

Kinshang, or "Forbidden City," because it contains the palaces, and cannot be entered without permission from the emperor. The roofs of the building, being slated with yellow porcelain, gleam in the sunshine like burnished gold.

In the other parts of the city, several long streets run parallel to each other; they are broad and dusty, and throw off on either side numberless alleys, where are the private residences, the broad thoroughfares being occupied with shops. These shops are not attractive in appearance, being low and shabby, not a few of them displaying old furniture and old clothes for sale. But the throng of people at once arrests attention, it is so motley, and unlike all to which an European eye is accustomed. Here comes "a high Mandarin," riding in a green sedan, borne on the shoulders of eight men. Numerous horsemen lead the way, with their heads dressed with peacocks' feathers and precious stones, while several carts, drawn by mules, and destitute of springs, bring up the rear, and convey the other attendants of the great man.

Yonder comes a caravan of Bactrian camels. They have long hair, and two mountainous humps, between which a Tartar wedges himself as naturally as if he had been born there.

There, under that awning, you see a man who is entertaining an audience with a tale from the history of their country. Further on a mountebank is displaying the suppleness of his joints or exhibiting his powers of deglutition in swallowing all kinds of indigestible things; and all along the thoroughfare you may see the men eating and drinking in portable kitchens, or shaving their heads and plaiting their tails in the open air. Indeed, the street seems to be regarded as private property and used for all kinds of purposes. There the heathen kneel down on the bare ground and perform their devotions. With wedding processions carrying gay banners, and funeral trains with melancholy music and white mourning habits, and a thousand other strange objects, a street in Pekin is a small panorama of the empire.

Turn now into an alley, or smaller street, and inspect the architecture of private dwellings. A low brick wall on either hand is all you see, with ranges of small windows peeping out like the loop-holes of a battery. These windows are glazed with paper. Whatever is rich or beautiful within, is jealously concealed from view.

The houses, none of them more than one story in height, are hidden by these blind walls. They are covered with earthen tiles, floored with brick, and supported by wooden pillars. The rooms are usually ranged in a hollow square around a paved court.

Pekin was a fine city once; but it is now in a state of sad delapidation. It still contains a large population wholly given to idolatry. Every square has one or more Pagan

temples; and every family has its household gods! When shall these temples be supplanted by the churches of Christ, and household gods give place to the family altar?—*Church Missionary Gleaner.*

—o—

The Sunday in Scotland.

THE following letter appeared in a late number of the *Times*:—"Sir: I do not belong to the Free Church, and have no desire to defend the too free language of its ministers at Kirkcaldy. It is a curious phenomenon that in England an extreme reverence attaches to sacred places, and in Scotland to a sacred day. The intolerance of the former manifests itself in compelling the worshipper in church to conform to arrangements, aspects, and attitudes which savour strongly of excessive observance of stone altars, encaustic tiles, and consecrated floors; the intolerance of the latter shows itself in excessive restrictions on the liberty of the subject on Sabbath days. In the one case a lady's footstep is supposed, as I have seen, to profane the space within the communion rails, and in the other the whistle of the locomotive is understood to be a desecration of the Sunday. In England this superstition reigns over a section of space; in Scotland it reigns over a section of time. What the Scotch feel and practise on a day called Sunday, the English feel and practise on a tessellated pavement called a church floor. But in one respect the Scotch have the advantage. Their day was consecrated by the Deity. The English place is consecrated by a bishop. It has always appeared to me that a radical error is committed by almost all the champions of the better observance of the Sunday. They ceaselessly inculcate it as a duty, and thereby rouse the wrath of those that do not see its obligation, instead of holding it forth as a privilege, and thereby attracting all. It should be put, not *ought* we to observe the Sunday, but *may* we observe it? The law enunciated on Sinai amid thunders and threats, is enunciated on the Mount of Beatitudes amid blessings and rewards. Let us read the Fourth and other Commandments of the Decalogue in the light of the 5th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. So reading, we shall all strive to let every man enjoy an inestimable privilege, and lament that any should in any degree obstruct the enjoyment of a fellow-man. And, after all, in these times we must hope for grand moral results less by thundering in the ears of railway directors 'Thou shalt and thou shalt not,' and far more by so teaching the people the greatness of their privilege that Sunday excursion trains shall henceforth cease to pay, and therefore cease to run. I do think the language and line of action inculcated by the Free Church ministers in Kirkcaldy are calculated to damage the cause of these good, but indiscreet, men have at