

one finds it difficult to believe that the dreaded "Boxers" are of the same nation as those kindly, silent, blue-garbed Celestials who pass our door so frequently; who work for us with such patient unwearying faithfulness; whose oblique eyes light up with quite as much kindness as the rounder orbs of their neighbours; who bring us beautiful, great bulbs of their sacred lily, during the winter, steadying them with snowy white pebbles in a pretty bowl and all ready to start into blossom; who fill our house with parcels and our children's hearts with joy, as the time of their Chinese New Year comes round, and large bags of Chinese "nuts" and "candy" (which latter is like crystallized fruit in a dream, sweetish and very insipid) prevade every place, and the air is thick with the smell of fire-crackers, while the gardener's eyes resolutely abstain from turning towards the flower beds bordering the verandah, which are sown thickly with little shreds of the mortal remains of the said fire-crackers.

If, as the Chaplain-General asserts, "Men and women are what you expect them to be," our expectations, as regards these neighbours of ours, must certainly have been pleasant ones!

The fidelity of the Chinese to what they consider to be duty, their scrupulous performance of what they think your directions to them have been, with, in many cases, their almost utter ignorance of the English language, so that you are in a chronic state of pleasing uncertainty as to the impression you have succeeded in conveying, even after the most energetic "dumb crambo," all these combine to render this department of one's work a most fascinating and truly

exciting performance! But then what else could you expect when the Sister Superior was solemnly told that "One lady, she want hullabaloo." Incredulous denial was of no avail, the assertion was reiterated until permission was given to procure the "hullabaloo," which turned out to be a common or garden wheelbarrow!

On one occasion, having gone on one's hands and knees by a parsnip bed and made sure that old "John" would "savey parsnip" next time, the only apparent result was that the next time he was told to take a "parcel" to the station, he was quite bewildered by the similarity of sound, "hey? hey? parsnip?"

We call him "John" for convenience, as the correct pronunciation of "Ah Wah," his real name, was rather beyond us!

One sad day "John" planned out all his work entirely to his own satisfaction, but unfortunately, our ideas did not run parallel to his! So, in an unwonted fit of anger, he took up his coat and walked off to Chinatown, from whence he was promptly brought back to us—a very shame-faced old man—by the "Boss Chinaman," who, understanding a good deal of English, undertook volubly to explain the situation to us. "You see, I say to him, 'You go Sister's house, that not all same as other house, you no go do what you like, you go door, you take off hat, you go Sister, you say 'What you want me do?' You no do what *you* want, all same government law stop there!'"

In the spring, when all nature stirs and awakens a restless longing to be up and doing, it is a constant case of "Go and see what John is doing and tell him not to!"