

while on each side, on a lower level, is a road reserved for pedestrians. Around us still are rich cavaliers, befurred and begowned; blue carts without number; ladies of quality in black sedan chairs, shaped like street lamps, and bourgeois of placid mien, mounted on hired donkeys and followed by donkey boys, who flog the animals with sticks and shout: "Ta, ta, ta ta!"

On the roads below are groups of people, simple folk, standing open-mouthed before a dancing bear, funambulists performing tricks, mountebanks who go through hideous contortions. And shops upon shops, always gilded and splendid, wherein are sold Mongolian furs, gold and silver brocades, priceless stuffs embroidered with fantastic things in dreamy shades, enamels and beautiful pottery, all the relics of an inconceivable past, extravagant in richness and color.

A Strange Cavern.

Then there are fortune-tellers grouping the people, acupuncturist doctors operating upon dummies laid on trestles. There are also banking-houses swarming with a whole population of sheep-faced employés, feverishly manoeuvring the strings of balls on the calculating machines with the tips of their long, sharp, Chinese claws.

At last, at last, we come to a large donjon, perched on a high gray wall, and a black gulf. It is a Sitchemen, the direct Western gate. Let us penetrate slowly and prudently into this cavern, so as not to break our horses' legs between the old, disjointed flagstones, dating from the time of Khali-bai-Khan, grandson of Gengiz-Khan and founder of the Youen dynasty.

Let us traverse this hideous tunnel, then an inner court, then a second tunnel cut under a second donjon, whose four white walls rise above us, pierced with black em-

brasures, like the portholes of a ship. Let us hasten through a cloud of human lice, beggars sinister and terrible; let us escape their somewhat alarming attentions and issue at length from this Dantesque cave.

More camels, more tumbledown houses of an old sordid faubourg, and a great plain opens before us. We are in the open country.

Concerning the Emperor.

From another account by one well informed concerning court customs in China we learn that the Chinese idea of the Emperor is that he is second only to Almighty God, and is the connecting link between ordinary humanity and the Almighty. He is held to be the legal monarch of the whole earth, of which China is merely the "Middle Kingdom," all other nations being therefore his tributaries and subjects. The practical outcome of this dual theory of the sacredness and universality of the Emperor's sovereign claim has been to exact from foreigners admitted to audience certain conditions which other States have with good reason never been willing to concede.

These requirements had reference, first, to the character of the obeisance made by the foreigner admitted to the interview, and, second, to the building in which the audience took place. As regards the former, the foreigner was formerly expected to perform the *kotow*—in other words, to kneel thrice and knock his forehead nine times on the ground. As regards the site of audience, the humbleness of the stranger received by the Son of Heaven was emphasized by receiving him not in the Imperial palace, but in a building of an inferior kind, involving the idea of political independence.

Upon these extravagant pretensions and their negation by other States, the whole audience question in China has turned.

As a
sador
peror
Macar
if a C
a pict
broug
fused.
when
view t
Chines
had *kot*
Emper
Lordsh
edge o
—"An
country

Whe
China
the tre
ulating
not be
deroga
eign of
of equ
during
nority
act upo
clause

As s
the rei
Ministe
permiss
to him
denied,
Macart
by mea
same r
Tsu-K
of the p
to the