

Hundreds of crackers are tied together in such a way that they go off one after another, making almost a continuous roar; and just as one man's string burns out another one's begins. It would take pages to tell all the kinds of fireworks that are made and set off at Chinese New Year.

When New Year's day fully comes, then begins the business of New Year's calls. No matter how this fashion varies and passes away in other lands, it has gone on just the same in China for a thousand, perhaps two thousand and more years, and still goes on just the same; and every one wishes each one he meets, "hsiu hsi"—new happiness, with much ceremony, and presents his card, a piece of bright red paper four inches wide and eight or nine inches long, with his name written in large black characters. These cards are all carefully saved, and for months after you see them posted up in the houses, showing the number of New Year's visits received.

With us people rent houses; and so they do in China. But there many a man rents the clothes in which he makes his New Year's calls,—and the clothes in which he is married, even to a button on the top of his hat. And he looks very fine too, in his own eyes and in the eyes of his friends.

But you would feel like smiling, I suspect, to see him in a long fur-lined, plum-colored satin sack reaching to his ankles, with sleeves full, and so long that you see nothing of his hands. If they shook hands like we do, it would be a lot of trouble. But they don't.

The women and children do not go about making visits, usually, and especially not for the first five days. But they have their share of the feasting and the fire-crackers at home.

And then, a little later on, the fun for the boys begins with the kite-flying. They have more kinds and sizes of kites than any boy here ever dreamed of, and I think they are either made better, or else the Chinese boys know better how to fly them, than our boys do. They are made to represent all kinds of birds and fishes, and are often higher than a man, when standing; some are made in a

great many different parts strung together, and when up in the air look like immense centipedes.

Then they have ways by which paper lanterns, with a lighted candle within, can be sent up the string to the kite. And many of the kites are made with wind harps, so that when up in the air many hundreds of feet their sound is constantly heard. I cannot call it music, however, though the Chinese like to hear it.

The New Year's festivities properly terminate with the Feast of Lanterns, on the first full moon, or fifteenth day of the first month, though the Chinese have a saying that "It is not too late to make New Year's calls when the grass is a foot high"; and the kite-flying goes on all through the early spring.—*Children's Miss. Friend.*

DECEIVING THE GODS.

By what name are you called, little boy?" I often ask in Chinese houses. Perhaps the answer will be "*Kou-tzu*," meaning "Little dog," or some equally displeasing name. The parents call him some such name, so that the gods will think he doesn't amount to anything and they don't care anything for him, so that they (the gods) will spare his life. For these people think that if they love or care for anything, their gods will surely take it away from them. So they deceive them, as they think.

Sometimes they try another plan. They will pierce one of the boy's ears and let him wear one earring. If the gods see that earring, they will think he is a girl and don't amount to anything, and so spare his life. The parents think too that the air is full of evil spirits and influences, and to protect the babies, especially the precious boys, against these, they hang charms around their necks, —silver, if they can afford them, if not, the mother makes some of bright-colored pieces of cloth, and the baby looks very gay in them. But sickness and death come to these babies as often as to any others. Many are now learning to pray to the "True God" to keep their little ones, instead of trusting in charms.—*Miss. Friend.*