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Chinese New Year in Frisco.

The Chinese New Year is what is called a movable festival; that is, it does not begin on the same day each year. though usually occurring about the first week in February and lasting about three

weeks. This year it began January 22.

The part of the festival that is most celebrated is the first three days, though some Chinamen take but one day in which to visit their friends and enjoy themselves generally. All the Chinese vegetable men—and nearly all garden-truck peddlers here in San Francisco are

chinamen—on the morning of the first day of the new year, present their cus tomers with little packages of Chinese candy, or with Chinese New Year lilies.

The lilies are of a beautiful, waxy whiteness, and are seen everywhere in Chinatown, and out of it, during the New Year festivities. By carefully noting the time of planting to flowering the Chinese have learned to start these flowers so that they may bloom on cr flowers so that they may bloom on cr about the first day of the year, and hap-py is the moon-eyed celestial who finds on New Year's morn his lilies in bloom; for then he is sure that good luck will be

with him all the year.

In Chinatown all is m holiday attire; the fronts of all the buildings are covered with banners and flags, each with some curious design, the most often seen being the black dragon on a yellow field.

All about are stands covered with China candy, sugared potatees, candied pork, and others sweets dear to the heart of "John." We had some doubt about of "John." We had some doubt about eating the candy, but found it to be rather "pleasant to the taste," as the patent medicine circulars say, and a novelty, anyway. Men with baskets were selling sugar cane, for which the Chinese possess a great fondness, and

on payment of five cents, three joints of this luxury was transferred to our pock-All the stores were most beautifully decorated with rich hand embroidery and spun-gold work, and the display of rare chinaware was wonderful.

The richest store we saw was a Chinese drug store. Perhaps you did not know that the Chinese had drug stores? Well, they do, and elegant ones, too; but they look now more like exhibitions of Chinese fancy goods than anything else. Here are compounded wonderful clixirs from dragon's blood, and the tengues of deers, and marvellous pills from rattle-snakes' rattles and dogs' teeth.

Those stores doing the largest business appeared to be clothing shops; for poor indeed is the Chius boy who cannot afford a New Year's suit. And how proud they are when they dress themselves in their holiday garb for the first time!

These queer people have one New Year custom that I think would please the boys of the East : it is their manner of burning fire crackers. From an upper window of the house they rig out a long pole, from which is suspended some forty or fifty bunches of fire crackers and these are all set of at once. At times there will be twenty or thirty of these bombardments going on at ouce, with a noise that ought to delight the most

noisy of young Americans. We visited a Joss house, or place worship, and after climbing two flights of diagy stairs, came into a small room where there were five or six priests, who were enjoying their evening meal of rice. On asking permission to enter the sacred precincts, we were shown into a small room the walls of which covered with filagree work in gold and lver, while about were hung rich tapestries. In the center, on a richly carved throne, satthe Joss or god, carved out of wood, and robed in most beautiful

fabrics.
While we were there a Chinaman entered, accompained by a priest, who began the ceremony by loudly pounding a large gong; then, taking a vase filled with little sticks—on each of which was written in Chinese characters a prayerhe drepped on his knees before the Joss and shook the vase till one of the stripes fell out. This he took to a stand on which was a book, and copied the prayer from the stick to the page of the volume All this time the worshipper stood at one side looking as if he had no interest

After a few other performances the Chinaman was called forward, told to sign the book, paid over to the priest a small sum of meney, and then went away, evidently feeling sure that no harm could come to him in the next

The Chinese also have a custom that would appear strange to our American merchants. If a Chinaman is too poor to pay a bill when it is presented at New Year, and can show that he has no more money than will keep his family along, he is given a canceled bill, and his account is crossed off the books, so he can begin the New Year square with the world.

The streets of Chinatown, during New Year are crowded with Chinamen, but a more orderly crowd, or one better natured, would be hard to find. In all cur trips among the Chinese we have never seen one of them intoxicated, or never seen one of them intoxicated, or one who appeared to have been drinking at all. Taken all in all, they seem to be far "whiter" than they are painted, and are, as a general thing, good, quiet, orderly people. At some future time I may tell you of the shops and of the Chinese that the control of the shops and of the Chinese that the control of the shops and of the Chinese that the control of the chinese that the chinese the chinese that the chinese that the chinese that the chinese the chinese that the chinese that the chinese that the chinese the chinese that the Chinese theatre. GEO. O. HALL.

Take the hours of reflection or recreation after business, and never before it. If you must flee from evil, do it calmly, without agitation, or you may stum-ble and fall in your haste.

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