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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. The year it began January 22.

The part of the festival that is most celebrated in 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 peddlers here in San Francisco are Chinamen--on the morning of the first day of the new year, present their customers 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 are seen everywhere in Chinatown, and are seen everywhere in Chinatown.

In Chinatown all is in 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 crowded with China candy, sugared potatoes, candied pork, and others sweets dear to the heart 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.

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.

These stores doing the largest business appeared to be clothing shops; for poor indeed is the Chin 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!

While we were there a Chinaman entered, accompanied 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 prayer--he dropped on his knees before the Joss and shook the vase till one of the sticks fell out.

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

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 book, so he can begin the New Year square with the world.

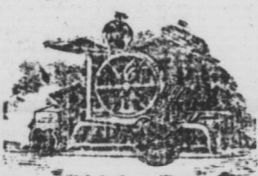
The streets of Chinatown, during New Year are crowded with Chinamen, but a more orderly crowd, or one better natured, would be hard to find. In all our trips among the Chinese we have never seen one of them intoxicated, or one who appeared to have been drinking at all.

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 stumble and fall in your haste.

In a letter from James Irwin, Beaver Creek, Manitoba, he says, "I was taken last summer with a very severe pain in my back. By using one bottle of Hayward's Yellow Oil I was completely cured."

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