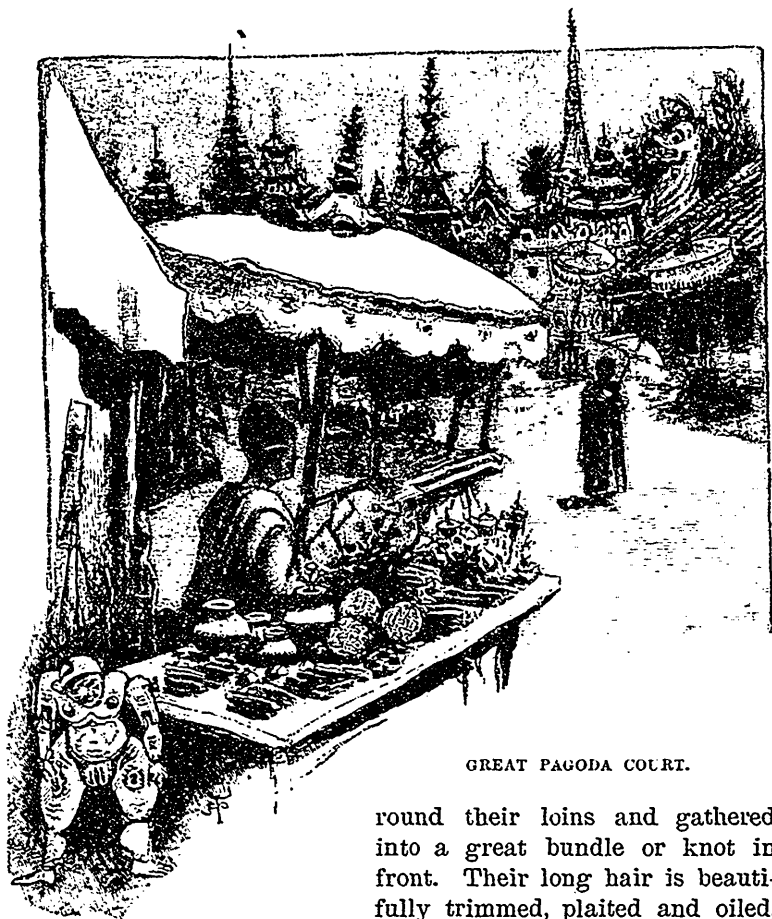


Important as are the commercial aspects of the place, it is not these which interest and arrest the attention of the stranger, but rather what is old, quaint, and perhaps more or less effete. The appearance of the people themselves, to begin with, is most picturesque. Nearly all the men are naked to the waist, or wear a small white open linen jacket, with a voluminous *putso*, wound tightly



GREAT PAGODA COURT.

round their loins and gathered into a great bundle or knot in front. Their long hair is beautifully trimmed, plaited and oiled, and their glossy locks are protected from the sun by an oiled-silk umbrella. The women wear much the same costume, except that the *tamieri* which replaces the *putso* is gayer in colour and more gracefully put on.

But it was not only the people that interested me. There were the great pagodas, like huge hand-bells, gilded and decorated in various styles, with curious little gilt crowns at the top, ornamented with rubies and emeralds. On the extreme summit, in the