

and gods of the dishonest gambler and thief: good gods and bad gods, all alike, find worshippers. The commonest worship of the Chinese is that of dead ancestors; the rarest is the worship of Shang-ti—the Supreme Being; and even in this last case, the worship of Shang-ti is mixed up with the worship of ancestors.

The Chinese believe that one of the three souls of each of their dead ancestors returns and dwells in the tablet, or little monument, upon which the new name of the person is written. They pray, and make their offerings before these tablets, very much as one of us might go to a loving father or mother with a present, or to ask a favour. Even in the great temple of Peking, the Emperor has placed the ancestral tablets of his family; so at the same time that he worships in the Altar to Heaven, or the Temple of Agriculture, he is praying to his departed ancestors.

Peking greatly disappoints the expectations of almost every foreign visitor. It is not as large as we had supposed. Its walls, houses, temples, and public buildings are all in a state of decay; its streets are filthy and narrow and dark; and the whole city has a poverty-stricken appearance. Yet the city has this interest: that it is over three thousand years old; that it is the seat of the Chinese government; and that the highest forms of Chinese worship are to be found here. In the noisy, crowded streets, the bustling, jostling, shouting multitude pursue their occupations. Here, one sees a blacksmith; there, a butcher; across the way, a "patent medicine" seller; each engaged in his business. It is only when one retires to the solitude of the Imperial Temple that he can escape the racket and din, the stench and dust of the Imperial City.

The temples, once beautiful structures, are situated in the southern section of Peking, quite near the Wall. The chiefest is the Altar to Heaven, situated in a park about a square mile in extent. Several high brick walls surround the temple enclosure. Mr. Bainbridge, in his "Around the World Tour," describes his successful efforts to force an entrance into this sacred enclosure. The magnificent structures, with all their delicate workmanship, are utterly neglected; as are also those of the Temple of Agriculture. Dust and dirt cover everything. Bishop Wiley tells how, when he visited these temples, with his foot he scraped away more than an inch of dirt on the floor, and discovered thus a "most beautiful mosaic work of porcelain tiles."

Every spring, the Emperor, with his attendants, proceeds to the park of the Temple of Agriculture. Here, in a specially reserved plot of ground, and in the presence of the Mandarins, and other high officers, the Emperor pushes a plough through furrow after