

"I had the good fortune to purchase a passport to the western heaven for the moderate sum of two cents. This included an official letter to Titsang, guardian of hades, who will pass the spirit of the individual whose name is writsen upon the document through his realms, across all the ferries, and finally, by the help of Pu-hsien, over the great bitter sea, which is said to have waves a thousand feet high. Both Titsang and Pu-hsien are working hard in the spirit world and on earth to carry out their numerous vows for the salvation of men and women, and, at the same time, doing something to work out their own salvation, which means the bliss of Nirvana, or the kingdom of perfect happiness. My passport is gotten up in good style, has a picture of Omito-foo, a pagoda, the bitter sea, and a boat in readiness for the departed spirit. An old sore-eyed monk climbed three hundred steps with me for the money, and as we toiled up he pressed my shoulder and said in a confidential tone, 'You have a valuable thing there.'"

Eagerly did our intrepid traveller press towards the summit of Mount Omei, that he might behold the famous "Aureole"—"the glory of Buddha."

" 'The clouds were far beneath me, bathed in light ;
They gathered midway round the wooded height,
And in their fading glory shone
Like hosts in battle overthrown.' "

"The view surpassed in delicate combination of colour and form any picture of fancy. We gazed upon the nebulous billows, snow-white and almost ethereal, broken up here and there as the strengthening sun pierced through to glassy river or glimmering vale. The little rivers winding seemingly at our very feet, glittered and gleamed like the phosphorescence of the ocean. Farther on I observed over an archway that I was only 'one step from heaven.' Daily the white feathery clouds come floating and passing the out-jutting points, until the broad expanse directly below us is completely filled. Not a peak remains unveiled. Then the gauze-like clouds float higher and higher, until early in the afternoon—from two to four—the cliffs are mirrored upon these bright white walls. Then, if the observer stands upon the edge of the precipice, and the sun shines brightly upon him, he will see his dark shadow away off upon the white clouds, with an exceedingly bright and sometimes large halo around it, which changes in size and brilliancy every moment as the mists rise, recede or advance. Stretch forth your hands, and the giant shadow does the same. This phenomenon, similar to the Spectre