

## A HEATHEN PROCESSION IN A CHRISTIAN CITY.

**Y**ES, that is just what some San Francisco girls saw one bright October day, from the windows of the Mission Chapel in Chinatown.

The occasion of the fete was the removal of the great "Joss," or Chinese god, from his old temple to a new one, but the removal could not be accomplished, much as the people wished to honor him, until the "Joss" gave a sign to his priest that he would enjoy a little change of scene.

Early in the morning the priest entered the temple, saluting with great reverence to the great idol, and after burning "punk" sticks and spicy-smelling incense, the "Joss" shook his ugly body slowly from side to side; that is, the priest said so, though unfortunately there was no other witness present. I wonder if the wind happened to shake the rickety building just then?

However, the priest was satisfied, and rushed out joyfully to announce to the other faithful that the great "Joss" was pleased with the attentions of his followers, so the preparations went on rapidly, and by ten o'clock that morning, the procession was ready to move.

It was announced to the expectant crowds by a clash of cymbals and the squeak of the ear-splitting flutes, and around a corner came a most wonderful sight. Young and old Chinese priests, dressed in the gayest manner, with beautiful silken scarfs of rainbow tints, tied around their waists, followed by other companies dressed in even gayer costumes, until, looking down the narrow street, could be seen a stream of color waving to and fro, like the pretty forms of a kaleidoscope. Now comes a wagon with such a sight in it!

Seated on movable boards are two little Chinese children about five or six years old, one dressed to represent a gorgeously-attired lady, with her cheeks painted such a fiery red that it gives to her face a wild, grotesque expression. "She," however, is a little boy disguised in a little lady's dress, for girls are not allowed to appear on public occasions.

Opposite the "lady" sits a boy who looks like a dwarfed Chinese mandarin. His little face is covered with heavy whiskers; a big, queer-shaped hat is on his head, and his little eyes are hidden behind huge round "goggles." Altogether he makes a very fierce appearance for such a small gentleman. Two Chinamen sit in the wagon to hold the children in their seats, or they would surely fall off, going down the steep hill. Every few minutes they push the boy's seat over to the "girls" and he touches her cheek with his tiny hand, while she puts his in return like a little coquette. The poor little things are very much be wil-

dered and frightened, and would indulge in a good cry if they dared.

After the little mandarin and lady come more children, but these are mounted on horses, and are decked out gorgeously, with their little feet in the big stirrups, looking very much like dolls riding horseback.

And now appears a curious object which several men are carrying on poles. It is a sort of pagoda made entirely of real Chinese flowers, principally of their small chrysanthemums, and if we watch closely, it will be seen that a large part of the parade is made up of floral pieces, representing banners, flags, etc., most creditably and ingeniously constructed.

Another clash of cymbals and along comes a sort of sedan chair, with gongs and musical (?) instruments hanging inside, but instead of walking after the fashion of civilized musicians, these queer fellows march sideways as the "chair" is carried along, and beat on the gongs as they walk.

Ah! here is something worth waiting for. The great "Joss" approaches, and condescends to stare ahead of him with his glaring eyes, as if he thought his subjects could not give him too much homage. With the crash of the music and the explosion of firecrackers all along the path of the august image, we can scarcely make ourselves heard—but, what is that!

Such shrieks as we hear from around the corner! We must wait however, until it nears us, for the crowd is so great that we cannot see anything but a sea of heads—Chinese and American. Surely it is something terrible, for the poor yellow babies in the crowd on the sidewalk, are shrieking with terror, and clinging to their mothers necks.

There is a sudden rush around the corner, and such a tumult that we can hardly tell what it is all about, but a Chinaman, dressed gayly, is hopping on one leg and whirling around as if he had gone quite crazy, and every now and then he rushes back and brandishes a pole at something we cannot see. Ah! here it comes, and behold! the most hideous head you ever imagined. It is a serpent worshipped by the Chinese and of which they stand in mortal awe, for they say he wants to swallow all the people on the street, and is only kept from it by the Chinaman with the long pole, which is tipped or baited with fruits and other food of which the creature is very fond, and just as it is about to gobble a fat little Chinese boy on the sidewalk, the dancer pokes the serpent's mouth, and saves his countryman just in time. Then he hops off on one leg again and gets himself out of the way, only to repeat his queer actions.

This enormous head, with its horrible eyes