in New York, who cry 'Shine! shine!'" "Just so," said my friend; "and beyond him see the poor wretch in oldkay, with a board or cangue around his neck for a shirt-collar; an article of his toilet which answers to the cuffs with which the lads in the Tombs there are garnished instead of bracelets. In the prisons in this land, instead of cropping the hair of a criminal, as with us, no man is allowed to have his head shaved."

In the alleys called streets, few of them ten feet wide, the signs stood on their ends or hung from the eaves; the counters of the shops were next the street, the fronts were all open, and I saw the holes for the upright bars which secured the shop at night. Everything was done or sold in the streets or markets, which presented a strange medley. The hogs were transported in hampers on the shoulders of coolies, to the evident satisfaction of the inmates, and small pigs were put into baskets carried in slings, while the fish were frisking and jumping in shallow tubs as they were hawked from door to door.

A loud din led us to look in at an open door to see what was going on, and there a dozen boys were learning their tasks, all crying like auctioneers; one lad reciting his lesson out of Confucius' turned his back to the master instead of looking him in the face, and another who was learning to write put the copy-slip under the paper to imitate it, instead of looking at it as our boys would do.

We next passed a fashionable lady stepping out of her sedan chair. Her head was adorned with flowers instead of a bonnet, her hands gloveless, and her neck quite bare. Her feet were encased in red silk pictured shoes not quite four inches long; her plaited, embroidered petticoat was a foot longer than her gown, and her waist was not to be seen. As she entered the courtyard, leaning on the shoulder of her maid to help her walk on those cramped feet, my friend observed, "There you see a good example of a live walking-stick."

A little after we met one of his acquaintances accompanying a prettily carved coffin, and he asked who was dead.

"No man hab catchee die," replied the Celestial; "this one piecy coffin I just now gib my olo fader. He likee too much counta my numba one ploper; s'pose he someteem catchee die, can usee he."

"So fashion, eh?" rejoined my friend; "how muchee plice can catchee one alla same for that?"

"I tinky can get one alla same so fashion one tousan dollar, so; this hab first chop hansom, lo."

"Do you call that gibberish English or Chinese?" I asked; for the language sounded no less strange than the custom of presenting a coffin to a living father differed from my preconceived notions of filial duty.

"That's the purest pigeon-English," replied he; "and you must be the Jack Downing of Canton to immortalize it."
"Come, rather let us go home, for soon I shall hardly be able to tell where or who I am in this strange land."  

In summing up the moral traits of Chinese character—a far more difficult task than the enumeration of its oddities—we must necessarily compare them with that perfect standard given us from above. While their contrarities indicate a different external civilization, a slight acquaintance with their morals proves their similarity to their fellow-men in the lineaments of a fallen and depraved nature. Some of the better traits of their character have been marvellously developed. They have attained, by the observance of peace and good order, to a high degree of security for life and property; the various classes of society are linked together in a remarkably homogeneous manner by the diffusion of education in the most moral books in their language and a general regard for the legal rights of property. Equality of competition for office removes the main incentive to violence in order to obtain posts of power and dignity, and industry receives its just reward of food, raiment, and shelter with a uniformity which encourages its constant exertion. If any one asks how they have reached this point, we would primarily ascribe it to the blessing of the Governor of the nations, who has for His own purposes continued one people down to the present time from remote antiquity. The roots of society among them have never been broken up by emigration or the overflowing conquest of a superior race, but have been fully settled in a great regard for the family compact and deep reverence for parents and superiors. Education has strengthened and disseminated the morality they had, and God has blessed their filial piety by fulfilling the first commandment with promise and making their days long in the land which He has given them. Davis lays rather too much stress upon geographical and climatic causes in accounting for their advancement in these particulars, though their isolation has no doubt had much to do with their security and progress.

When, however, these traits have been mentioned, the Chinese are still more left without excuse for their wickedness, since

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being without law, they are a law unto themselves; they have always known better than they have done. With a general regard for outward decency, they are vile and polluted in a shocking degree; their conversation is full of filthy expressions and their lives of impure acts. They are somewhat restrained in the latter by the fences put around the family circle, so that seduction and adultery are comparatively infrequent, the former may even be said to be rare; but brothels and their inmates occur everywhere on land and on water. One danger attending young girls going abroad alone is that they will be stolen for incarceration in these gates of hell. By pictures, songs, and aphrodisiacs they excite their sensuality, and, as the Apostle says, “receive in themselves that recompense of their error which is meet.”

More uneradicable than the sins of the flesh is the falsity of the Chinese, and its attendant sin of base ingratitude; their disregard of truth has perhaps done more to lower their character than any other fault. They feel no shame at being detected in a lie (though they have not gone quite so far as not to know when they do lie), nor do they fear any punishment from their gods for it. On the other hand, the necessity of the case compels them, in their daily intercourse with each other, to pay some regard to truth, and each man, from his own consciousness, knows just about how much to expect. Ambassadors and merchants have not been in the best position to ascertain their real character in this respect; for on the one side the courtiers of Peking thought themselves called upon by the mere presence of an embassy to put on some fictitious appearances; and on the other, the integrity and fair dealing of the hong merchants and great traders at Canton is in advance of the usual mercantile honesty of their countrymen. A Chinese requires but little motive to falsify, and he is constantly sharpening his wits to cozen his customer—wheedle him by promises and cheat him in goods or work. There is nothing which tries one so much when living among them as their disregard of truth, and renders him so indifferent as to what calamities may befall so mendacious a race; an abiding impression of suspicion toward everybody rests upon the mind, which chills the warmest wishes for their
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welfare and thwarts many a plan to benefit them. Their better traits diminish in the distance, and patience is exhausted in its daily proximity and friction with this ancestor of all sins. Mr. Abeel mentions a case of deceit which may serve as a specimen.

Soon after we arrived at Kualang san, a man came to us who professed to be the near relation and guardian of the owners of the house in which we live, and presented a little boy as the joint proprietor with his widowed mother. From the appearance of the house and the testimony of others we could easily credit his story that the family were now in reduced circumstances, having not only lost the house when the English attacked the place, but a thousand dollars besides by native robbers; we therefore allowed him a small rent, and gave the dollars to the man, who put them into the hands of the child. The next month he made his appearance, but our servant, whom we had taken to be peculiarly honest for a heathen, suggested the propriety of inquiring whether the money was ever given to those for whom it was professedly received; and soon returned with the information that the mother had heard nothing of the money, the man who received it not living in the family, but had now sent a lad to us who would receive it for her, and who our servants assured us would give it to the proper person. A day or two afterward our cook whispered to me that our honest servant, who had taken so much pains to prevent all fraud in the matter, had made the lad give him one-half of the money for his disinterestedness in preventing it from falling into improper hands; and further examination showed us that this very cook had himself received a good share to keep silent.

Thieving is exceedingly common, and the illegal exactions of the rulers, as has already been sufficiently pointed out, are most burdensome. This vice, too, is somewhat restrained by the punishments inflicted on criminals, though the root of the evil is not touched. While the licentiousness of the Chinese may be in part ascribed to their ignorance of pure intellectual pleasures and the want of virtuous female society, so may their lying be attributed partly to their truckling fear of officers, and their thievery to the want of sufficient food or work. Hospitality is not a trait of their character; on the contrary, the number and wretched condition of the beggars show that public and private charity is almost extinct; yet here too the sweeping charge must be modified when we remember the efforts they make to sustain their relatives and families in so densely peopled a country. Their avarice is not so distinguishing a feature as their love
of money, but the industry which this desire induces or presupposes is the source of most of their superiority to their neighbors. The politeness which they exhibit seldom has its motive in goodwill, and consequently, when the varnish is off, the rudeness, brutality, and coarseness of the material is seen; still, among themselves this exterior polish is not without some good results in preventing quarrels, where both parties, fully understanding each other, are careful not to overpass the bounds of etiquette.

On the whole, the Chinese present a singular mixture: if there is something to commend, there is more to blame; if they have some glaring vices, they have more virtues than most pagan nations. Ostentatious kindness and inbred suspicion, ceremonious civility and real rudeness, partial invention and servile imitation, industry and waste, sycophancy and self-dependence, are, with other dark and bright qualities, strangely blended. In trying to remedy the faults of their character by the restraints of law and the diffusion of education, they have no doubt hit upon the right mode; and their shortcomings show how ineffectual both must be until the Gospel comes to the aid of ruler and subject in elevating the moral sense of the whole nation. Female infanticide in some parts openly confessed, and divested of all disgrace and penalties everywhere; the dreadful prevalence of all the vices charged by the Apostle Paul upon the ancient heathen world; the alarming extent of the use of opium (furnished, too, under the patronage, and supplied in purity by the power and skill of Great Britain from India), destroying the productions and natural resources of the people; the universal practice of lying and dishonest dealings; the unblushing lewdness of old and young; harsh cruelty toward prisoners by officers, and tyranny over slaves by masters—all form a full unchecked torrent of human depravity, and prove the existence of a kind and degree of moral degradation of which an excessive statement can scarcely be made, or an adequate conception hardly be formed.