

## IN CHINATOWN.

TO become familiar with the manners and customs of the Chinese, and to observe their manner of living, it is not necessary to take a journey to China. One can see and learn almost as much in the city of San Francisco as in Shanghai. About fifteen blocks, in the very heart of the great Pacific Coast city, are given up to the Celestials, and here they are crowded together in close proximity. White people do not care to live in the neighborhood of a Chinaman, so that the pig tails have this section entirely to themselves. The streets fairly swarm with men, women and children, especially at night, when everybody spends an hour or two out of doors.

The usual way of "doing Chinatown" is to secure a guide, starting out about eight o'clock in the evening and finishing shortly before twelve. The streets present a stirring appearance.

The most gaudy colors abound on every side, and unique signs and flaming Chinese characters are to be seen as part of the decorations of the buildings. Chinese lanterns abound; these are noted for the variety of their size and hue, and strangeness of shape. Everything presents a crowded and stuffy appearance, and from the alleys, lanes, byways and cellars pour dense clouds of smoke from the open fires, where cooking is done. The odors are as numerous as the doors you pass, and it is claimed that they are beyond the power of any connoisseur of smells to analyze. Another evidence that you are in Chinatown will be the fearful noise emanating from some theatre, and produced by a Chinese orchestra, composed of cymbals, gongs, screeching fiddles, etc.

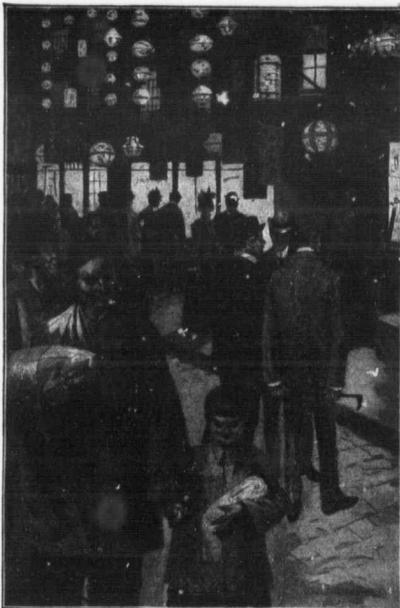
The stores are a great source of attraction to most people. These are numerous, and contain almost every kind of goods that is to be found in China. They are crowded with nick-nacks and notions of various sorts, and usually are not very orderly.

The Chinese restaurants are numerous, and a few of them are quite pretentious in their architecture and furnishing. They have large balconies, gaily painted and gilded, and decorated with great lanterns and flower urns. The interior is furnished with expensive materials, imported from China. The finest carvings in wood and metal are to be seen on every hand. These are the high-toned restaurants, where the wealthier class of Chinese go for great festivals and elaborate dinners. There are plenty of cheaper eating-houses, which are mostly below the streets, in cellars.

The Chinese are noted for their inveterate love of gambling. An opportunity will be afforded you to look in upon them while they ply this great evil, either as a business or a pastime. Gambling-houses and lotteries are going on day and night; there being at least seventy-five such places in Chinatown. They have various games of chance, played with cards, dice, dominoes, and other devices. Their favorite betting-game is called "Fan-tan," which to them is a very fascinating game. They have eight or nine organized lottery companies.

Through official corruption and the wily nature of the Chinese, this unlawful business frequently goes on unmoisted. One whole street in Chinatown is given over to gambling.

Almost every tourist visiting Chinatown wants to see an opium-joint. This desire is easily gratified, for opium-dens are plenty in Chinatown, and many Chinamen are given over to the terrible vice of smoking opium. These dens exist



A STREET IN CHINATOWN.

both above and below the street. A visit to one of the subterranean dens of horror is possible. After passing through a dark and narrow alley, you descend a flight of stairs, pass through a long narrow half-way, open a door, and find yourself in a real opium-joint. Here will be seen men lying upon bunks, in different stages of stupefaction and of physical wreck. Some are still conscious, while others are oblivious to all about them.

Here can be seen the dried up, sallow-colored sots, and the beginner who is taking his first lessons in the pace that kills. These are unwholesome and unpleasant places to visit, as the air is heavy with the stupefying fumes of opium; no ventilation ever reaches them, and no light ever penetrates the gloom except from the flickering flames of a few opium lamps.

Opium bunks are to be found attached to every heathen lodging-house, restaurant and store. Business transactions are discussed over the opium-pipe.

Desiring that the party might witness the operation of opium smoking our guide says to a villainous looking China-

man, "smokee pipee?" "No, no," he instantly replied, "no smokee pipee." The guide slipped a dime into the old fellow's hand, when presto! a change occurred that was marvellous. Preparations for smoking were immediately commenced. The opium was carefully melted over a small flame and poured into the small bowl of the pipe, about one quarter the size of a thimble.

Just one draw was taken, and the operation was over.

The Chinese call their places of worship "joss-houses." All idols are called "joss"; that is, god. It is said that "joss" is a corruption of the Portuguese word, *dios*, or God. Incense sticks, are called joss-sticks. There are eighteen of these joss-houses in San Francisco alone; but few of these approach to anything like an Oriental pagan temple, and none of them, judging from their external appearance, would be taken for anything more than an ordinary house of the Chinese quarter. The chambers where in the deities are enthroned are usually on the top floor of the building. The interior of the house of worship is fitted up in accordance with the custom that obtains in China. The images, or idols, are made of wood or plaster, and seldom number less than three, and frequently they number from six to twelve.

The principal images in these temples represent "The God of the Sombre Heavens," "The God of War," "The God of Medicine," "The God of Wealth."

The temples are fitted out with all the paraphernalia of heathen worship. The decorations are profuse, costly, and elegant. The principal decorations are gilded wood carvings, elaborate and costly incense urns, gaudy paper-flowers, made by women in China, beaded silken tassels, sbonized panels, and beautiful silk banners. The gilded wood carvings have been executed with wonderful skill, and they represent scenes from Chinese history and mythology.

Missionary work among these people is being carried on by various denominations. Christian schools and churches have been established, and quite a number have been won to Christ.

THERE is a Sunday conscience as well as a Sunday coat; and those who make religion a secondary concern put the coat and conscience carefully by to put on only once a week.—*Dickens*.