

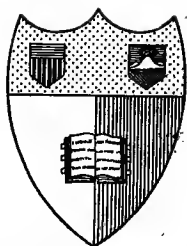
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GLIMPSES OF  
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AND CHINESE HOMES

EDWARD S. MORSE



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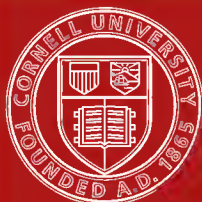
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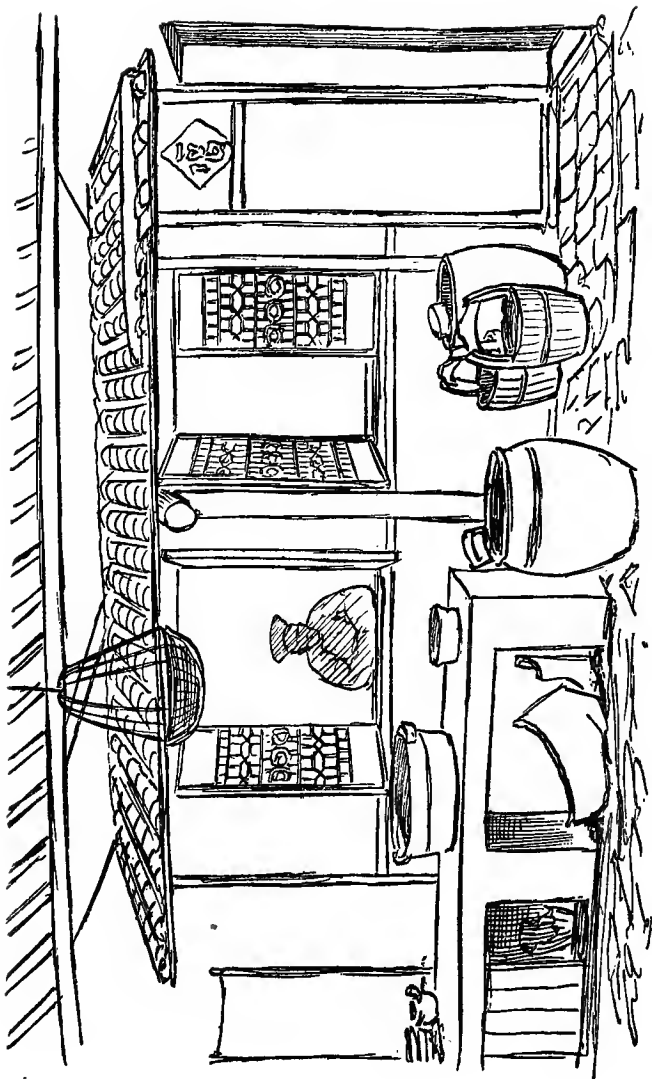
*Chas. Mason*

Glimpses of China  
and  
Chinese Homes









*Cook's house, Canton*

# Glimpses of China and Chinese Homes

By  
Edward S. Morse

Formerly Professor of Zoölogy in the Imperial University, Tōkyō

*Author of*

“Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings,” etc.

*Illustrated from Sketches in the Author's Journal*



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*Something is to be learnt from every book*

CHINESE PROVERB



## P R E F A C E

**T**HE following brief memoranda and sketches were made some years ago during a short visit to China, after a residence of nearly four years in Japan, two years of which I held the chair of Zoölogy in the Imperial University of Tōkyō. This experience with a related people may add slightly to the value of my observations in China. My only excuse for publishing them is that they deal with certain phases of Chinese life, which, though often commented upon by various writers, have rarely been depicted by sketches. The drawings themselves are reproduced directly from my pen-and-ink journal sketches made on the spot in ill-lighted rooms, amidst jostling crowds, and wherever a point of vantage could be got for the moment. Nothing can be claimed for them in the way of artistic merit, for they have none; many are mere sketch memoranda, though it is hoped that they may add a few points to the overwhelming mass of facts and observations which have been chronicled for the last few hundred years. Any one attempting in the future to co-ordinate the various characteristics of this bewildering race as recorded by hosts of writers, may possibly find a few items

## PREFACE

to utilize in this material. One may perhaps judge of the weight of this contribution by the following quotation from the preface of Arthur B. Smith's book entitled "Chinese Characteristics." Dr. Smith was for twenty-two years connected with the American Board of Foreign Missions in China. He says: "The circumstance that a person has lived twenty-two years in China is no more a guarantee that he is competent to write of the characteristics of the Chinese than the fact that another man has lived for twenty-two years in a silver mine is proof that he is a fit person to compose a treatise on metallurgy or bi-metalism." This is unquestionably too modest, as will be realized by any one who has read his remarkable analysis of Chinese character, yet it may stand as a warning to those who generalize about the Chinese on slight acquaintance. Whatever conclusions I have come to, superficial as they may be, are curiously borne out by the testimony of others who have spent as many years in the Empire as I have days, and have travelled as many thousand miles in the country as I have single miles.

Most of this material appeared first in a series of articles in the "American Architect" under the title of "Journal Sketches in China," and to the publishers of that journal, and to its editor, Mr. William Rotch Ware, I am indebted for the privilege of publishing them in book-form. A number of sketches have been added, as well as numerous notes and memoranda.



## PREFACE

I desire here to express my obligations to Mr. Edward B. Drew, an officer in the Chinese Custom Service, for many courtesies while in Shanghai; to Dr. B. E. Martin, who kindly read my preliminary manuscript; and, finally, to Mr. John Robinson, of Salem, who has suggested certain additions to the text.



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I

THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI



# GLIMPSES OF CHINA AND CHINESE HOMES

## I

### THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

**L**EAVING Japan, the land of gentle manners, rational delights, and startling surprises, I looked forward with eagerness to the promised glimpses of China, the mother nation of these eastern races from whom they have derived the arts of written speech and about everything else,—a nation, or, perhaps better, a congeries of tribes which in the past had anticipated the Europeans in many arts and inventions.

Our steamer had threaded the intricate passage of the Inland Sea and passed through the Straits of Shimonoseki to the ocean beyond. From Shimonoseki to Shanghai is a comparatively short passage; to go from Tōkyō to Hong Kong is a sail of over twenty-five hundred miles. So little do we appreciate distances on a crowded

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

map that one is surprised to find the remoteness of these places from one another. We were sailing on the Yellow Sea and the waters were as blue as those of any ocean, but we were yet one hundred and forty miles from the Chinese coast.

Within one hundred miles of the mouth of the Yangtse, however, the sea becomes yellow and the water opaque from the mass of mud brought down by this great river. The Yellow Sea, the name of which I had learned in my early school-days, was now clearly understood, so much better is a single object-lesson than pages of dull description. With the understanding of this came also a realization of the mighty changes which are slowly taking place in the wearing away of land-surfaces and the filling-up of sea-bottoms through the erosive energy of water. Here was this great mass of water, one hundred miles from land, made noticeably yellow by the mixture of fine sediment brought down by the river. I could not help reflecting that if, in the future, a yellow flood of human detritus should overrun Europe and America it would render civilization just as opaque and make shallow the

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

great depths which mark the intellectual supremacy of our race to-day.

We anchored at midnight some miles within the mouth of the river and at dawn started again, still, apparently, in mid-ocean, as no land could be seen on either side. The river at this point is forty miles wide, and one realizes its magnitude when he is told that for eight hundred miles the river is deep enough to float the largest ships. We sailed for an hour and more and the expanse of water seemed illimitable. Gradually we neared the southern shore, and long, low stretches of land came in sight. The scene was desolate to the last degree. The vessels we passed were numerous and quaint; we had seen such craft figured in books and were familiar with their models in the museum at Salem, but here were the veritable objects: fishing-boats, trading-vessels, engaged in the enormous coast-wise traffic, and war-junks. The fishing-boats had a huge dipping-net standing up like a sail on either side of the boat, and not on one side, as I had noticed in Japan.

My attention was soon attracted to the peculiar features of the land, which was covered, so far as the eye could reach, with low mounds. It pre-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

sented the appearance of a salt-marsh covered with hay-cocks. My first impression was that they were prehistoric mounds, and consequently offered a great field for the archæologist. I soon learned that these mounds, extending to the very horizon, were simply ancestral tombs, or burial places. Here, then, we had, even before landing, a glimpse of how a baleful superstition could arrest the progress and development of a people. Not only was a vast amount of arable land thrown forever out of cultivation by these surface-consuming sepulchres, but the necromancers insist that no road shall be built through them, nor must the shadow of a telegraph pole or wire fall upon them. One no longer wonders that there are so few roads in China. Some slight respect might be felt for this superstition if these mounds showed any evidences of tender regard or care for the dead. A closer examination, however, shows them to be in the most neglected and dilapidated condition. The contrast between their treatment and the treatment of similar places in Japan, where graves three hundred years old even are still freshly decorated with flowers, is striking.

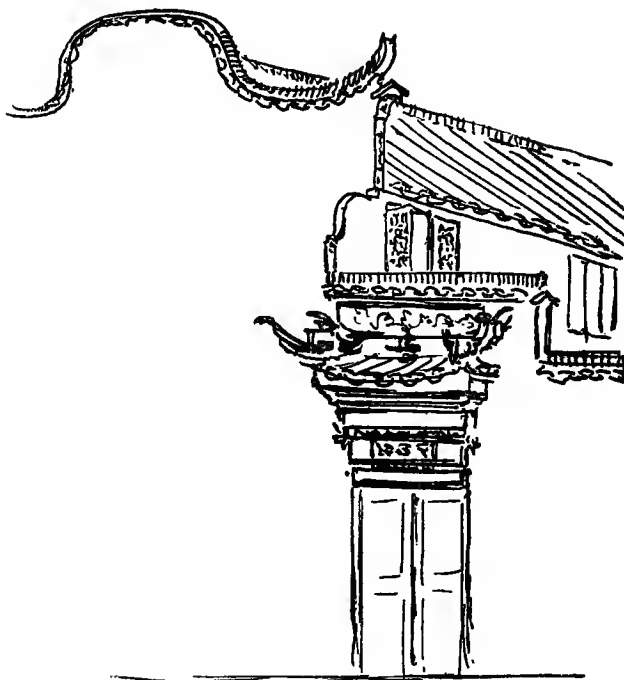
## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

After sailing for several hours, entertained by the diversified craft on the water and depressed by the dismal and monotonous landscape beyond, we turned into the Shanghai River, and, crossing the bar, after another hour's sail, reached Shanghai and came to anchor. I noticed the little boats as they came out or floated by were brown with dirt and grease; indeed, the woodwork reminded one of the inside of a hut for smoking bacon. My standards of comparison were always with Japan, and this was certainly unfair, but there came to me the memory of Japan, where the woodwork of boats recalled the cleanliness of a Quaker kitchen and even the sewage-buckets came back from the country scoured like milk-churns. The memory of Japanese cleanliness rendered all the more shocking the exceeding dirt of this people.

The foreign city of Shanghai, with its beautiful buildings, fine streets and parks, has often been described, and the contrast, as one passes from its spacious avenues to the dirt and squalor of the Chinese quarter, is appalling. It is difficult to realize that this great object-lesson of order, elegance, cleanliness, and comfort is

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

' looked upon by the Chinese with supreme contempt.



*Doorway in Shanghai*

When I looked out of my hotel window the next morning a glimpse of one form of Chinese architecture was in view just across the street. It was a typical doorway of a business enclosure,



## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

and a sketch of one is a sketch of all. The various mouldings and the ornaments over the doorway were very elaborate, and nothing short of a painstaking drawing or photograph could do justice to the work. The little groups of carved human figures and pheasants, brightly colored, and tinsel-like accessories, might have meant something to the Chinese brain, but they looked trivial and insecure for the entablature of a doorway. Whole streets in the foreign quarter are lined with these rather high, windowless walls. Some of them had stone or glazed pottery panels with figures of flowers moulded in high-relief. The ridges of these walls gracefully turned in broad curves, and the imbricated coping of roofing tiles, bedded in cement, presented features that our architects might study with profit.

After breakfast I hunted up Mr. Edward B. Drew, an American by birth and an officer in the Chinese custom-service to whom I had a letter and who during my short stay in Shanghai greatly facilitated my work. His father kindly offered to go with me to the native city of Shanghai. It should be explained here that the Chinese towns are surrounded by high

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

walls having several gates which are closed at night.

The irregular lanes which function as streets, with the filth and noise of these overcrowded communities are intolerable to our race, and one,



*Gateway, native city of Shanghai*

therefore, finds at Shanghai, Canton, Tientsin, and other cities a concession of land upon which the foreigner lives apart, with his own ideas of streets, buildings, and cleanliness. This, then, was the foreign city of Shanghai, with its imposing buildings; villas with well-kept lawns and gardens; broad avenues and open parks modelled after our own ways and presenting the leading character-

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI.

istics of our well-ordered cities. The dwellings, with their open character and their broad verandas, have just enough flavor of native architecture to add piquancy to the effect, and the Chinese nurses, with strange coiffures and silken garments of curious fashion, accompanying little English boys and girls, present a continual series of interesting sights to the foreigner when he first lands. Then in contrast is the ancient walled city of Shanghai, out of whose dungeon-like gates swarm a living stream of natives, reminding one of a colossal ants' nest.

As we neared the city the swarm and bustle increased, — an eager, active crowd, pushing, jostling, shouting, and intent on getting somewhere with their multifarious loads swinging from the ends of their carrying-poles, which they deftly guided through this dense current of humanity.

The grim walls of the city towered just beyond a bridge which spanned a narrow canal filled with all manner of liquid impurities. The walls were crenellated for cannon, but no cannon could be seen, and with their massive thickness and rounded buttresses they presented a most formidable appearance. Outside the wall were

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

piled to a great height pottery jars of all descriptions. It was a veritable lumber-yard of pottery.



*Pottery Yard, Shanghai*

There must have been thousands of pots and jars in these accumulations. They were piled up in regular and solid masses nearly to the height of the city's walls, — huge water-jars, bathing-tubs,

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

flower-pots, etc., all of coarse pottery with brown or green glaze. One wondered if they ever tumbled down, and wondered still more how they had been piled up to such a height and so securely.

As we entered the city the crowd became denser, and such a swarm of shabbily dressed men and boys I never saw before. Now and then a mandarin, with his brocade and silken vestments, rendered more striking by contrast the squalor of this unkempt crowd: A few women and children were being hustled in this living stream which incessantly flowed in and out of the gateway. We passed through by dint of much dodging, and became one with the innumerable mass that filled the irregular-running streets. Palanquins, each with a number of bearers, swinging along and crowding obstructors to the wall; peasants, with buckets hanging from the ends of long carrying-poles containing the sewage of the city, rudely sweeping by, shouting, and by no means careful whether they brushed you with their filthy receptacles or not; water-carriers moving rapidly along with slouching step in cadence with the oscillations of their carrying-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

poles, their legs fairly buckling under them from the enormous weight they were bearing, and calling out in curious cries to make a way; wheelbarrows loaded with market produce and human freight as well, awkwardly jamming into the crowd, all combined, made an impression never to be effaced. Everybody was dirty, and the surroundings were dirty and old. The city looked as though it had never been swept or cleaned, and it never had. Mediæval microbes and prehistoric odors were always in evidence; many buildings going to ruin, and, apparently, nobody with time or interest enough to arrest the decay. Indeed, in my brief experience in China, I do not recall the sight of any one repairing or cleaning a building.

The street sights, as in all Oriental cities, were of abounding interest. Here was a group of little boys gambling with copper cash and wildly and noisily gesticulating. The Chinese are born gamblers, and their various methods and intricate games of chance render poker, to them, a kindergarten game. In a little open space, wet and muddy, was a wreck of a street juggler, ragged and dirty to the last but one degree, with an assistant reaching the last degree of dirt and

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

dilapidation. The properties with which they played were equally squalid, — a basket, a rag, a wooden doll, a cup, a few bamboo tubes, and other junk-shop material. Now, the marvel was to see these vagabonds, with vagabond material, play the most wonderful sleight-of-hand tricks. After seeing these wrecks perform, I could well believe some of the marvellous stories about the Indian jugglers. A circle of admiring men and boys surrounded them, and despite the danger of contagion, for at that time the people were dying by hundreds of small-pox, and one passed on the street cases showing full efflorescence, I joined the ring. The ancient trick of sword-swallowing was done with a long, rusty sword, and there was no trick about it, for the rusty blade was literally thrust down the stomach. The man had picked me out as a victim, and with body inclined and straightened he came directly to me and held out his hand, nor would he remove the sword till I had given him some money, the crowd, meanwhile, eying me and derisively shouting. When he withdrew the sword, tears flowed from his eyes and copious phlegm ran from his mouth. It was a most painful and disgusting sight.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

It was an odd experience to have to provide one's self with a little bag in which to keep small fragments and crumbs of silver in lieu of coin in order to purchase anything in the shops, the shop-keeper furnishing the little scales which, according to all authorities, never weighs in the buyer's favor. The whole transaction reminded one of a miner's camp where gold dust is used as currency. But fancy this primitive method in the great cities of Shanghai, Canton, and other places.

In purchasing objects at the shops, the Chinese seem less solicitous for trading than the Japanese, though they do not allow a chance to escape to sell you something.

Our guide was to take us to a famous tea-house, and the remembrance of the Japanese tea-house, with its exquisite neatness, simple and satisfying surroundings, and quiet demeanor of the attendants—all girls—was fresh in my mind, so I looked forward with interest to the sight of a Chinese tea-house, and a famous one at that. I felt assured that here, at least, were to be seen some attractive features in the way of cleanliness and pleasant surroundings,—some



## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

contrast to the squalor through which we had been roaming during the morning. I fully expected to have a new experience, and here was the tea-house: a two-storied building in typical Chinese style, certainly quaint in its architecture, and recalling the pictures one sees rudely depicted on blue-and-white china. The building rose from the centre of a pond, and was approached by a zigzag bridge. Now the house, bridge, and pond were in an equally dirty condition. The water was covered with a green slime and emitted foul odors. We crossed the bridge, entered the building, and found our way to the second story. Taking a seat at one of the tables, we ordered the usual tea, which was brought to us by a male attendant, in large covered porcelain cups, accompanied by a tray full of unsavory-looking cakes. If there is one evidence above another of the absence of all artistic tastes among the masses in China, the appearance of the food alone might be offered. In Japan, the little street booths exhibit a variety of cake, rice-balls with fish on top, and confectionery, and these are all made in tasteful forms and moulds. The Japanese not only enjoy the simple art displayed

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

in all such matters, but seem capable everywhere of fabricating tasteful-looking objects. The Chinese tea offered us, was far more to the foreigner's taste than is the best of the Japanese. One of the unsavory-looking cakes was carefully dissected. Its contents appeared to be closely chopped vegetables or fruit or something else, and its taste resembled the odor of mouldy salve. A dish of finely chopped ginger sprouts salted was exceedingly good; the preserves were rather too sweet for our taste; the tea was perfectly delicious. At a table near us were three mandarins, and, judging by their fine clothing, evidently of the better class. They looked at us inquiringly for a while, and finally one of them arose, crossed to our table, and shook hands with Mr. Drew, who thereupon presented him to me as one of the famous class of Hartford students who were all recalled by the Government while in the midst of their studies. The two others then came to our table and an interchange of introduction followed. Mr. Drew explained to them my desire to see the interior of a Chinese house, and one of them, turning to me, said that he and his companions had all been so kindly treated in

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

America when students at Hartford that they would be only too pleased if they could be of any service to me. Gladly accepting their kind offers as hosts and guides, I promptly dismissed my guide who had brought me hither, and under their lead at once started off on a round of investigation.

It was a rare and interesting experience to ransack the native city with three mandarins dressed, of course, in their full Chinese costume, with their long queues hanging down behind. All of them spoke English without an accent; they were even familiar with our peculiar New England idioms, and even with our slang. As an illustration: I stopped to buy some trifle at a shop, when one of them said, "Oh, come along, Mr. Morse, don't bother with him, the fellow's giving you taffy."

It was, indeed, a rare opportunity, and it was through their help that I was enabled to make many sketches of house interiors. One of them kindly invited me to his home. How he ever found his way there is a mystery to me to this day. It was a long walk through a tangled labyrinth of narrow and exceedingly crooked streets.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

On entering his house we apparently passed through the side of a shop and came to an open court-yard. From there we passed into a kind of reception-hall used by two families in common. A side entrance from this led us into a more secluded reception-hall. His little sister came out to meet us and I held her for a moment, but she seemed very shy, as well she might, for she had never been so near a "foreign devil" before. A little brother, equally shy, stayed by me for a while despite his fears. I was shown rapidly through the ground-floor of the house, including the kitchen and servants' quarters, but, as my friend had invited me to dinner the following day, made only brief memoranda of the points that had interested me. The most serious matter was the very primitive and objectionable features connected with the sanitary arrangements. I have dealt with this subject elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> but must insist that in these respects the Chinese are degraded to the last degree, and one wonders, if such conditions prevail throughout the Empire, how the nation should number four hundred millions, whereas, if they belonged to the same species

<sup>1</sup> "Latrines of the East," *American Architect*, March 18, 1893.

## THE YANGTSE AND SHANGHAI

with ourselves, they should all have been swept off the face of the earth centuries ago. Entering a room called the study, or library, we were invited to sit; a servant brought us a light refreshment consisting of fried peanuts, oranges, and a little root which had a delicious crisp taste. The root was dug from the river-mud and was quite new to me. I enjoyed it, not having seen the river. Wondering how I should dispose of my orange-peel and peanut-shells, I was told to throw them on the floor! The floor, it may be added, was apparently mother-earth, — damp, cold, and nearly black in color, in fact, a continuation of the street surface. Doubtless, the floor was tiled: the dirt, however, obscured all traces of it.

It was late in the afternoon when my companions guided me to the gate of the city by which we had entered in the morning. After passing through a densely settled Chinese area and coming into wide streets and fresh air, it was like passing out of a noisome pit into health-giving daylight. Outside the city-walls there is an immense Chinese population, outnumbering the foreigners thirty to one. At the time I was in Shanghai the foreigners numbered

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

three thousand, while the Chinese, outside the native city, numbered sixty thousand. At the present time the numbers have been mentioned as five thousand and two hundred thousand respectively.

## II

### A CHINESE HOME





## II

### A CHINESE HOME

**T**HE next morning, one of my Chinese acquaintances of the day before came to the hotel to guide me again through the entangled channels of the native city, and to take me to his house to dinner instead of to the house where I was first invited. We entered by a different gate, yet the same throng of people were pouring in and out, and the walls about the gate had the same huge piles of pottery in great blocks. We traversed the same narrow and tortuous alleys, were assailed with the same odors and hustled by the same rude, hurrying crowd of water-bearers, sewage-luggers, market-men, and a hundred other varieties of two-legged carriers. It was a puzzle as to what they were all about and why they were in such haste. In the toting of heavy loads one might imagine the hurry to get rid of the swinging weight, but everybody seemed to be impelled by a restless or nervous energy,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

and yet no race shows more the absence of what we call restlessness or nervousness than the Chinese.

A second view of the city opened new sights. A peculiar effect is produced by the shop-signs, which are hung at right angles from the shops and when free hang vertically, as the Chinese characters are read in vertical lines. These signs were of all sizes, and the characters were in gilt or red. Over the door and on the sides of the posts were strips of paper upon which characters were written.

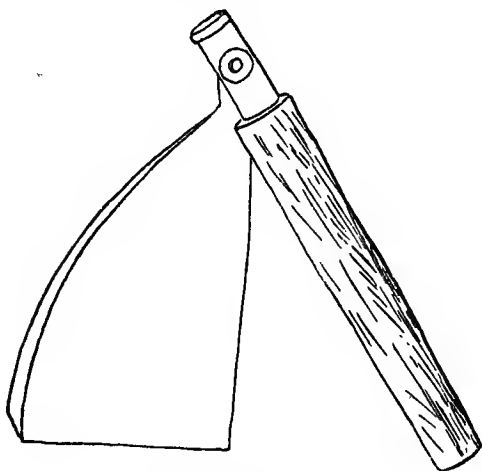
Dr. Gustave Schlegel,<sup>1</sup> professor of Chinese at the University of Leiden, has translated a number of these inscriptions, and they ran as follows: "Preserve your virtue." "Spring's brightness is the first boon." "The heart preserved." "Spring never grows old," etc. He says these inscriptions often have a far-fetched meaning and for the most part are neither understood by the owner who pastes them upon the lintels and door-posts of his house, nor by the writer who wrote them.

The narrow streets, curving often, and the projecting signs, with the close crowds filling the

<sup>1</sup> Internationales archiv für Ethnographie, Vol. VII.

## A CHINESE HOME

entire thoroughfare from side to side, give one a smothered sensation. From the open character of the shop-front and the many occupations going on in the street, one is brought into most intimate contact with the people. Such a be-



*A common Chinese razor*

wildering medley of sights, here a barber shaving and dressing the head, using a primitive-looking razor and having in addition a long ear-spoon and a washbowl of dirty water; another individual marking the direction on some package in curious characters; a tailor pressing a piece of

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

cloth with a flatiron in the shape of a long-handled dipper filled with burning charcoal, and at all times these people may be seen sipping their cups of tea, and this is done in a slow and methodical way. Porcelain-shops and metal-shops seem to predominate, probably on account of the cleanliness of the "blue and white," and the hammering noise emitted by shops of the other kind. Restaurants were numerous, but the unsavory dishes offended the eye as well as the nose. Their markets display the most dubious looking messes, dirty dried fish, dried shrimps, smoked ducks, a bright yellow cheese-curd-looking substance, small seeds of some kind partially sprouted, little bits of some kind of a nut done up in a fragment of fresh palm-leaf, large shallow trays filled with the tiniest dried fish, and a multitude of other unknown edibles.

Their drug stores with pounded snakes, dried lizards, gall stones, and other equally absurd substances, would drive a modern pharmacist stark mad to contemplate.

On our way to the house where we were to dine, we stopped at a few Buddhist temples, and these were so dirty and dilapidated that any de-

## A CHINESE HOME

scription of their lamentable condition would seem exaggerated. It was shocking to see the root of a tree prying off some delicate bit of stone carving from an entablature, and no one in the land with wit or enterprise enough to cut off the offending root and save the structure. We stopped at one house to invite a companion of the day before to dine with us. He was still abed, though it was past ten o'clock, and so, while waiting, I had an opportunity to see a coffin-maker's place, for that was the trade of his family. Whether the occupation of coffin-making is considered respectable in China I do not know, but a friend of mine, whose family name is Coffin, on being presented to our Chinese minister, Mr. Wu, brought out the brusque response that he ought not to have such a name. I examined the stock-in-trade. The coffins were huge affairs, the best ones being made of thick planks. In these chests the body is closely packed with powdered charcoal and may be kept in the house for weeks before final interment.

In passing some carpenters at work I noticed that many of the tools were identical in form to

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

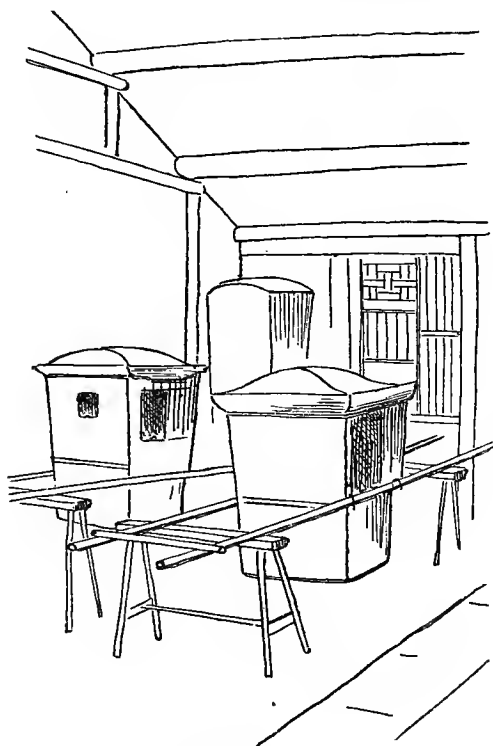
those used by the Japanese; the wood-lathe was used in the same way; the blacksmith's bellows, in the form of a large square box with a square piston working back and forth, was the same. The blacksmith, however, stood at his work and the anvil was raised from the ground. In Japan, the blacksmith sits on the ground and may be seen pulling the bellows with one foot, while the other foot is bent under him, the anvil being on a level with the ground, the helper, however, standing at his work.

China, I soon realized, was a land of tables, chairs, and bedsteads, and men stand at their work. Their legs are long and well formed, and the Manchus, as a class, are physically well built. It is a common impression with many that the short and often bent legs of the Japanese are due to their custom of sitting for many hours at their work with their legs bent under them. If it could be proved that the shortness of their legs was due to this universal custom of sitting,—which I do not believe,—here would be a good example of the transmission of an acquired trait.

As we approached the place where we were to dine I was told, on inquiry, that the house repre-

## A CHINESE HOME

sented a dwelling of the better class. I asked my host if there were any streets or regions in



*Sedan chairs, Shanghai*

the city specially noted for their finer houses, and he said, "No; you will find the house of a

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

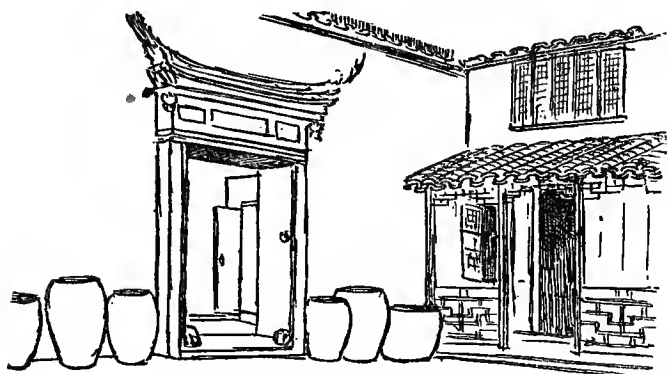
rich man adjacent to the hovel of the poor." In other words, there is no West End or Fifth Avenue, so to speak. This condition was precisely what I found in the cities of Japan.

The entrance to the house was not unlike the one we visited the day before. We first entered an open court surrounded by a high brick wall, which, in turn, opened into an inner court, on our way passing a large room in which were a few palanquins, or chairs, as the foreigners call them, a carriage-house in fact. In entering the inner court-yard we could look into the general reception-room directly opposite the main entrance. On the sides of this court-yard were rooms which were designed as studies or libraries. A tiled roof, supported by upright posts, projected from the eaves, and had there been a floor beneath, a veranda would have been provided for these various rooms. The court-yard was paved with square stones, and was fairly clean. The main entrance to the court-yard had an elaborate entablature, too intricate for me to sketch in the limited time at my disposal. At night all the doors are closed and barred, and this feature, with the high surrounding walls of brick, presented a



## A CHINESE HOME

marked contrast to the unprotected and open character of the Japanese house. On either side of the court-yard entrance were huge pottery jars for the purpose of holding water. From the



*Court-yard: private house, Shanghai*

court-yard we entered the library, and here the family immediately gathered about me, all except a daughter, aged seventeen, who was as much a prisoner as any felon. Later I was shown through the house, and having seen several rooms on the ground-floor, I asked particularly to see the girl's bed-chamber, which was in the second story. The appearance of my own daughter's chamber was recalled, with its pictures and souvenirs on the

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

wall, and the dainty trifles which brought up so many pleasant memories of parties, picnics, and journeys abroad. My host regretfully told me that it was impossible to grant this reasonable request; if I were allowed even a glimpse of his sister's chamber it might be reported by the servants and her chance of marriage might be imperilled. He further told me that even the lower classes were particular in these matters. Even the most intimate friend of the family would not be allowed to go upstairs.

Until this experience I never fully realized the condition of women of the more favored classes in China, though their unhappy lot has been repeatedly described in works on the subject. At the outset the girl's feet are compressed in a cruel fashion, so that a dull pain is endured for a year or two, and in some instances mortification of the parts takes place and the child dies; with no recourse to books, as she is unable to read or write; at the age of twelve or thirteen immured in the house like a prisoner, with the privilege, however, of an occasional visit to some intimate female friend of the family or a near relative, and this visit made in a closed palanquin; at marriageable

## A CHINESE HOME

age compelled to unite with a man she has never seen and knows nothing about, and consequently with no choice in the matter, — all of which you say is barbarous, and so do I. This, however, has been the custom for centuries, and a custom in China is a thousand times more unmodifiable than with us.

Bearing in mind this custom of rigid exclusion of the women from every walk of life for ages, let us try faintly to imagine how to them must appear an aggressive female missionary boldly walking the streets in open daylight in a garb which seems highly disreputable, not to say indecent, to the Chinese, and endeavoring, in very deficient lingo, to induce the people to come to her compound and listen to teachings as alien to Chinese beliefs, crowded as they are with superstitions, as are the teachings of Ingersoll to the strictest Presbyterian doctrine. I could not help picturing what the effect on our people would be with the conditions reversed, and if a strange and powerful people by armed force should impose upon us a treaty in which had been surreptitiously inserted a clause whereby their missionaries might own property and preach their

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

dogmas throughout our country. Furthermore, for just comparison, the female proselytes of this cult should be seen in our streets with painted cheeks, dyed hair, and garments extremely short at either extremity, and riding savagely down the street on a bicycle. Whatever horrid lie might be told about such people would certainly be believed by our masses, just as the shocking lies told about our missionaries are fully believed in China. It can be stated, without a shadow of doubt, that our female missionaries present quite as shocking a sight to the Chinese as would be to us the apparition I have just described. Now we all know and admire the heroism which prompts our women to part from family and friends and enter into the arduous work of "converting the heathen." In their work of introducing a new religion, the propriety of which many question, they teach them at least the laws of hygiene, proper medical practice, the virtue of telling the truth, of being prompt, and set before them the living example of self-sacrifice and devotion for the good of others, and yet these Chinese savages have brutally undone all these workers have accomplished, not only by murder-

## A CHINESE HOME

ing the missionaries, but by slaughtering the native converts by thousands. It is a pitiful tragedy, and yet, judging from the outbreaks within a year in New York, Ohio, and Louisiana, just such tragedies would be possible in our blessed land, if the conditions were reversed.

One of the reasons why the Catholic Church attains greater success than the Protestants in China is that its missionaries are men, its preachers are men, the Jesuit dresses in Chinese garb, he lives among them and becomes one of them; he is careful not to interfere with their superstitions only so far as these interfere with his own, and is especially careful not to inveigh against the foot-crushing mutilation. His incense-burning, bead-counting, and picturesque ritual does not widely differ from the Buddhist. Kaempfer, when he went to Japan, as surgeon to the Dutch in Nagasaki, on seeing Buddhistic worship for the first time, insisted that it was the devil simulating Christ. "*Diablo simulante Christum.*" Whatever the cause, the results attained by the Catholic missionaries far outstrip those of their Protestant—I was about to say brethren; but there is no brotherhood between

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

these two great branches of Christianity. Not only are the intelligent Chinese perplexed at the variety of creeds presented by the Protestants, but they cannot in the least understand why the French should insist upon forcing the Jesuits into China, having at one time kicked them out of their own country.

With this digression let us return to our Chinese family. This, my first critical visit to a Chinese home, was made on a cold and rainy day in February; there was no fire in the house, and no visible means of providing warmth; the apartments were dark, damp, and chilly, the floor was wet and cold, and I began to stamp my feet to get warm, upon which a servant brought me

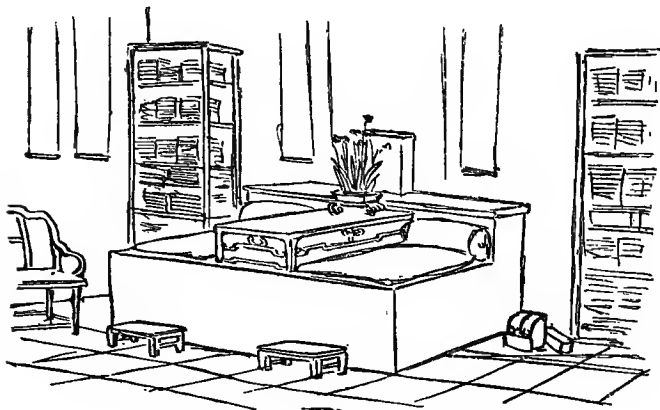


*Foot-warmer*

a bronze foot-warmer. Despite this I was compelled to wear my thick winter ulster during my stay. It was, indeed, a unique opportunity to be in a gentleman's house the entire day and see the full round of domestic economies, — cooking, washing, etc., — going on without disturbance save what my presence excited. The library room was very formal and stiff in appearance; the place for reading or study consisted of a raised floor which pro-

## A CHINESE HOME

jected like a square block from the middle of one side of the room to a distance of from seven to eight feet. A higher portion next to the wall formed a shelf a foot or more in width; resting on the projecting portion was a long, low, narrow



*Library, private house, Shanghai*

table running out at right angles from the wall, leaving a space three feet wide on either side; this space permitted a reader to recline at full length, or to sit on the edge of the platform resting his feet on a low stool at the end. Book-shelves were against the wall on either side of the platform, and on the wall were hung long, narrow

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

kakemono, on which were inscribed precepts from Confucius or some other revered sage.

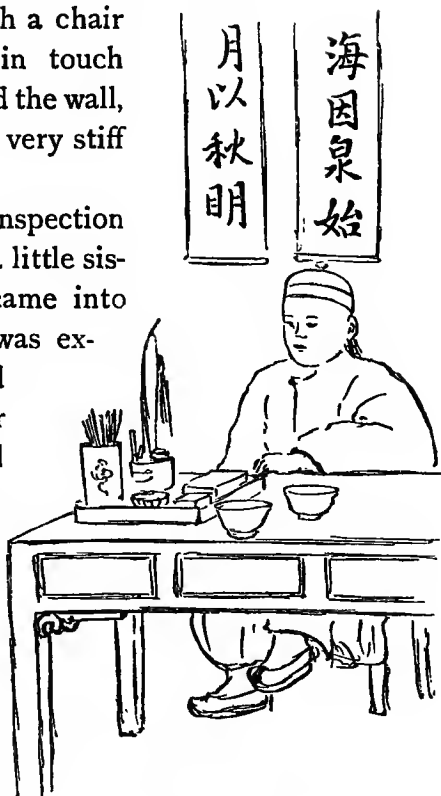
The receptacles for books consisted of simple shelves equal distances apart and not adjustable. The Chinese books, like those of Japan, have thin and elastic covers of paper. The books themselves are usually thin, and rest on the shelves flatwise, piled one upon another. In a work of several volumes a folding case of thick material usually covered with cloth is provided, and this is held together by ivory pins and loops. A number of volumes constituting a set are not numbered as with us, volume I, II, III, etc., but are indicated by Chinese characters which mean, above, below, in case of two volumes; or, for three volumes, above, middle, below, and when there are more, other conventional characters are used. The accompanying sketch will best illustrate the arrangement above described: At the side of the main entrance of this room was a writing-table upon which was a tray containing a brush-holder, ink-stone, a Chinese water-pipe, and other conveniences, and here one of the young men sat while I made a hasty sketch of him. On each side of the room, against the wall, was a



## A CHINESE HOME

square table, with a chair on either side in touch with the table and the wall, and this looked very stiff and formal.

During my inspection of these details a little sister of my host came into the room; she was exceedingly shy and held close to her brother. I tried to induce her to come to me, but though she smiled at my attempts in a frightened way, I could get no farther in my advances; whereupon I



*Writing-table, etc.*

proceeded to make a sketch of her, she, meanwhile, looking very dubious and clinging to her brother all the time. The band over the front

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

of her head was a thick affair of black silk richly embroidered in pearls mounted in gilt; the stuff from this, hanging over her forehead and looking like a bang, was composed of black silk thread. The hair behind was wound up in two compact pugs which were secured in some way on each side of the head; her ears were rather large and the outer margin had two perforations, and at the time held two simple gilt rings. She was very pretty, ten years old, and the daughter of a Chinese gentleman, and yet when I asked her brother to induce her to give me an autograph on my sketch he told me, in the frankest way, that she could not write, and that girls were not taught to read or write. Here was another startling contrast to the Japanese which English writers, of course, recognize as an evidence of the superiority of the Chinese. I particularly noticed the little compressed feet of the girl, and while sketching her an aunt passed through the room with the gait that reminded me of a goat, or, one walking on very short stilts. They do not limp, but simply stump along.

Every one that I saw in the house was clothed in thickly quilted garments, and my entertainer

## A CHINESE HOME



*My host's little sister*

wore a fur robe besides. It was true I was chilled to the bone in my thick winter ulster,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

and from my short experience it seemed to me that the Chinese city house, though having thick brick walls and closed doors, was as cold as the Japanese house, with a chill which the latter does not possess, and dirt which only an Ainu hut could parallel.



*Sideboard and cupboard*

My host and his friends were dressed in the ordinary costume of the better class of Chinese, and, curious to know the cost of their clothing in order to compare with that of our own, I made bold to ask my host the price of everything he had on at that moment. The asking of similar questions by Li Hung Chang, when in this country, was considered rude, and it is possible that my host thought that the questions I asked him were of that nature; by no act or expression, how-

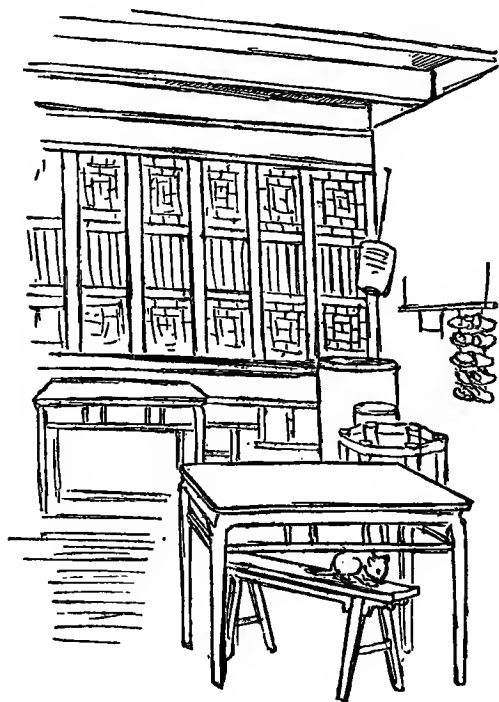
## A CHINESE HOME

ever, did he indicate a shade of annoyance. In the one case, however, the questions asked were probably never recorded nor, so far as we know, prompted by anything save a passing curiosity. In the other case the questions asked a Chinese by foreign writers and students are recorded, and they are asked for the purpose of acquiring information, a feature as remote from Chinese impulses as can possibly be imagined, and this my host, having been in America, probably knew. Showing no surprise then at my curiosity, he gave me *seriatim* a list of the prices which had been paid for the clothing, which, he assured me, represented the daily garments of a young man of his class. Long overcoat lined with squirrel-skin, \$35; short satin gown, \$60; waistcoat, \$4; leggings, \$3; sleeves, \$1; stockings, 20 cents; hat, 50 cents; wadded gown, \$5, and a few other items brought the sum to \$110.70. He further informed me that a finely dressed Chinese might easily have on clothing costing \$1,500.

From the study we entered a large dining-room, possibly twenty feet square. It was dimly lighted, like all the other rooms, gloomy better describes it, and cold and damp besides. In this

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

room were various tables, chairs, a case of large drawers, a cupboard, and a number of well con-

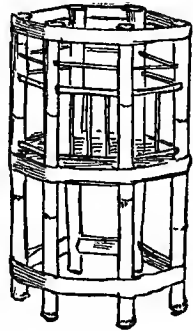


*Dining-room, private house, Shanghai*

structed benches, in form not unlike a "carpenter's horse," only made of a dark, hard wood and finely finished. Among other objects was a

## A CHINESE HOME

baby's chair made of a stout bamboo in the form of an octagonal tube with a partition half way down upon which the baby rested. It was as brown as an old meerschaum pipe from age and grime. Dirt and disorder were in evidence here as elsewhere in the house. The windows had a complicated framework, too intricate to hastily sketch. The formula for the window-frames struck me as the same over a wide region in China. I saw the same at Canton and have seen photographs of buildings in other places in which the same design appears.



*Baby's high chair*

The dining-room opened directly into a yard behind the main house, and across this yard, at a distance of fifteen feet, was the kitchen, a narrow tiled roof extending across the yard from the dining-room door to the kitchen door. Under this roof an old woman sat astride a bench washing clothes in a large shallow tub, which also rested on the bench. The windows of the kitchen had close, net-like wooden frames covered with

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

paper, as in the Japanese *shoji*, but all the little squares were broken through, and there was no evidence that any attempt had been made to re-



*Old servant washing clothes*

pair them, and this neglect in a fine house, too. Again, the contrast with similar conditions in Japan, where if by accident a hole is made in the *shoji*, a bit of paper is cut out in the shape of a cherry or plum blossom and the hole is patched



## A CHINESE HOME

with this tasteful device. Even in the poorer houses in Japan this dainty way of mending rents is often seen. Nowhere in the house did I see the evidence of any attempt having been made



*Backyard of house, Shanghai*

to repair or to prevent matters from going to rack and ruin.

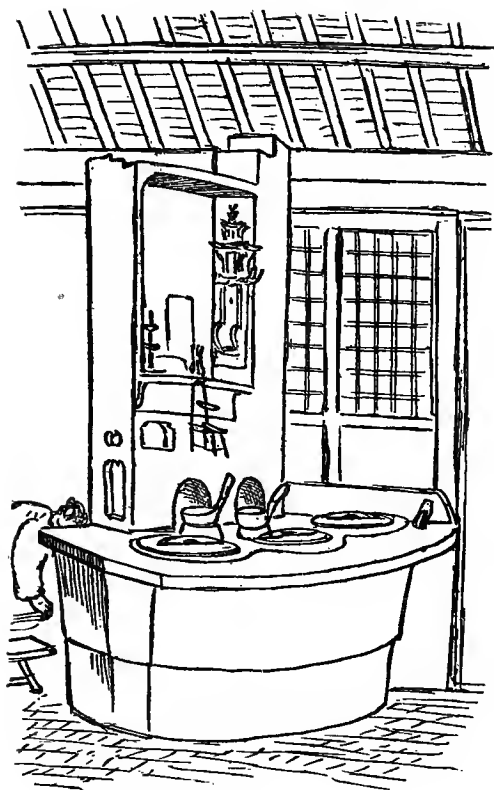
While the window-frames in the kitchen and out-buildings consisted of a close frame-work covered with paper, in the house proper many of the windows were made of vertical slats of bamboo, three inches apart, to which were tied the thin, translucent shells of a species known as *Placuna*.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

These shells are flat, circular, and are trimmed into a rude square and perforated at the edges, so that they may be tied to the bamboo frames. The shell admits only a dim light, and represents the window-glass of China. The use of this material by the Chinese is a good illustration of their conservatism. Window-glass can be cheaply purchased in the foreign concession, yet the usual contempt that the Chinese holds for anything foreign confines him rigidly to this archaic device.

The kitchen was dark, gloomy, and dirty. It was anything but appetizing to see so much dirt and to remember that here was to be prepared the dinner I was invited to eat. The stove was a curious affair. It was made of brick and plaster, and occupied considerable space in the room. Three large iron pots in line were permanently built into the structure, and two smaller pots were built near the chimney. Many of the Shanghai kitchens had chimneys, — a feature rarely seen in the Japanese kitchen. The opening of the stove was behind, and here the wood was piled for the fire. In the chimney above the stove was a shelf-like recess on which was a

## A CHINESE HOME



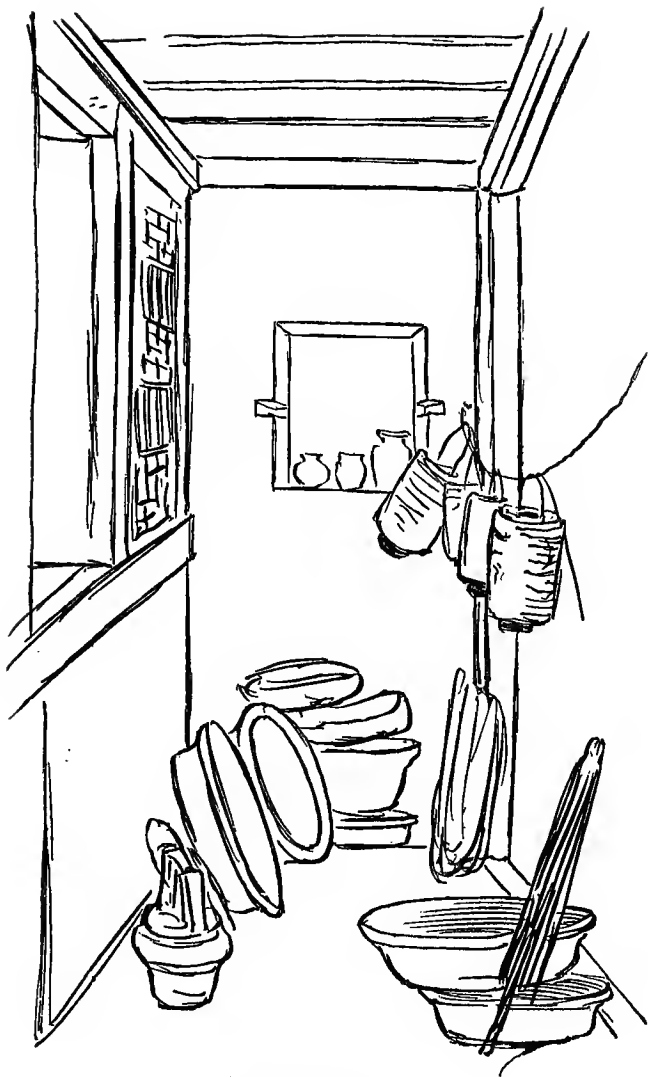
*Kitchen range, Shanghai*

candlestick, and on the side of this recess was suspended the kitchen deity, as well as conveniences for burning incense. The floor of the kitchen

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

was paved with small bricks, and these were grimy with wet dirt. There was no scraper nor mat at the door, and the inmates did not remove their shoes for indoor slippers. So far as I could see, the mud and filth of the street were tracked into every part of the house. The rooms were all high studded, much higher than our rooms at home, but the walls and ceilings were discolored with dirt and grime. Back of the kitchen was a long, narrow, closet-like room, in which were a number of lanterns hanging from a rope, a few shallow tubs leaning against the wall, and at the farther end a niche in the wall holding some small jars. Even in this shed-like place, facing the dirtiest of yards, the window-frames were of intricate patterns. In the sketch of the kitchen, what appears to be a table is in reality a chopping-block supported on four legs. In Oriental kitchens a large chopping-block or plank is always seen, and the sound of the rhythmical blows as the cook, with a knife-like chopper in each hand, beats a tattoo is a characteristic of Chinese as well as of Japanese houses.

In this kitchen, as in other kitchens I saw, clutter and dirt had the upper hand. Baskets,



*Back porch of a Chinese house*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

pots, and dishes littered the table as well as the little table beneath. There were no chairs in the room, but long narrow benches such as have been already described. The floor was also littered, and confusion and damp dirt pervaded the place. Indeed, if I pause for a sentence, the appalling character of the dirt, not ordinary clean dirt, but what appeared to be pathogenic dirt, intrudes itself, and I have not done the matter justice.

I must admit, for fear of doing the Chinese an injustice, that the contrast was the more pronounced having just come from Japan, where the shoes are always removed before entering the house, the floors and mats are repeatedly swept, and the woodwork of the rooms and the floor of the veranda are often wiped with a damp cloth.

In one room we passed there had just been brought in four large straw baskets fresh from the maker. These were as big as large pumpkins, and had a light framework of wicker above, evidently made after some definite formula. The baskets seemed too frail to bear the usual treatment accorded these archaic yet beautiful devices. On inquiry, I was told that on the anniversary of

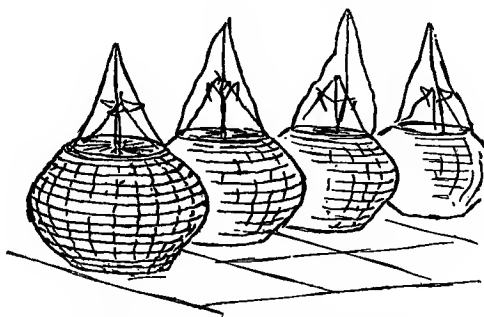


*Kitchen*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

the death of some ancestor one of these baskets, filled with gilt paper representing money and bought by the peck at a neighboring shop, is burned at the grave.

One notices at the doorway of shops, at the gateway of a city, and at other places, little piles



*Baskets with paper to be burned at grave*

of ashes on the ground, an evidence that joss-paper, as the foreigner calls it, has been burned as a propitiatory offering, or to ward off evil influences. One feels an extreme contempt for a people guilty of such superstitious and ridiculous practices until he recalls the various superstitions and credulities which characterize his own race. Only a few years ago, in Boston, that centre of intellectual culture, thousands of so-called "lucky"



## A CHINESE HOME

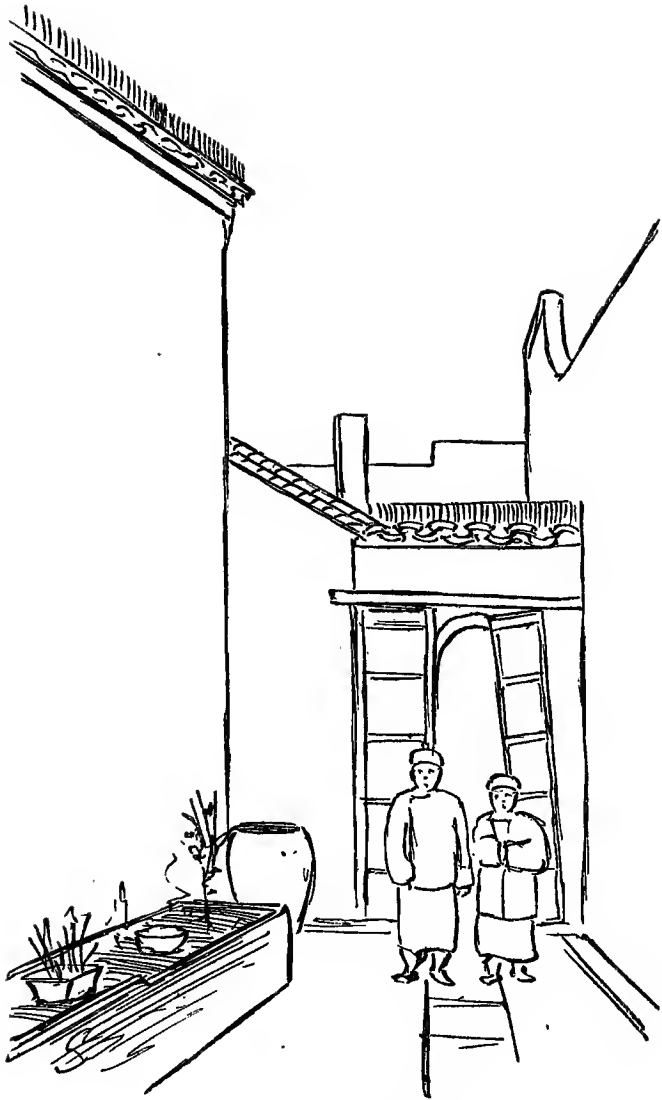
boxes were sold. These were said to have come from India, and to be endowed with some peculiar property whereby the possessor would secure good luck, and many testimonial letters were published showing their marvellous potency. The city authorities finally stopped the sale of them as fraudulent, and then it was discovered that they had all been manufactured in Lynn, a neighboring town, and the only property with which they were endowed was the sweat of two overworked wood-turners. Thus much for credulity. Indeed, if we but stop to enumerate the number of superstitions believed in by our own people the list would almost parallel that of the Chinese, who are supersaturated with them. As a proof of this we have only to recall the appearance of an otherwise rational American backing out of his front door in order to see the moon over his right shoulder, or the sight of a man stepping into the mud rather than walk under a ladder, or a hungry man missing a good dinner to avoid making thirteen at the table. An equal absurdity is to see an apparently sensible man draw from his pocket a handful of change with which is a well worn rabbit's foot.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

These and many other superstitions will readily suggest themselves to every one. As a matter of fact, we grow up with our superstitions and our methods of lying and are no longer impressed by them. We visit a new country, and the novelty of the superstition or lie arrests our attention, and we moralize about it.

At one side of the court-yard was a high, narrow opening having two doors, one off its pivots. This led into a narrow yard surrounded by high walls. The ground of this yard was paved with stone, and against one of the walls was a brick pen, four feet wide, fifteen feet long, and three feet high, very much like a cellar coal-bin. This was filled with earth and represented the flower-garden of the estate, doubtless an attractive feature in the summer, but now presenting only a few dry stalks and dead leaves. It certainly looked dreary enough.

Two little children from the neighborhood had kept close by me during my rambles, and by pantomime expressed a wish to be sketched. Afterwards one of these little fellows made certain motions to my host, at the same time pointing to his companion's head. I inquired why he



*Garden and passage way*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

was gesticulating in this way, and was told that he was trying to tell us not to go near the boy, as he had parasites in his hair, and he was warning us as quietly as he could, so as not to offend his friend. In this act there was certainly betrayed some sense of cleanliness, as well as consideration for his friend's feelings,—a trait for which the Chinese have been given little credit.

While in the house I was somewhat surprised to have an opportunity to sketch a slave. Those who are familiar with the literature of China know, of course, that servants are bought and sold; yet to see a veritable specimen of humanity that had been bought like a piece of merchandise was, to me, a novel experience. My host brought the girl into the room to be sketched, and informed me that she had been purchased in Canton some years before. The price paid was sixty dollars in our money, but with the instructions she had received in household duties (which certainly did not include sweeping and cleaning) she was worth at least two hundred dollars. In thus holding the girl as a slave, the master conditions that she shall be married off when of a marriageable age.

## A CHINESE HOME



*Female slave servant*

How meekly this poor creature stood when I sketched her; patient, apparently uncomplaining, literally knowing nothing about her antecedents,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

doomed to work and slave as long as life lasted, whether single or married. With the degradation of women in China, it is possible that her lot might be considered far happier than that of her mistress, in that she had her two good feet to stand upon, and could see the activities of the street without impropriety. It was, indeed, a hard lot. The old African slave, with his dances and songs, freedom in the open air, and 'possum hunting on a moonlight night, might be considered in a state of bliss and wildest freedom compared to the lot of a female slave in China.

### III

## A CHINESE DINNER





### III

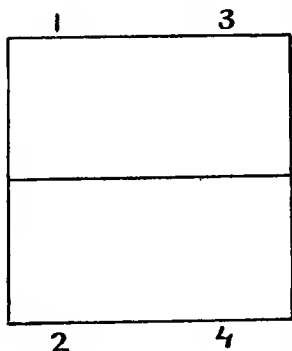
#### A CHINESE DINNER

**A**FTER ransacking the house for an hour or two, dinner was announced. The table, for some reason, probably on account of the clutter in the dining-room, was placed in the study. It was of dark polished wood, four feet square, the legs square and slender, with the curious open-work between them so characteristic of Chinese furniture. A seam ran through the top of the table where the two boards joined. In seating guests, etiquette requires that the seam should run at right angles with a line drawn between the host and guest.

We were four in number, and the first guest of honor sits directly opposite the host, the next in honor sits at the left of the host, while the third guest sits directly opposite the second guest, and, of course, to the right of the first guest. Women are excluded from the table, as in Japan. The

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

tables are not placed together, but, if there are more guests, additional square tables are provided, which are placed in different parts of



the room; probably definite places are assigned to them, though about this matter I failed to inquire.

The dinner that was provided for me was evidently not a common every-day dinner, but, as with most of us when we have company — a few additional dishes were served.

I should have much preferred dropping in and taking pot-luck.

Wine and oranges were first offered us; the wine, a *sake*, much finer than I had drunk in Japan. The dishes of food were placed on the table in a radially symmetrical manner. No plates or individual dishes were provided until the rice was served, and then each one had a bowl to himself. Each one helped himself to whatever he liked from the assembled dishes. In one dish was a fish with rice gravy, and each

## A CHINESE DINNER

person picked in turn from it. This, of course, is done with the chop-stick, and my ready use of these "nimble lads," as they are called in China, led my host to remark upon it. And I may say in passing that the chop-sticks are certainly the most useful, the most economical, and the most efficient device for their purposes ever invented by man. Following is a list of the articles of food which we had for our dinner, with my brief comments recorded at the time :

Water-chestnut. Crispy and interesting.

Peanuts, fried in oil, served cold. Delicious. (Will fry peanuts when I get home.)

Watermelon seed. Indifferent, and one wonders what the Chinese find of interest in the diminutive morsel within.

An uncooked goose's egg, four years old. Ghastly.

Salted chicken, cold. First rate.

Salted pork. Fairly good.

Clover-leaf and bamboo. Not unlike spinach. Delicious.

Fish with rich gravy. Delicious.

Shark's fin, a gelatinous mass. Delicious.

Fermented bean-curd soup. Very poor.

I was surprised to find that nearly all the articles of food were not only good but appetiz-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ing so long as the recollection of the kitchen did not obtrude. In justice it should be said that not one speck of dirt or foreign substance showed itself in the various foods; no suspicious fragments of an insect, no gravel in the clover-leaf, as one often finds at home in his spinach and lettuce. With the usual reversal of things Chinese, the kitchen is dirty, while the food is clean. Judging from this first experience, Chinese food resembles in taste our own far more than does that of the Japanese. One has to acquire by practice the enjoyment of many kinds of Japanese food. Of course the foreigner takes at once to the Japanese raw fish, with its sauce, which must have been specially created for the fish, the rich custard-like *chawan-mushi*, the fried eels, and many other delectable preparations. The Chinese food appeals to one at once. The fish, with its rich gravy, and the salted meats were not unlike ours; the salted chicken was remarkably good, and I would suggest to our farmers that they prepare a barrel of corned chicken just as they prepare a barrel of corned beef. Chicken and turkey might easily be preserved in this way for transportation.

## A CHINESE DINNER

While gnawing my chicken I wondered what I should do with the bone. It would not do to lay it down on the polished table-top, I certainly was not expected to return it to the communal platter, and there was no individual plate, so in despair I was constrained to ask my host, and he told me to throw it on the floor, which I did. Indeed the floor, judging from its appearance, fulfilled the function of slop-pail, cuspidor, and garbage-barrel combined. When one considers the mud tracked in from the street on a wet day, and such streets as those of a Chinese city, with no conveniences for removing the dirt before entering, it will be readily understood that the débris from a dinner would add little to the matter already accumulated. In some ways one was reminded of the savage Ainu hut, where the inmates eat out of the same dish and fling the bones on the earth floor.

The conservatism of the Chinese must have begun back at the dawn of their emerging from quadrupedal ancestors; for this reason one finds projected into their present life many archaic survivals. Their fiendish cruelty; their innumerable childish superstitions; their propitiation of

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

unseen evil spirits and influences; their filthy manners, and, above all, their absolute indifference to ascertain the causes of phenomena must be regarded as survivals from their prehistoric savage ancestors.

The goose's egg was a revelation to me, and the dainty way in which my Chinese friends ate crumbs of this awful substance probably has its parallel in the way we nibble our stronger cheeses. The raw egg is allowed to go through every stage of fermentation, putrefaction, and whatever other unimaginable processes of putridity it might venture upon. These changes take place while surrounded by a thick coating of clay. The egg may be one year old or ten years old; conceive for a moment a rotten egg even four years old! It resembled a green variegated soap, and had a greasy crumble to the touch, and tasted as one might imagine the condensation from the inside of a charnel-house might taste. It was simply ghastly, and one taste of it lasted me a week. My Chinese companions were nibbling crumbs of it, not mouthfuls, as I observed. On my expressing a certain amount of horror at the idea of eating a rotten egg four years old,

## A CHINESE DINNER

they quite justly reminded me of our Roquefort, Brie, and Limburger cheeses, equally ghastly to them. They were evidently familiar with the processes of making our stronger cheeses, for my host recalled the process of cheese-making by saying, "Which is worse; a fairly rotten egg three years old which has never been removed from its first shelly enclosure, or a liquid substance derived from a modified sebaceous gland of a cow, to which is added the active principles of the gastric juice of a young calf?" He further went on by reminding me that in the case of the stronger cheeses this stuff is put in a skin bag and buried in lime, so that it will not go entirely to the dogs; in the case of Limburger, it is actually permitted to putrefy. Some of the cheeses are kept a year or more, and we do not hesitate to eat them when green with mould, as in Roquefort, and even fly-blown, with wriggling maggots within, and yet smack our lips over them! I had nothing to say, and had to confess that a bad egg even ten years old was a fresh dainty tid-bit in contrast to the substance he had so graphically depicted. It should be understood that the Chinese detest milk and all its products, and cheese

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

is particularly repulsive; the odor even, despite the innumerable stenches that constantly assail them, is especially obnoxious.

Returning to our menu, I would suggest that our people learn to cultivate the delicious clover-leaf, if clover-leaf it was, ginger-shoots, and other delightful forms for our salads. Ginger might be successfully cultivated under glass, and the young shoot is most delicious.



IV

A BACKYARD



## IV

### A BACKYARD

**A**FTER dinner we left the house by a back-door and passed through a large backyard. In this yard was a huge mound, at least twenty-five feet high, composed of brick, plaster, broken roofing tiles, and ashes. I thought at first it corresponded to the *Ko-yama* (little mountain) of the Japanese garden, with its narrow spiral pathway, quaint shrubs, rustic bowers, and the like. I was told that, years before, an extensive conflagration had occurred in the neighborhood, consuming many of the houses, and the débris of this calamity had been gathered here as the only available place for its disposal. By what right this huge pile of rubbish had been placed in this particular backyard I did not learn, but reflected that there was no other place that it could be carried to. It could not be thrown into the shallow river, as it would impede navigation; all the land surrounding the city was

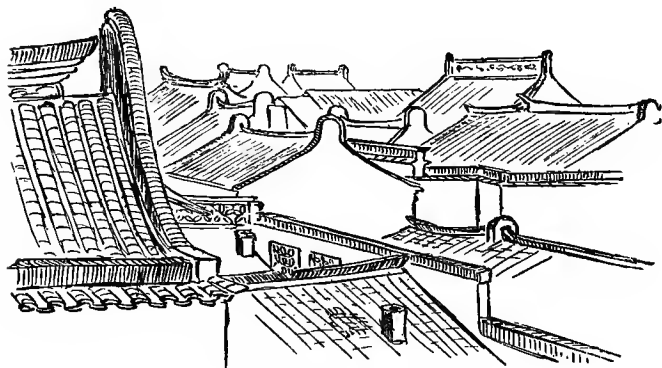
## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

under cultivation or occupied with the innumerable sepulchral mounds; it had to be piled somewhere, and as this was the only open lot in the vicinity, it was piled here. On the top of this mound two depauperated trees were struggling for existence, and from this vantage-point in a raw, cutting wind I secured a sketch of the house-tops in the immediate vicinity. How the Japanese would have utilized for beauty a mound of this size, and yet here was this pile of rubbish without even steps, and the two trees on top were evidently fortuitous.

The house-tops varied but little in their type of architecture, and reached a nearly uniform height, with small, low chimneys. The walls were of brick and plastered outside, forming a marked contrast to the thin wooden and inflammable buildings of the Japanese. The ridges of the roof were ornamented with flat tiles placed on end, as books are arranged in a rack, and apparently without being fastened; at the ends of the ridge iron pieces were turned up, against which the tiles rested. The firmly turned gables and heavily tiled roofs gave an appearance of solidity and durability. The terra-cotta roofing tile is

## A BACKYARD

everywhere seen. Not only the roofs of houses are covered with these tiles, but they form ridges on ornamental gateways and garden walls. The Chinese tile is the earliest form known in history, and the earliest type of roofing tile ever exhumed



*A study of roofs, Shanghai*

still forms the roof-covering of the greater mass of mankind to-day. In China and Japan the tiles bordering the eaves of the roof are variously ornamented, and in some cases glazed; while in India they often appear of the most primitive character. I have dealt with this subject, however, more fully elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The American Architect and Building News, Vol. XXXVI.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

A short walk from the house brought us to the jail, always described in books as an inferno. It was certainly a painful place. Here were collected a number of malefactors, dirty and dejected-looking vagabonds. There were two thieves in low wooden cages. The worst-looking device was an arrangement in the shape of a high wooden cage, in which the criminal is imprisoned for a certain time. His head is secured through a hole in a plank which stands vertical and forms part of the cage. Friends are allowed to feed him, otherwise he would be permitted to die of starvation. He cannot lie down, and if he drops to sleep has to hang by his head. This probably gives him but slight annoyance, however, as the Chinese absence of feeling is such that they are said to endure the most frightful surgical operations with little manifestation of suffering. One authority, in describing their peculiar insensibility in these matters, avers that a Chinese can sleep soundly while reclining across the top of a wheelbarrow with head bent back at right angles, mouth gaping and full of flies. However this may be, the annoyances that set most of us frantic do not seem to disturb a Chinese in the least.

## A BACKYARD

The punishments are frightful in their cruelty. My companion admitted that the wealthy and influential often escaped the severer penalties imposed by the law. He further told me that in case of matricide or parricide every member of the murderer's family, including all the generations from great-grandfather to nursing infant, are put to death. Even the first cousins are sacrificed, and a school-teacher is impartially included, as he was influential in the formation of the boy's character. On expressing incredulity at such monstrous acts of injustice, my informant insisted that this comprehensive punishment had been inflicted within ten years.

Coming out of the city gate that night I saw an emaciated beggar lying prone in the mud and slush at the side of the crowded thoroughfare. He was trembling, and apparently in the last stages of dissolution; an empty basket was beside him for the pittance he hoped to attract by his pitiable condition. In that hurrying throng no one seemed to notice him. Such heartlessness was difficult to understand, until one learned that if any one rescued such a case he would be held responsible for the man's debts and, possi-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

bly, for his crimes. It was certainly a shocking sight.

Such dirty booths as we passed, with such dirty food for sale! Among the common classes, at least, there seems to be no attempt to make the food look tasty and attractive as in similar places in Japan. All of the articles not only looked unsavory, but some of them appeared positively disgusting.



V

A CHINESE THEATRE



## V

### A CHINESE THEATRE AND PRISON

**I**N the evening we all went to the theatre in the Chinese quarter, outside the city walls. The Chinese theatre in San Francisco gives one a fair idea of the native one in Shanghai; but for rich colors and gorgeous effects of dress and banners, bizarre painting of the face, and ear-piercing sounds, I have seen and heard nothing to compare. I did not tear myself away till midnight, and could have remained much longer.

The audience hall was large and spacious, though barny. The floor was covered with small square tables, at which parties of four sat in hard-bottomed chairs. These tables were scattered in an irregular way all over the room. There must have been at least a thousand men on the floor, with not a woman to be seen among them, and I was apparently the only foreigner present. The

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

galleries and floor were packed with an orderly set of people, all talking and apparently paying but little attention to the play. In the gallery, near the stage, were large boxes in front of which were green baize curtains to be lowered in case they were occupied by women of the higher class; now they were crowded with women of the common class, every one with her hair properly arranged in the peculiar and picturesque style of Chinese hair-dressing. Certain portions of the play were shockingly indecent and excited much laughter, yet no one looked to the galleries to see if the women minded it, nor did I see the slightest evidences of disapproval. After we had taken our seats, a boy came along bearing a large tray containing dishes of watermelon seed, *li-chi*, fried peanuts, oranges, and a weak rice soup. Another boy soon followed, bearing in his hand a pile of square pieces of thick quilted cloth; these were wet and steaming hot. Each one took a piece and wiped his face and hands. These had already been in use before being offered to us. I naturally declined to use a cloth that had already mopped the dirty mouths and faces of a number of Chinese, and was probably looked upon as ex-

## A CHINESE THEATRE AND PRISON

tremely fastidious. It is in matters of this nature that the uncleanness of the Chinese must be insisted upon. My companion told me that the Chinese always used hot water, and not cool, for their faces, and that in the city there were stands where the poorer people could buy hot water for a trifling sum for the making of tea and for other purposes. Still another boy came to our table, bearing a tobacco-pipe and a light, and this circulated among the audience. It was often smoked, yet I saw no one wipe the mouth-piece before using. No wonder infectious diseases have full sway among these people. Those who had their own pipes had a slow-match consisting of a roll of paper as big as a candle, and this could be blown into a flame when occasion required.

It was curious to observe the absence of concentrated attention that one sees in our theatres, and, indeed, as a play will occupy some days and even weeks in its presentation, it would be beyond human endurance to sustain the strain of attention. My companions apparently understood but little of what was uttered by the actors, and it seemed impossible that the audience did, judging from their lack of attention. It was explained to

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

me that there were long monologues and recitatives of no special interest, the familiarity of the audience consisting in a knowledge of the general plot, or story, and not with the words uttered.

When it is realized that there are a number of languages and hundreds of dialects in China, it will be understood that a troupe foreign to the immediate locality might be speaking in a tongue unintelligible to its auditors. If the text, in Chinese characters, could be flashed upon a screen as the play proceeded, then from one end of the Empire to the other, a fair idea of what was being said could be gathered by all the scholars, at least.

In the acting there were the same absurd conventionalities that one sees on the Japanese stage. For example, the hero is supposed to ride away on horseback; to represent this equestrian feat he waves his hand in the air, flings his legs over an imaginary horse, and then prances — but not off the stage. As in Japan, the woman's part is taken by a man. To get the appearance of the compressed foot of the woman, the whole foot is rigidly bound with bands, and a small shoe is provided, which fits the toes, the actor literally

## A CHINESE THEATRE AND PRISON

moving about on the tips of the toes, at the same time squeaking in a high falsetto voice. The impersonation is wonderful.

The orchestra, consisting of a number of virile performers, was provided with a variety of musical instruments, the counterparts of which may be seen in our ethnological museums. To hear their music, however, one must visit a Chinese theatre. Of all distracting and nerve-harrowing noises, a Chinese orchestra certainly exceeds all. We have heard the marriage, war, and death songs of the Zulu, Kaffir, Hottentot, and other Africans, and there was something pleasing in their quaint and subdued intonations. We recall with delight the weird music of drums and other instruments of a party of travelling Arabs. But Chinese music! — words fail in describing it. Picture one performer vigorously fiddling away at an instrument that might be a cross between a violin and a banjo, and, like all crosses, inheriting the bad points of each, — fiddling, without a single rest or pause, a continuous series of high squeaks. The noise might be roughly imitated with the high strings of a violin compressed within an inch of the bridge, and filed away at

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

by a boy. Another individual played an instrument something like a banjo, with the same vigor, but the notes could not be heard. A third one had three curious tight-skinned and high-pitched drums, the sound given from them much resembling blows struck upon the bottom of a wooden keg. Now and then the loose clanging sound of a gong would be heard. Lastly, the trumpet, a short kind of clarionet, with brass opening, and possibly all brass. This was the hair-raising, goose-fleshing, and cranial-splitting instrument — whew! As we recall the lusty vigor of that blower, the enthusiasm of his motions, and the undisguised delight he evidently took in this brain-throbbing torture, it seemed that the last trump must be a gigantic something after the same kind; for certainly none could rest easy in their graves with such sound waves agitating their skeletons. The hall being virtually naked of all sound-breaking projections, the uproar was all the more frightful. There was a flute of some kind, and its sounds were by no means unpleasant. In justice to the performers, it is proper to add that there was a certain symmetry in their music, in the fact that it was all equally execrable. Syn-



## A CHINESE THEATRE AND PRISON

chronous movements were detected, and a repetition of similar strains, so that a Chinese ear might recognize separate airs; we detected only a discordant and horrid noise.

Many of the performers were magnificently dressed with garments worked in gold and richly colored silks, and the most surprising head ornaments. The long-sleeved gowns were used to screen their faces in talking; fans were used in the same way; and one could pick up many interesting facts in watching these strange people.

After this came some extraordinary gymnastic performances in which men, clumsily though gorgeously dressed in leg-entangling drapery and elaborate head-dress, with four flags projecting from their backs like wings, would leap into the air and turn somersaults. Others would leap from a high point, striking another in the chest, and fall with a tremendous thud to the floor, striking on their backs, and jump up again — not only alive, but not a feather or ruffle disarranged. And all the while this marvellous gymnastic performance was going on, the orchestra seemed to have broken loose, if such a thing were possible, and was pouring forth a series of sounds that

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

makes one's brain reel to recall. It is enough to state that one muscular performer had two immense gongs which he clashed together with all his might and main. These crashing blows were repeated again and again, until one came to the conclusion that the tympanic membranes of the Chinese must be of the nature of hog's skin, such as they stretch upon their drum frames.

I saw a disgusting sight from the banks of a narrow canal near Shanghai. In the canal were low open barges, like canal-boats, which had been poled or towed down from the Interior. These were the receptacles for the sewage of the city, and carriers were coming like a string of ants, bearing buckets of this material, which they had collected in the city from house to house. These were emptied with a splash into the barges, in every case some of the stuff spattering into the river. The canal itself was green and yellow with filth, and yet women were along the banks washing rice, and some were dipping up water in buckets and carrying it away, possibly to water their gardens, and one could not imagine a more generous fertilizer.

## A CHINESE THEATRE AND PRISON

Thus far I had seen the interior of three houses of the more favored classes ; they were all essentially alike in the high walls, court-yards, rooms, and dirt, and I was told that one house would answer as a type for the thousands in Shanghai.



VI

A PEASANT'S HOUSE



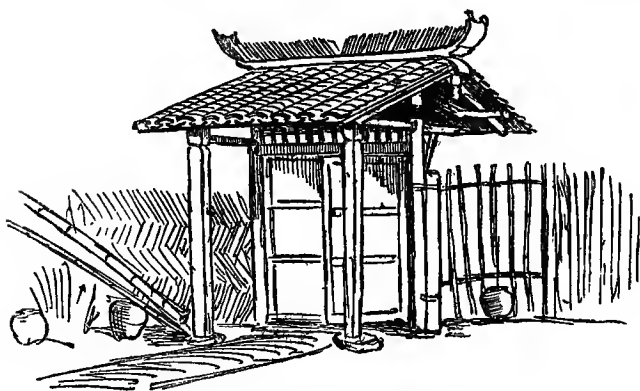
## VI

### A PEASANT'S HOUSE

**T**HE next day I had an opportunity of walking into the country with Mr. Drew, who was to visit an old nurse of the family. This woman owned a little house on the side of a muddy creek. Whether the house had belonged to a richer person before coming into her possession, I did not learn; it was interesting, however, to observe the conspicuous gateway to the yard. The prominent gateway is a distinguishing feature in the Orient. The evidence of taste and time bestowed on the main entrance is not only seen in Japan, but in Anam, the Malay Peninsula, and Java, though in Java there are so many Chinese that this feature may be due to Chinese influence. In our country and in Europe the estates of the wealthy are marked by prominent and conspicuous gateways, while among the masses this is rarely made a prominent feature.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

The fence on one side was a ramshackle affair of split bamboo in braided patterns; on the other side simply bamboo poles. The framework of the gateway showed some little carving; the superstructure was heavily tiled and the ridge had tiles placed vertically, as in the roof ridges



*Gateway: Farmhouse near Shanghai*

already described. The gateway and fence were in the usual dilapidated condition. The house, or houses, formed three sides of a quadrangle, the fence and gateway bordering the road making the fourth side, the space thus enclosed making a rather spacious yard, which was wet and muddy. There were no evidences of an attempt at a





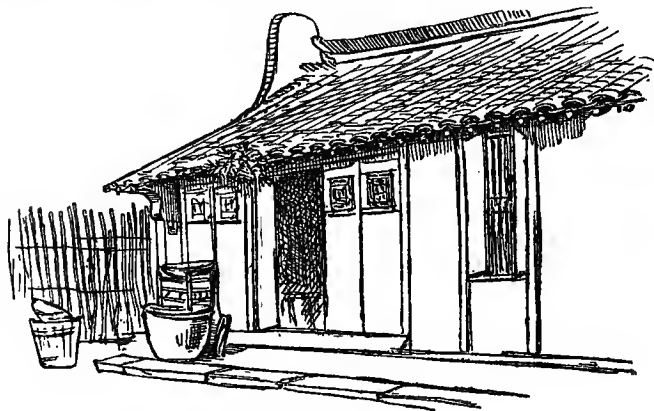
*Farmhouse near Shanghai*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

garden, and the yard and surroundings presented a most forlorn appearance. The houses were one story in height, and the roofs were all heavily tiled. The walls of the main house which faced the gateway were wattled and plastered, though this material was broken away in spots, exposing the bamboo wattle beneath. The main entrance to the house was recessed, and on the right and left sides of this recess were the doorways, and on each side of the entrance was a window closed by two outside wooden shutters. Wooden hooks were suspended by cords from the overhanging eaves, and on these hooks hung the peculiar Chinese shoe to dry, an indication that the felted sole of the Chinese shoe absorbs water. A mass of straw and twigs was piled up on the side of the house, this material representing the wood-pile. Charcoal is also used, as in Japan, but not by the poorer people. For fuel, dead leaves, bits of straw, and twigs are garnered along the roadside. The cast-iron kettles are made with the thinnest possible bottoms, in order to utilize every particle of heat emitted from the burning of this light material. In our great country, with its long streaks of Oriental blindness and stupidity in not enact-

## A PEASANT'S HOUSE

ing and enforcing proper laws for the preservation of the forests, it will not be many generations before able-bodied Americans will be seen picking up dead leaves and dried pods along the road in order to cook their dinners.

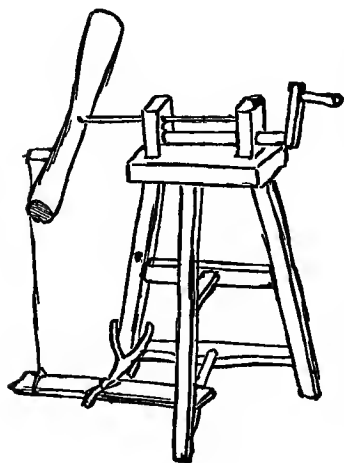


*Farmhouse near Shanghai*

The accompanying figure presents a view of another building of this group running at right angles to the main house, its end abutting on the road. In this portion was a bedchamber and also a large room for the making of homespun cloth. The little wooden frame-work resting on top of a big water-jar, and in its turn supporting a shallow pan which had been dropped there, represents a

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

sort of cage in which the baby is confined when sitting on the ground. The walls of the building were of brick and plaster. An abutment is seen at the end of the house next the fence, and in this abutment was a little square niche with an ornament of flowers made in stucco. Over the doorway was a bundle of green shrubbery, evidently placed there to



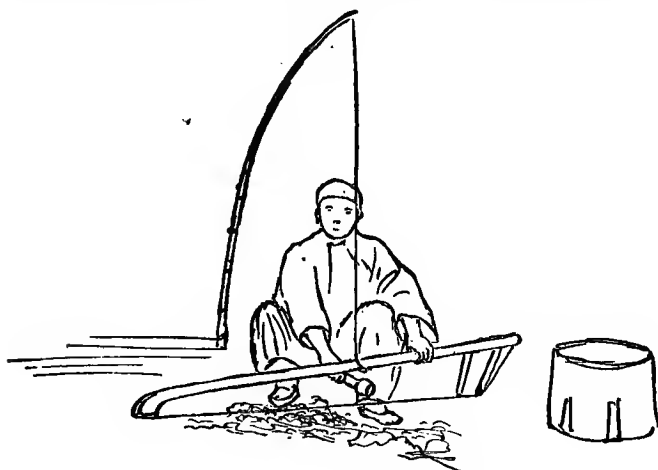
*Cotton-gin*

commemorate some event. The window, like the others, was closed with heavy wooden shutters. Besides the large window were a few small openings with close frame-work covered with paper. Within was a large barn-like room with dirt floor and roof rafters show-

ing, in which were all the devices for converting raw cotton into cloth,—a primitive cotton factory. These simple and home-made devices were so interesting that I sketched them all. The

## A PEASANT'S HOUSE

cotton-gin consisted of two wooden rollers moved by a treadle which was connected with what answered to a balance-wheel in the shape of a heavy stick of wood larger at the two ends ; the slender roller was of iron ; all the other portions were of

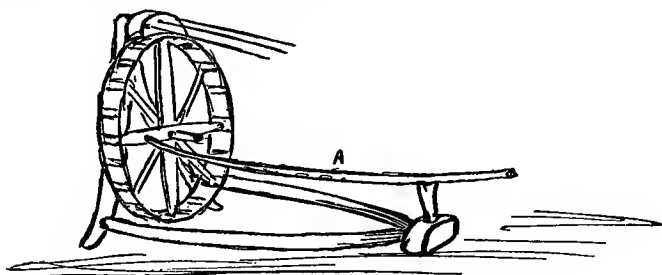


*Device for cleaning cotton*

wood held together by wooden pins. The little hand-crank at one end was simply to start the machine. The device for making the raw cotton fluffy, and shaking out the dirt seemed to be a very efficient machine ; it consisted of a heavy wooden piece, seven feet in length, abruptly

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

curved at one end; a stout cord was strung to this as in a bow, a bridge at one end enabling the cord to be made tense. In appearance it reminded one of a colossal bass-viol bow. This was held from the ground by a cord which was



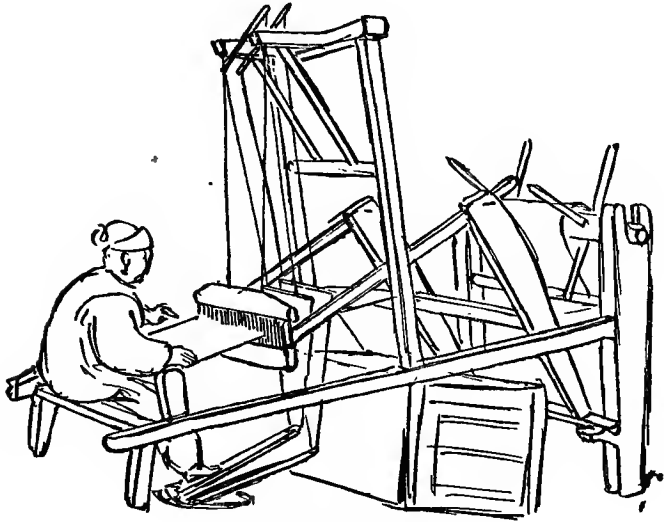
*A rude wooden spinning-wheel used by the country people*

fastened to the end of a long bamboo, rising upright from the ground, but now bent from the weight of the bow. To operate this, the person sits on the ground; before him is a pile of dirty and compacted cotton; in the left hand he holds the bow; in the right a thick knobbed stick; with this he violently twangs the cord, which vibrates rapidly in the pile of cotton in a most effective manner.<sup>1</sup> The cotton by this process is quickly

<sup>1</sup> My friend Mr. Edward Atkinson, an expert in all matters relating to cotton, as well as a thousand other subjects, in response to my inquiry

## A PEASANT'S HOUSE

reduced to a fluffy condition, and is now ready for the spinning-wheel, which was a primitive and rickety affair. The wheel was turned by the



*Loom for making cotton cloth*

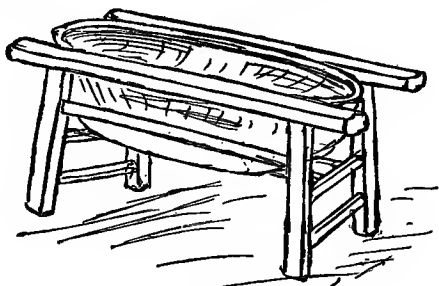
foot resting on the bar, the woman sitting on the bench at her work. Three spindles came

about this primitive device, kindly writes to me as follows: "Referring to the use of the Bow in China, not only for clearing the cotton fibre from leaf or motes, but also for separating the fibre from the seed, it may be interesting to state that this practice of detaching the fibres of cotton from the seed is probably as old as the use of cotton itself.

"When the first shipment of cotton of seven bales was made from Georgia to Liverpool, it was thought in the Liverpool Custom House

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

out just above the wheel, and three threads were spun at a time. The loom was equally rude, and the old woman, who was weaving when we entered the room, was working with the same tireless energy that seems to characterize these people



*Cradle*

in all their vocations. The old nurse was very polite and kind, and seemed greatly interested in showing and explaining everything.

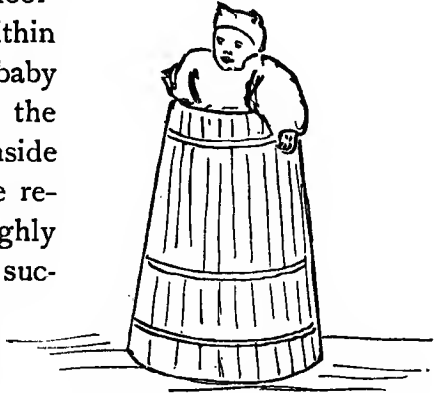
that so large a quantity could not have been made in Georgia or in the United States. It was named 'bowed Georgia cotton,' the saw-gin or engine not having been invented and the lot having been prepared with a bow. The term 'bowed Georgia,' became a trade-term, even after the saw-gin had taken the place of the old methods, and may be occasionally used or heard to this day.

"This process of separating by the snapping of a bow-string can be applied to the types of cotton that are slightly attached to the seed. The East India cotton is very closely attached to the seed, and is removed by a roller-gin called the 'churka,' the bow-string not having sufficient force and the saw breaking the staple."



## A PEASANT'S HOUSE

The figure on page 104 shows the baby's cradle, consisting of a thick basket held in a stout framework of wood. The mother removed the sleeping baby and placed it in what looked like an old-fashioned milk-churn, but was in reality a baby's high-chair. A floor-like partition within prevented the baby from going to the bottom. The inside of this churn-like receptacle was highly polished by the successive generation of babies who had wriggled in it.

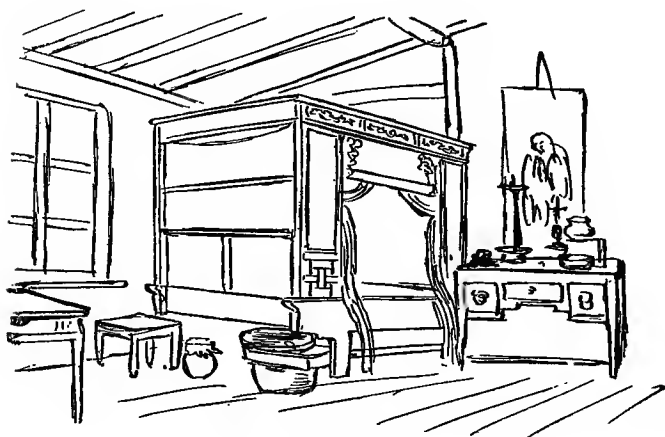


*Baby chair*

During all my sketching in the house I was surrounded by fifteen or twenty men, women, and children who had drifted in from the neighborhood. The crowd seemed to be quite as inquisitive as a Japanese crowd under similar circumstances, but far less gentle and polite. In this house I was permitted to see a woman's bedroom. The room was small and dark, and it

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

was difficult to get enough light, even with the door open, to make out clearly the various objects and details of the place. The appointments were not unlike those in our own chambers: a



*Woman's bedroom*

dressing-table littered with the usual clutter of a disorderly bedroom; a bureau holding three drawers rested against the wall. On the top was a tall wooden candlestick, a few small jars, and other objects. On the wall behind was a hanging scroll with the picture of some god or household deity done in black and white. Chairs, low stools,

## A PEASANT'S HOUSE

and a table, with no semblance of order, were about the room. In one corner was a large finely carved bedstead, with heavy frame above to support the bed-curtains. The rafters of the room were exposed above. At one side was an attic or space under the roof, the floor of which formed the ceiling of an adjoining room. I noticed, as with us, the same accumulation of attic rubbish, too useful to throw away and too worthless to keep,—stuff upon which more distracting brain energy has been wasted by man than in the writing of big books.

. . . . .

The few temples I saw in Shanghai left the impression of neglect. They were certainly dirty, as were the priests connected with them. It was hard to trace the same cult after seeing the Japanese Buddhist temples. In one temple which I visited there was a room, more like a shop and suggesting a dime museum, opening directly off the street, in which were various effigies arranged in order on a series of step-like shelves. A few people were engaged in prayer. In the midst of these devotions a woman came in and scolded in a high, strident voice. No one interfered or ap-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

parently noticed her actions. My escort thought she was insane.

. . . . .

As I left the city at twilight, after my brief experience within its walls, and glanced back through the gateway to take a last look at its narrow streets and low buildings, and recalled the mass of filth, misery, and small-pox, I noticed a Jesuit priest with heavy black beard and unmistakable French face, but dressed in full Chinese costume. He was entering the city, in which he lived surrounded by all this squalor and misery. I could not help admiring his noble devotion, and could readily understand why the Catholics make such progress in China in comparison with that made by the missionaries of other sects, who usually live in the foreign settlement, associated with many of the comforts of their more sinful brethren. I further realized that a convert of this priest might compare notes with a Catholic convert in Thibet or Cochin China, and there would be no divergence of doctrines in the minutest particular.

. . . . .

VII  
CANTON



## VII

### CANTON

**A**FTER a hasty good-bye to my American friends, who had been so kind to me, I started for Hong Kong in an English steamer, having a quiet, uneventful voyage, good substantial food, exceedingly pleasant travelling companions, and whist most of the time.

In sailing up the passage to Hong Kong an expanse of rocks loomed up which seen on the Norway or Maine coasts would have been at once recognized as showing typical glacial erosion.

From the damp, cold, and shivering weather of Shanghai we had been transported in three days to a tropical climate. In the parks and gardens were palms, big ferns, and a most luxuriant vegetation.

The city is policed by Sepoys, and on the streets one meets many races: heavily turbaned Hindoos; Parsees, with their caste-marks on their foreheads, which, curiously enough, seemed per-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

fectly natural; Malay and Indo-Chinese, and red-coated British soldiers. The greater mass of the people were, of course, Chinese, who, alone of all the various peoples, showed the same interest and persistent activity that I had observed in Shanghai. There were slight differences in the dressing of the women's hair, but the clothing appeared the same, and the narrow streets of the Chinese quarter, though cleaner on account of English domination, sent out the same unsavory odors.

A day only in Hong Kong, and late in the afternoon I left the city on a steamer bound for Canton, a regular white, side-wheel steamer of the American type, with a Salem commander, Captain Lefavour. It seemed odd to find a stack of cutlasses and loaded guns in the main cabin, and in each stateroom a cutlass in a rack near the berth. On inquiry as to the necessity of these war-like preparations, I was told that only a few years before the steamer "Swift" on the same route had been captured by pirates, and all the foreigners but one, on board, murdered. As pirates still abound on the river, these precautions are wisely considered necessary.



## CANTON

It began raining at dark, and continued to rain throughout the night. The darkness was impenetrable, and it seemed incredible that any one could navigate a boat in a tortuous river under such conditions. We reached Canton the next morning at nine o'clock, the boat having anchored during the night on account of the storm.

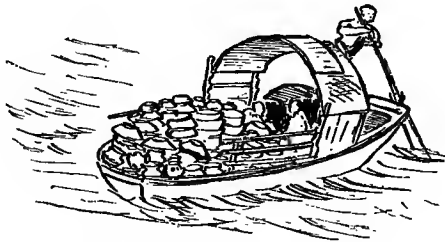
A wonderful sight presents itself as you near the wharf. The river in places, and over large areas, fairly swarms with covered boats, literally thousands of them of all sizes and conditions, and these boats represent the dwelling-places of families, who for generations have been born, have lived, and have died without knowing any other living-place. All the trades and manufactures of a great city are represented in this agglomeration: fruit-boats, pedlers' boats of all kinds, and the famous flower-boats, or, more properly, gaudy boats, a rendezvous for harlots.

The accompanying figure is a sketch of a pottery pedler, who, with his stock-in-trade of pots and jars, pans and flowerpots, piled to the gunwales, plied his trade up and down the river, and in and out of this maze of floating craft.

One could not help wondering at the distract-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

tions of a census-taker were he assigned to enumerate the river population. The conveniences of such a residence were immediately apparent when it was realized that one could easily sweep overboard all the dirt and dispose of all the garbage; there would be no sewage nuisance, unless the river might be considered a sewer, and in



*Pottery pedler on Canton River*

either case the Chinese are apparently immuned physically,—absolutely so mentally,—and filth and stench give them no annoyance; no lawns to mow or sprinkle; no wells running dry or water to shut off, and when a child disappears, no harrowing suspense for days, but quick realization of the calamity, if calamity it appears to these cultivated savages; no upstairs nor downstairs; no cellar to clear up, nor attic to put in order.

## CANTON

The boat is not only a residence, but a passenger-conveyance, a baggage-wagon, a pedler's cart, a blacksmith-shop, a bakery; indeed, it lends itself to every demand of life, active or idle. A glimpse into some of the boats showed them to be fairly clean, and prettily fitted up in the way of pictures, bright-colored curtains, and tinsel. The larger boats had lashed to their sides blocks of wood in which were square holes for the convenience of boatmen who have to ward them off or push along their own boat. As to the model of these boats, for they all seemed alike save in size; a watermelon cut lengthwise would give a very good idea of their shape. They were apparently cranky, but evidently dry.

As soon as the steamer made fast to the wharf, a guide, who, to my surprise, turned out to be a woman, was secured for me. Off we started in a drizzly rain, through a maze of narrow streets, to find the foreign quarter, where resided a few gentlemen to whom I had letters. A charming feature of the East is the unbounding hospitality of foreign residents; even the English become more like human beings when separated from their snug little island. Tempting as the prof-

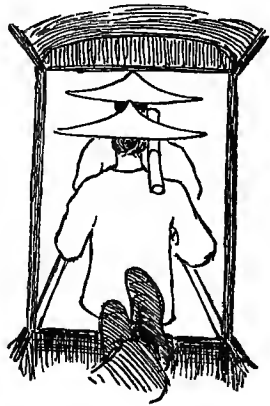
## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ferred hospitality was, I had to decline, as my time was exceedingly limited and it was necessary that I should get as near the Chinese as possible. This was fully understood, and I was directed to a hotel on the other side of Pearl River which was in the midst of Chinadom, and was kept by a Portuguese who had married a Chinese. I was also given a letter to Mr. Sampson, the Director of the Government school. Off we started again, my female guide appearing quite as masculine in her jacket as the other sex did with their smooth faces and hair-braids down their backs. A boat was engaged, literally the man's house, and he and his wife rowed us across the river. Opportunity was then offered for a further examination of this forest of boats that lined the shore in a deep layer for miles. It was interesting to peer into some of them and discover little domestic scenes: cooking, tinkering, children playing, and, indeed, just those activities that one might see in a busy street. We finally reached the hotel, which was certainly all I could desire in the way of proximity to the Chinese. With the exception of the Portuguese landlord, I was apparently the only foreigner in the region and the only guest at the

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hotel. I say hotel, for thus it was labelled on the outside, but its appearance reminded one of a small tenement house. It was with regret that I gave up the comforts and quiet of European civilization in the Orient, with its tennis-courts, flower-gardens, whist, and the delights with which the English and Americans surround themselves. I use the word European, for the avoidable noises we produce in America are only equalled, not exceeded, by the Chinese with their fire-crackers, ear piercing trumpets and gongs.

The landlord arranged for two palanquins, or chairs, as they are called, one being for my guide. Each of these was borne on the shoulders of three men, two in front and one behind. My first quest was for the Government school and Mr. Sampson, and away we went at a fairly rapid pace, through such sights, sounds, and odors as one might expect to find on some other



*So-called chair in which one travels*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

planet, and a very addled one at that. The city of Canton is much cleaner than Shanghai. The narrow streets are paved with stone or big square bricks, and the buildings, mostly of one story, are all of brick, with thick, solid-looking walls. Narrow shops, or cells, consist in front of a wide doorway and a wide window through which one, without entering, may haggle for the goods displayed. The shops are rather dark within, as the streets are narrow, and overhead reed mattings, supported by wooden frames, provide a constant shade from the sun's rays, which in the latitude of Canton pour down with tropical fervor. The vertical signs with their gilt characters form a varied fringe on each side of the narrow, irregular streets, which in many cases are hardly wide enough for two chairs to pass. The same activity is seen here, despite the heat, as in Shanghai. The crowded thoroughfares are still more congested by the various artisans carrying on their occupations in the middle of the streets, in fact, taking up both sides. The peripatetic carpenter, with his stock of tools and lumber, over which one has to step; the petty traders and fabricators, crowding the narrow

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lanes in a way that would not be tolerated in our country for a single moment; the hammering, planing, rice-pounding, the loud din of the coppersmith, the musical clink of the blacksmith's hammer, the multitudinous variety of weird street-cries, with the occasional rattling outburst of fire-crackers, all made up a perfect pandemonium. The three senses of sight, hearing, and smell were incessantly assailed by interesting, ear-splitting, and disgusting impacts. It was all intensely absorbing, and I had my eyes everywhere.

We had a long distance to go to reach the Government school, and the crowds through which we forced our way were anything but friendly. If the Chinese of Shanghai appeared rude and indifferent, the Cantonese appeared decidedly hostile; nor could I wonder at this attitude, for at the time of my visit the French were threatening their southern frontier, and Manchu troops were passing through the city on the way to repel the expected invasion. Aside from this, there was not a man who was not more or less familiar with the history of the Opium War and the calamitous horrors which accompanied it,

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when humiliation and death had come upon them in fullest measure from the hand of the hated foreigner.

On reaching the school I presented my letter and was received very kindly by Mr. Sampson, who at once conducted me to the recitation-room, in which were five students. They all rose and said, "Good-morning," like a set of automatons. Mr. Sampson requested them to read in turn from an English history, and this they did fairly well. On my expressing surprise at the smallness of the class, Mr. Sampson told me that one of his greatest difficulties was to impress upon the pupils the necessity of punctuality; some days there would be a dozen or more in the class, and at other times none. Here, in a city of a million of inhabitants, was this one little school to satisfy the demands of the people for a knowledge of foreign studies. I could not help contrasting this with Tōkyō, having the same population, with its great University, every student of which becomes well versed in English before entering; the great Medical College, every student of which has to understand German before entering; the College of Engineering;



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the Foreign Language School, where a knowledge of French, German, Russian, and Chinese is required; the School of Chemical Technology; the Military and Naval College,—all with their foreign professors and instructors, and the modern languages taught in the normal and high schools, and the Nobles' School, as well, and thousands upon thousands of Japanese students punctually attending the classes of these institutions until graduation. What a contrast! And yet many English writers regard this hunger for knowledge with contempt, and esteem the Chinese as superior, basing their judgment on their own leading characteristic as a nation of shopkeepers, which quality has dominated nearly all their foreign wars and their acquisition of foreign territory. Here in China they find their match in the astute Chinese merchant, who is equally honored and respected.

The school consisted of a few private dwellings which had been brought together into a series of connecting rooms by simply knocking a few holes through the thick partition-walls of the various houses allotted for the purpose. A plan of Canton with its houses would resemble a

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gigantic honeycomb, the cells being quadrangular instead of hexagonal. Mr. Sampson kindly permitted me to roam over the premises at will, and I secured a number of sketches. Many of the features were quite unlike those of the Shanghai house, though the reception-hall was planned like the northern one, and the minor details of work and ornament were somewhat similar. I may add in passing that the people are different, their language is different, and a Chinese from Shanghai is not only regarded as a foreigner, but is rather brusquely treated as one. In Shanghai I had acquired a few expressions such as "thank you," "good-morning," "good-bye," etc., which had always been understood when I ventured to use them; here in Canton not a single expression was understood. I was told that the two languages were as different as Spanish and Portuguese or Italian. They all use the same characters in writing, however. These characters are conventional symbols, each one representing a word or an idea, and hence called ideographs. Over this vast Empire, as well as in Korea and Japan, the written language is the same. Throughout the Chinese Empire there

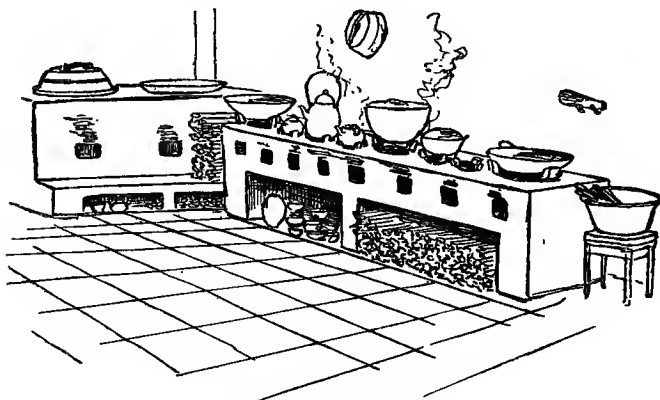
## CANTON

are a number of languages and hundreds of dialects. The characters, to the number of thousands, which have come down from the dim past, have the same meaning. The Chinese must have had, early in their history, the example of phonetic writing on their western borders, but have persisted to the present time in using this archaic and cumbrous device in expressing their thoughts.

My first hunt was for the kitchen, for here is an ethnic feature associated with family life that persists without change for generations. It is this feature that is rarely described or figured in books, and for that reason I made a special effort to secure sketches when opportunity offered. The kitchen range was long and had accommodations for many cooking-pots. Each opening had three spurs, or supports, so that the vessel was held some little distance above the fire, as in the little braziers in Japan. Here, also, I saw in an open place under the range a number of braziers or pottery cooking-devices in which charcoal was used for fuel; in another space wood was piled. The rice-kettles were large and somewhat shallow; the cover had the appearance of a shallow

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

rub inverted. Mr. Sampson informed me that the Chinese often utilized the steam arising from the boiling of rice in cooking other kinds of food. In the rice-boiler range was a round chimney which conveyed away the smoke, but for the



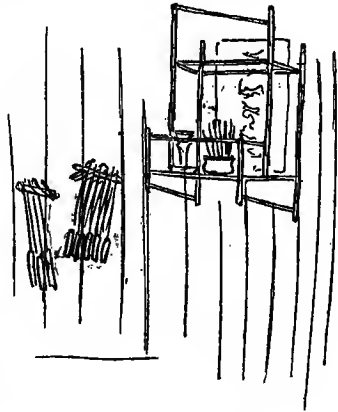
*Kitchen range, Canton*

long range I failed to note a chimney, if there was one. The walls of the kitchen were sufficiently blackened by smoke to indicate that no flue existed. At the end of the long range was a large jar in which were various wooden ladles for convenient use, and above, a huge bamboo brush, or stirrer, was resting on two pegs. The

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materials used in the construction of these ranges were stone, brick, and cement, and appeared strong and durable. Here, however, the differences ceased. The resemblances to the Shanghai kitchen were again seen in the same amount of dirt and disorder; the floor was grimy with dirt, — street dirt tracked in, — broken jars lying about, and everything indicating a shiftlessness past belief.

At the opposite end of the kitchen was a little shelter where sat the cook, who smoked his pipe while waiting for the kettle to boil. It was amazing to see this tumbled-down



*Kitchen shrine, Canton*

shanty provided with the most elaborately designed window-sashes, the details of which I had no time to sketch. The carvings over the door and the various intricacies had all to be omitted in these rapid memorandum outlines. The kitchen shrine was high on the wall near the

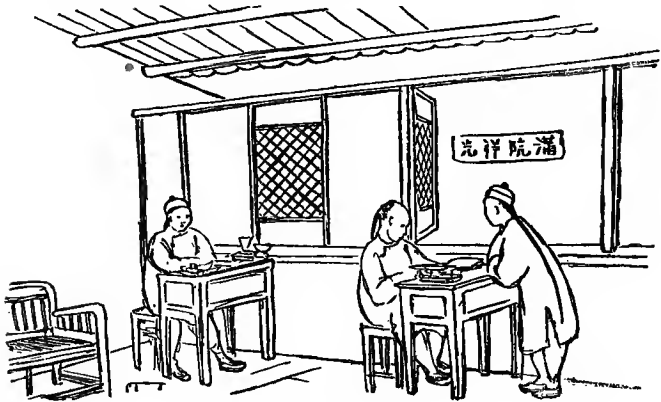
## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

rice-kettle. It was a rough bamboo framework capable of holding a device, in which candles were burning; near by were a number of candles made on long sticks. These were stained or painted red, and at the ends of the sticks cross-pieces of bamboo were tied so that they could be hung on a peg, as shown in the sketch. A number of Chinese gathered about me curious to know what my purpose was in sketching, and Mr. Sampson, who spoke Chinese, asked them what they supposed I was making the sketches for, and they replied that the foreigner was about to build a house, and was getting ideas how best to do it.

From the kitchen other rooms were visited. One room, evidently a study, had a very large window opening into a little garden. On the garden-wall, opposite the window, was a strip of paper on which were written four Chinese characters, which after some trouble were rendered into English as follows: "*May fortunate light illuminate the garden.*" The translation of these inscriptions in China always comes as a surprise to the foreigner. Many of them express the highest emotions, — a love of cleanliness, exalted

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piety, tender compassion, etc.; and then one contemplates the people with their cruelty, their filth, their ignorance, the abject position of women, and it is realized that the inscriptions are words — empty words, conveying no more mean-



*Study-room in school*

ing to them than if they had been written in Coptic. I suppose it may be justly said that the moral teachings of Christ have in the same way lost their potency among Christian nations. Dr. Gustave Schlegel translated an inscription in a Canton gaudy boat, which read, "Among pure breezes we enjoy the moonlight." It may be

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said with truth that the Chinese, in the cities and villages at least, are deprived of this enjoyment. I was shown a few bedrooms, and here, as in Shanghai, the bedsteads were ponderous affairs, having a high frame, with tester above and curtains pendent.

The sanitary arrangements were simply abominable. In the three thousand years and more that the Chinese have been a nation, natural selection has rooted out all those who could not survive these flagrant violations of all sanitary laws, the survivors being evidently immuned against microbes that would kill a European outright. The same curious selection has doubtless taken place in some of our older New England towns, where the native can drink the well-water with impunity, while the stranger is affected at once.

In no other part of the world, unless it be in Russia, can such depths of filthiness be found as in the cities of China. Dr. Arthur H. Smith, in his interesting work entitled *Chinese Characteristics*, says that, "No matter how long one has lived in China, he remains in a condition of mental suspense, unable to decide that most interest-



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ing question, so often raised, Which is the filthiest city in the Empire? . . . The traveller thinks he has found the worst Chinese city when he has inspected Foo-Chow; he is certain of it when he visits Ning-Po, and doubly sure on arriving at Tientsin; yet after all it will not be strange if he heartily recants when he reviews with candor and impartiality the claims of Pekin!"

. . . . .

The curious custom of compressing the feet of women, thus in a way rendering them cripples for life, is always alluded to in books on China. In the Peabody Museum of Salem are a few casts of this peculiar deformation made by the late Dr. G. O. Rogers, formerly of Hong Kong. By the accompanying figure of one of these casts it will be seen that the four smaller toes are made to partially bend under the big toe, and that the heel is also brought forward. This is accomplished by tight bandaging, and usually begins as soon as the child is able to walk. According to Williams (see *The Middle Kingdom*, Vol. II. p. 38), this practice is not confined to the higher classes; on the contrary, all classes of society, even the

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poorest, strive to be in fashion. The Tartars, though becoming Chinese in most matters, have had the good sense to let their women's feet develop normally. As to the origin of this savage custom, Dr. Williams says, "A difference



*Plaster cast of compressed feet*

of opinion exists respecting its origin, some accounts stating that it arose from a desire to pattern the club feet of a popular Empress, others that it gradually came into use from the great admiration and attempt to imitate delicate feet, and others that it was imposed by the men to keep their wives

from gadding; the most probable accounts do not place its origin further back than A. D. 950. . . . The appearance of the deformed member when uncovered is shocking, crushed out of all proportion and beauty, and covered with a wrink-

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led and lifeless skin like that of a washwoman's hands daily immersed in soapsuds."

I was much interested in the archery methods of the Chinese, and an assistant in the school, a Manchu, illustrated their way of releasing an arrow from a bow, and also the manner of stringing a bow. The attitude of the hand in pulling the string differs greatly in different races. The Mongolian draws the string back with his thumb, the forefinger being bent over the end to strengthen the hold, and the arrow being held in the crotch made by the junction of the forefinger and thumb. In this method a ring is worn on the thumb to engage the string and to prevent the thumb from being lacerated. That this method is very ancient is seen in the frequent allusions to the subject in the Chinese classics. In the *Shi King*, or book of ancient Chinese poetry (translation of Legge), the thumb-ring is called a thimble and also a *pan chi*, or finger regulator: "With archer's thimble at his girdle hung," and, again, "Each right thumb wore the metal guard." The Mediterranean nations draw the string with the tips of the first three fingers, holding the arrow between the tips of the first

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

and second fingers. The very lowest savage races pull the string by holding on to the arrow with the thumb and forefinger; a little more advanced savage assumes this attitude supplemented by bringing the second and third finger on the



*Stringing a bow*

string and thus getting a stronger pull. I have dealt with this subject more fully elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

The stringing of the bow is somewhat peculiar. The bow when unstrung turns back upon itself

<sup>1</sup> "Ancient and Modern Methods of Arrow Release." *Bulletin of the Essex Institute, Salem, Mass., Vol. XVII.*

## CANTON

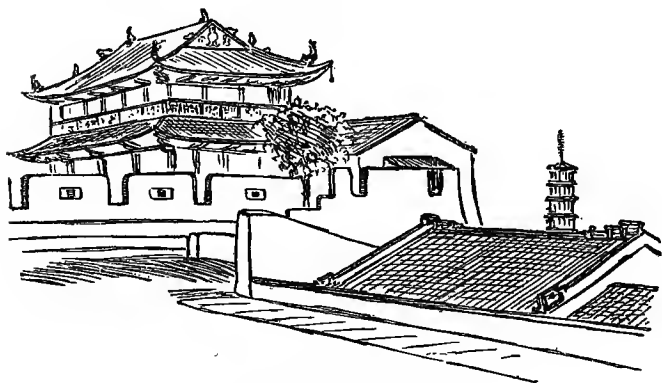
and is so short when in this state that it occupies but little room and may be carried in a convenient case. In stringing the bow the archer places one end upon his left knee, the bow passing under the right leg, then by pulling up the right end of the bow he can slip the loop of the string into the nock; or the bow is bent over the knee as in the attitude of breaking a stick and an associate slips the loop into the nock. Great care is taken of the bow and a box is contrived for it in which charcoal is burned to preserve the bow in a perfectly dry condition.

After spending a few interesting hours at this place, Mr. Sampson accompanied me on a trip to one of the city gates and around the city walls. In the palanquin, or chair, one sits rather high, as the poles supporting it are attached to the chair nearly two-thirds from the top, so that one gets a better view than in riding in the Japanese *kago*, which is entirely below the suspending pole, and one is near the ground.

The encircling wall of Canton is twenty to twenty-five feet in height and of great thickness. It is nearly seven miles in length and consists of an immense mass of masonry resting on a

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

sandstone foundation. The top of the wall is reached by steps and also by gently rising inclines. At intervals are gates over which are large building structures. The gates within have a semicircular wall perforated by another gateway. In the days of bows and spears, which the



*View from city wall, Canton*

Chinese still retain, these grim walls must have rendered a city almost impregnable, but they offer little resistance to foreign artillery and dynamite. A broad roadway is found on top of the wall which is apparently never used except by loiterers like ourselves, and yet this thoroughfare is wider and cleaner than any avenue I found in the

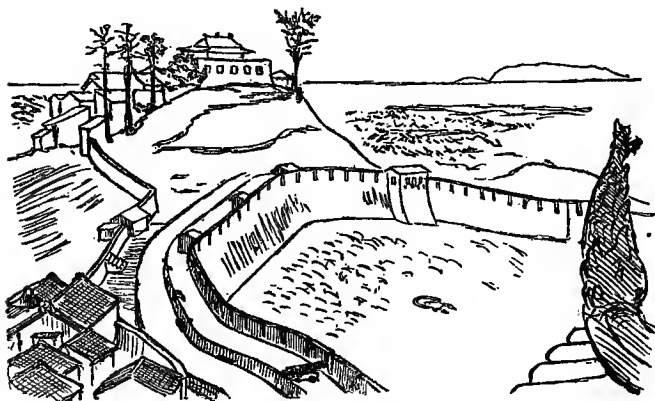
## CANTON

city with its crowded thousands. Such are some of the exasperating perplexities that one encounters in China. In the following sketch of the walls a huge building is shown through which the road passes and below which is one of the city gateways. The building was erected in the fifth century, and is leaning slightly. The crest of the wall is pierced for cannon, and, at intervals, were small iron cannon, rusted and utterly neglected. The obsolete and puerile methods of defence explained at once the easy capture of the city by the English and French in the Opium War.

I rode in my chair for a considerable distance, and then got out and walked. In the crevices of the wall and in a shady nook the last violets of the season were blooming. Our walk led us to a five-storied pagoda built in the thirteenth century. From the top of this structure a fine view of the city was obtained. It was interesting to look over this vast city, where no tall buildings or factory chimney overtopped the uniform low level of the roofs. Here and there were the imposing roofs of Buddhist temples and the many roofed pagodas rising conspicuously. It is a remarkable sight to have a clear view across a

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

city to the country beyond. The absence of coal-smoke accounted for the clarity of the atmosphere. This condition was markedly so in Tōkyō twenty years ago, and presented an agreeable and startling difference from the smoke-



*View from five-storied pagoda, Canton*

begrimed cities of Europe and America. From the pagoda I made a sketch of the wall which we had just traversed. In the distance is seen a cluster of Buddhist buildings, monasteries and the like. Outside the walls, on a sloping hillside, were thousands of little hummocks of earth, each having a tablet of some sort; here and there



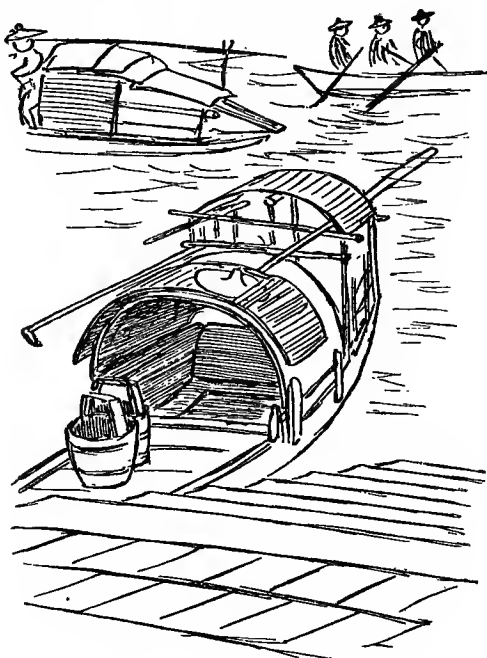
## CANTON

an amphitheatre-like structure of stone marked the burial-place of some wealthy mandarin. I examined the region afterwards from the wall, and could not find a trace of tree, flower, green leaf, or path even. The shocking state of the place, in view of the fact that the Chinese are supposed to worship their ancestors, was in marked contrast to the care and devotion shown by the Japanese, or by our own people, in their burial-places. The ground around the pagoda was covered with a tangled mass of dead leaves and shrubs. Here I found the shells of a large snail, a species which as a boy I had preserved in my cabinet as a rare and valuable object. The ground was strewn with them, and a little boy, who had observed me collecting them, at once gathered a handful and brought them to me, at the same time promptly holding out his hand for pay. A few people were in the enclosure gathering the dead grass and twigs for fuel.

Tired out with the novel and interesting experiences of the day, I reluctantly gave orders to return to the hotel, and again we passed through the same seething mass of people crowding the narrow streets. The night was spent in writing

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

up my notes. My room opened on a platform directly over the banks of the river, and the rear of the hotel came into immediate contact with the



*Boats on river, from hotel steps, Canton*

Chinese houses. The river was almost as active with traffic as the streets. A continual humming sound, with occasional shouts, came over the

## CANTON

water, and from the region behind the hotel the same eternal din of the various activities was going on, though it was past midnight; this din was now and then punctuated by loud explosions of cannon-crackers, or small cannon, in saluting some high official just returning or departing from his house. With this and the banging of drums, and every conceivable form of racket, sleep was wellnigh impossible. The streets of an old New England town on the night preceding the Fourth of July are the nearest approach to it, and are a manifestation of the same heedless barbarism.

The manufacturing activities seem to be as lively at night as in the daytime. I walked out back of the hotel at midnight, going through several streets, not daring to go far, however, lest I should be lost. The streets were certainly not so crowded as in the daytime, though still alive with people. Here a ragged pedler, selling some kind of fruit, with a cry sounding like the note of a Wilson's thrush and the peep of a tree-toad combined. The variety of street calls are in a high falsetto voice and remind one of various animal calls. The shop-doors were closed, but

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

through the crevices glints of light could be seen, and the coppersmiths and carpenters and other artisans were apparently just as active as in the daytime, judging from the various sounds that issued from these places. Every one familiar with the appearance of the Chinese laundries in our country will recall the fact that, no matter how late one may pass them at night, the Chinese are usually found at their occupation. It is said that the Chinese farmer utilizes the moonlight for his work, and one can readily believe it.

VIII

A BUDDHIST TEMPLE AND  
THE SACRED HOGS



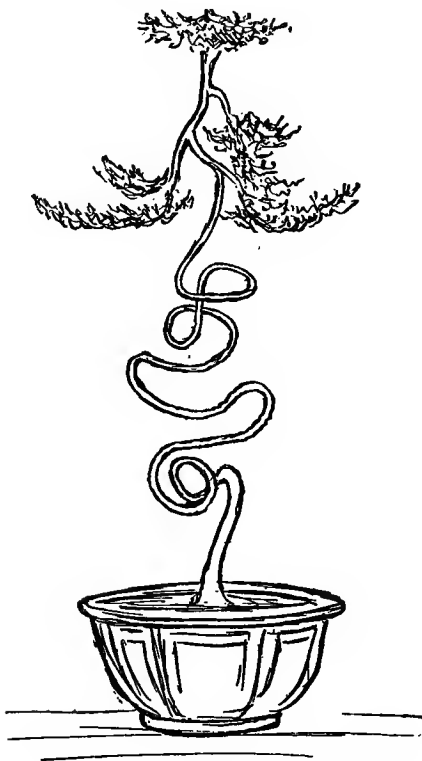
## VIII

### A BUDDHIST TEMPLE AND THE SACRED HOGS

**T**HE next day I visited a Buddhist temple. In general style of architecture, with gateway, huge, carved figures as guards on each side of the entrance, and the various appliances within, the temple followed closely the Japanese type. In the inner court were twenty or more priests chanting at their devotions, with a few curiously inclined Chinese looking on. Such dreary, dirty-looking priests, shoes, stockings and all, fairly dingy with dirt, presenting a striking contrast to the same class in Japan! The enclosure had evidently never been swept; sticks, dead leaves, and noisome pools were everywhere. Back of the temple was a famous flower-garden which was in an equally dilapidated state. There were, however, some interesting evergreens in large flower-pots, which had been artificially

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

trimmed and trained to represent various objects, such as a fan, a kind of fruit, figures, etc. The



*Dwarf tree in Temple Garden, Canton*

figure of a man was quite remarkable in its way, though the feet, hands, and head were made of



## A BUDDHIST TEMPLE

some other material. These curious dwarf trees were in the midst of broken pots, piles of rubbish, and festering puddles of water. During my ram-

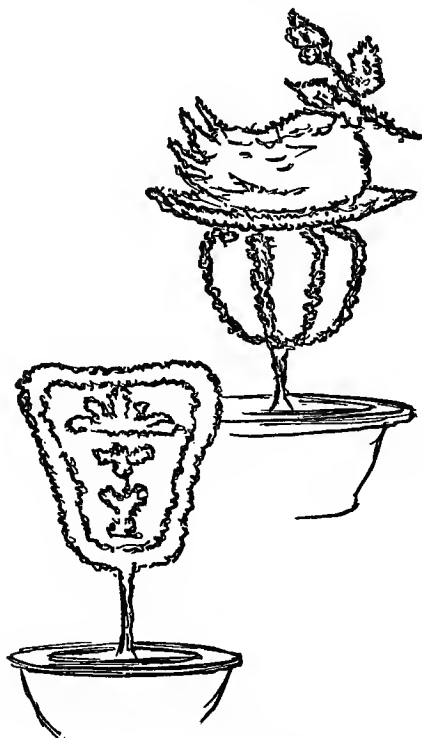


*Dwarf tree in Temple Garden, Canton*

bles about the grounds, I was aware of a new stench commingled with the other vile odors which filled the air, and wondered what could be its origin. In the enclosure back of the temple

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

were a number of great fat, lazy hogs, and my guide told me they were never killed, but allowed



*Dwarf trees in Temple Garden, Canton*

to live and die under the care of the priests of the temple. They were wallowing in their filth,

## A BUDDHIST TEMPLE

swarming with flies, and spreading over the neighborhood a most horrible stench. It struck me at the time that here was an emblematical animal that ought to be emblazoned on the Chinese flag beside the imperial dragon. Justice compels me to confess, however, that the hogs were much dirtier than their patrons, though hardly more useless. How many centuries this practice has been kept up I did not learn, but in *Cleveland's Voyages* the author records that in 1799 he visited this temple and found several of the priesthood "whose dress bore some resemblance to that of Franciscan friars, and whose business was principally to take care of the sacred hogs. These were about twenty in number, and were in an enclosure. They are never killed, but are left to die in the regular course of time; and several of them were so unwieldy that it was not without great difficulty they could move themselves a few feet one way or the other."

With this briefest glimpse of a few temples in two great cities of the Empire I was inclined to believe that Buddhism in China was moribund. I saw no evidence of devotion in the people, no earnest, prayerful attitude as one sees in Japan.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

The cult apparently excites no religious enthusiasm. What must be expected of a people who, losing their religion, have no science to fall back upon! At night I noticed a Chinese come out of his house, yawning and evidently bored, and burn a little joss-paper before the shrine at his doorway. The burning of paper, incense, and lighted tapers seems to be done in the most perfunctory manner. It reminded one of the way in which some people rattle off an unintelligible blessing at home. In all these brief glimpses I could not help contrasting the vigorous and healthy condition of Buddhism in Japan; the fresh-looking temples, though hundreds of years old, so carefully kept and repaired, the surroundings so cleanly swept and in perfect condition, with the utter destitution and decay of the same monuments in China. Here was wrack and ruin everywhere, gnarled roots, by their growth, prying off delicate sculpture from the walls or overturning coping-stones, and no one arresting the destruction.

IX

HOWQUA'S MANSION



## IX

### HOWQUA'S MANSION

**T**HE few dwellings I had already seen in China were those belonging to the more favored classes, with the exception of the farmhouse near Shanghai. For purposes of comparison it was important to get access to the house of some person of great wealth, and this opportunity was offered me in Canton. By good fortune, I got a letter to the family of Howqua, — a family of unbounded wealth. The great Howqua was considered one of the richest merchants in Canton. He was known as a person of sterling character and benevolence. In accounts of the Opium War his name often occurs as mediator. The old Boston and Salem merchants knew him as a man of absolute rectitude, whose word was as good as his bond. He died some years ago, leaving a great fortune to his sons. The house was well known to my guide, who piloted me through the narrow streets to the place.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

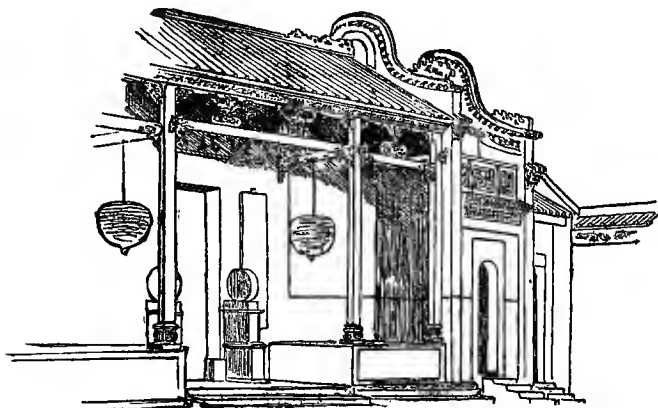
Facing the street was a huge blank wall in which was a single gateway, through which we passed and entered a great square court-yard paved with stone and surrounded on three sides by walls of considerable height; one of which was the wall through which we had passed; the fourth side, which ran at right angles to the street, appeared to be the front of some fine public building, but was in reality a gateway which led to another court and building containing the ancestral tablets upon which were inscribed the names of Howqua's ancestors. On the anniversaries of the deaths of these various ancestors the head of the family passes through this imposing gateway in the ceremony accompanying the burning of incense and offering prayer. It is only on these occasions that the gateway is used.

The accompanying sketch gives only a faint idea of its appearance. The lower portion was composed of a fine-grained granite exhibiting the most delicate and beautiful work and finish; the upper portion was of brick; the long, slender columns were monoliths of the same kind of granite; the cross-beams just below the eaves



## HOWQUA'S MANSION

were of wood, and at their junction with the stone were elaborately carved; the cornice was richly wrought in intricate designs, and was evidently of terra-cotta; the circular drum-shaped discs of the entrance, as well as all the lower



*Ceremonial gateway, Howqua's house, Canton*

portion of the structure, were fine examples of stonework. The whole effect was quite imposing, and architecturally very beautiful. The sketch does but slight justice to its stately appearance, though the outlines and proportions are in the main correct.

I had made an appointment to meet a grand-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

son of Howqua's, who, with his brother, then occupied the mansion, and so, after making the gateway sketch, I was guided through an alley across a dilapidated garden, then through an ordinary gateway to the mansion itself. After waiting some time, one of the brothers finally made his appearance and invited me into the house. His brother soon joined us, accompanied by numerous servants and nurses, the latter bearing in their arms diminutive specimens of humanity, the offspring by wives and concubines of these men who had come into the inheritance. The brothers were not particularly gentle in their bearing, and made no effort to relieve me of the pressure of the crowd about me. Every sketch that I made was rudely snatched from my hand by one of the brothers, who disappeared for a while for the purpose of showing it to the women, who, by etiquette, could not be seen. The contrast in the behavior of these men with that of the Japanese, high and low, was striking. After some time I was invited to sit down, and a most delicious cup of tea was brought me. The various rooms through which I was conducted were marvels in the way of elab-

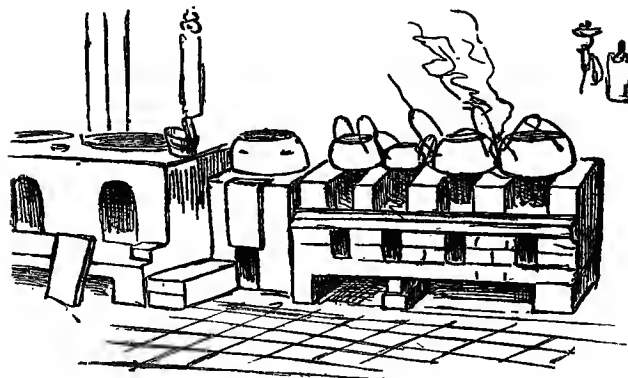
## HOWQUA'S MANSION

orate wood-carving and intricate tracery. I found it useless to attempt any sketch of them. The brothers asked me to make the most impossible sketches, which, had I attempted, would have involved days of the most assiduous labor. When I asked to see the kitchen, they were amazed and expressed their rather disgusted astonishment that I should prefer to sketch this region of the house rather than their more elaborate apartments. I was finally conducted to the place, and found it quite as dirty and disorderly as any I had seen. Had the Chinese any realization of what we call dirt, it would be impossible for them to permit a place wherein food for the table was being prepared to be in such a lamentable condition. Filth tracked in from the streets, plus the dirty accumulations that come from their domestic work, made the kitchen a most unsavory place. I cannot but believe that in some of the houses of the richer classes the apartments must be clean, yet how can we unite such an idea with what has already been seen in the houses thus far described?

Howqua's kitchen was very interesting. I was told that it was a fine example of the old Canton

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

kitchen. It was over one hundred years old and quite different from the kitchens I had already seen, though the differences were probably such as one might see at home between the ordinary cast-iron stove and the elaborate range in the

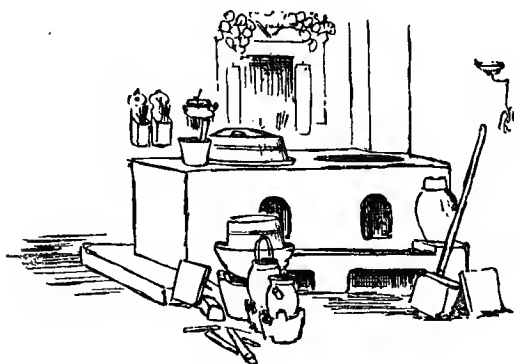


*Kitchen, Howqua's house, Canton*

kitchen of great houses. Later, I saw the interior of a country-house, north of Canton, said to be two hundred years old, and the kitchen was on the same general plan as the one of Howqua's, so I am inclined to believe that the Cantonese affair differs, in many respects, from the northern kitchen, though in both cases, as before remarked, the rice-boilers are very similar. In the

## HOWQUA'S MANSION

drawings three sides of the kitchen are represented. It will be seen that the long range with a number of openings is not unlike the Japanese range, or *kamedo*. The fireplaces are square, and open from top to bottom, and the vessel simply rests on the opening above.



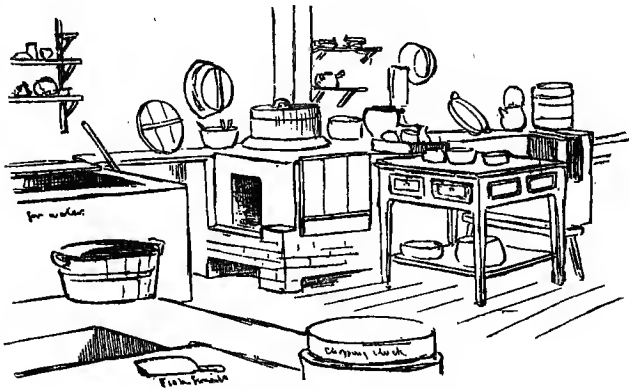
*Rice kettle, Howqua's kitchen*

In comparing certain Chinese objects with the Japanese it should be understood that the Japanese have, in every case, derived these objects from China. The ornamental dwarf trees, the form of range, the carpenters' tools, musical instruments, etc., of the Japanese have all been derived from China in precisely the same manner that our

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ancestors, the English, derived similar methods and devices from contiguous regions on the continent.

The kitchen was a large, spacious room, and had all the appliances for preparing a great banquet; copper kettles, large boilers, ladles, etc.,

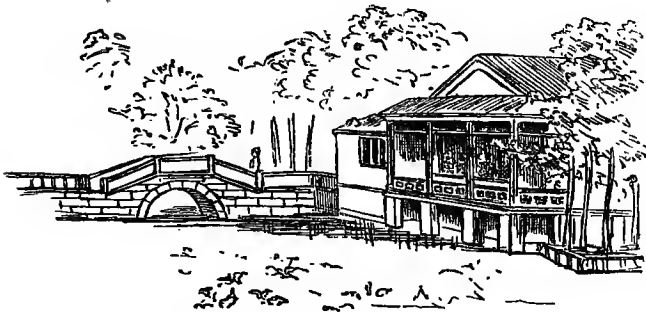


*Third side of Howqua's kitchen*

were all there, and so was the dirt. In this respect it was precisely the same as those I had already seen. Now, the amazing thing about it is this, that if a Chinese cook could be transported to a kitchen of some great house in this country, and see the immaculate floor of tile or wood, the polished coppers, the incredible neat-

## HOWQUA'S MANSION

ness and sweetness of everything, it would not excite the faintest emotion or envy. He would probably look upon it all as a vast waste of human energy, and would say, if he were capable of reflecting on anything, "So long as I keep the dirt out of the food, or at least render it invisible, what's the use of all this effort at dirt remov-



*Lotus pond, Canton*

ing?" and he might quote our saying which is such a comfort to slovenly people, "Every man has to eat his peck of dirt."

In the rear of this great house was a large lotus pond walled in with brick; on each side were substantial summer-houses, in which dwelt the concubines. A glimpse of the large reception-rooms only was permitted. Little bridges,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

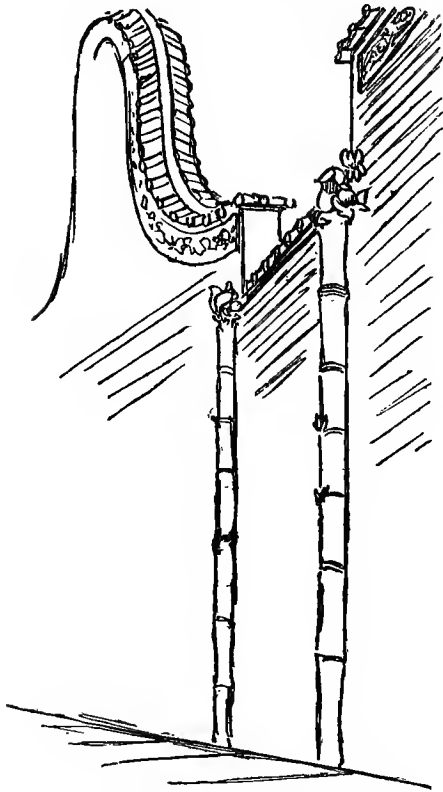
such as one sees depicted on old china, spanned certain narrow places. Here was every opportunity to make a charming retreat, yet the pond was covered with slime and rubbish, the summer-houses were neglected and dirty, and, knowing the great wealth of the family, one was compelled to recognize this condition of matters in China as a national trait.

During my brief visit to this place it was plainly evident that I was *non persona grata*, and the intrusion would never have been made had any one given me the slightest premonition of the possible character of my reception, so my frankness of comment cannot be considered a breach of hospitality; there was no hospitality to breach.

I am not criticising the Chinese for this attitude, for it is about the only evidence of manhood, from the standpoint of a Christian nation, that they possess. It is too much to expect of a man that he should treat with more than cold reserve an individual who belongs to an alien race that has systematically robbed his people, filled his land with emissaries who have done their best to break down every sacred belief and



## HOWQUA'S MANSION



*Alley wall and cement water-conductors, Canton*

cherished superstition, and that has defrauded his nation of vast tracts of territory and of enormous money indemnities.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

I left the place by a narrow alley bordered by high walls of brick. The top of the walls had great rounded curves like the gable-ends of the Shanghai houses; these were imbricated with roofing tiles, and just below the edge was a line of glazed panels having designs in high relief. The water-conductors, in the form of huge bamboo, were made of cement, the joints and buds being well represented, the upper portion bulging out with flowers modelled in stucco, and having no relation botanically with the bamboo. It is such incongruities in present Chinese art that jar upon the eye. It is possible, however, that some sentiment was to be conveyed by these flowers. The whole structure was an interesting illustration of the survival of form when the material of the device or the method of construction has been changed. This example was, of course, an obvious case, as bamboos are still used everywhere in the East as water-conductors.

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X

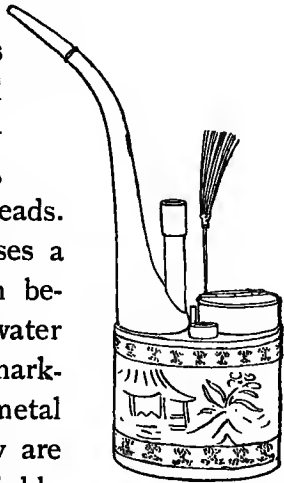
TOBACCO PIPES, EXAMINATION  
HALL, WATER CLOCK, ETC.



## X

### TOBACCO PIPES, EXAMINATION HALL, WATER CLOCK, ETC.

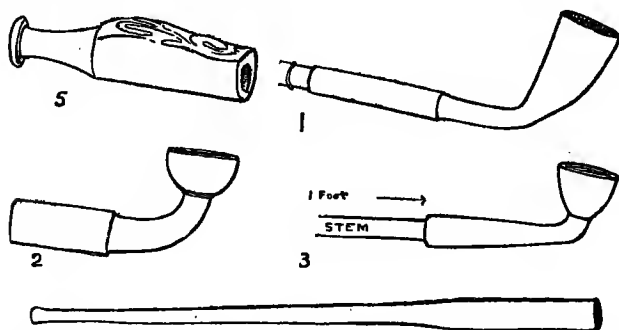
**T**HE Chinese are inveterate smokers of tobacco as well as snuff-takers. The tobacco is milder than ours, and is cut in the finest threads. Among the wealthier classes a form of pipe is used which belongs to the class known as water pipes. These pipes are remarkable examples of work in metal and other materials. They are often very elaborate and highly ornamented. The water is contained in the large body, which has a flat bottom, and which rests firmly on the table, where it is always seen with the ink-stone, writing brush, paper weight, and other articles.



*Tobacco pipe with  
water receptacle*

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

The pipe-bowl is in the form of a smaller tube, the lower end of which is immersed in the water; the smoke has first to pass through the water before ascending the long tube through which the smoker draws. There is also a receptacle for tobacco closed by a lid. The little rod ter-



*Figs. 1, 2, 3, metallic pipes. Fig. 4, metallic mouth-piece. Fig. 5, jade mouth-piece*

minating in a tassel is simply a convenience for loosening the tobacco, or cleaning out any obstruction in the tube. The Salem Museum has a number of these pipes, and the sketch on the preceding page is a figure of one of them.

A common form of pipe among the poorer classes consists of a metal bowl with short stem combined. Into this a wooden stem is fitted, and

## TOBACCO PIPES, ETC.

on the other end a mouth-piece is secured. The mouth-piece is usually of metal, though bone, horn, or jade may be used. The wooden stem may be six inches or three feet in length; when the stem is short it is often wound with tinsel or brass wire. The pipe-bowl may be a rough casting of brass or very thin white metal, the method of making being somewhat puzzling.

In Foo-Chow, according to Miss Gordon Cummings, the poorer classes use pipes in the form of large globular bowls of porcelain, which are gaudily decorated. The thick wooden stem is three feet long, and is used as a cane as well. These people cultivate a coarse tobacco for their own use. The accompanying figures illustrate some of the pipe-bowls and mouth-pieces.

The Koreans have a similar form of pipe with long reed stems, and these are variously ornamented with curious designs stained on the surface. A fine collection of these Korean pipe-stems may be seen in the Museum in Salem.

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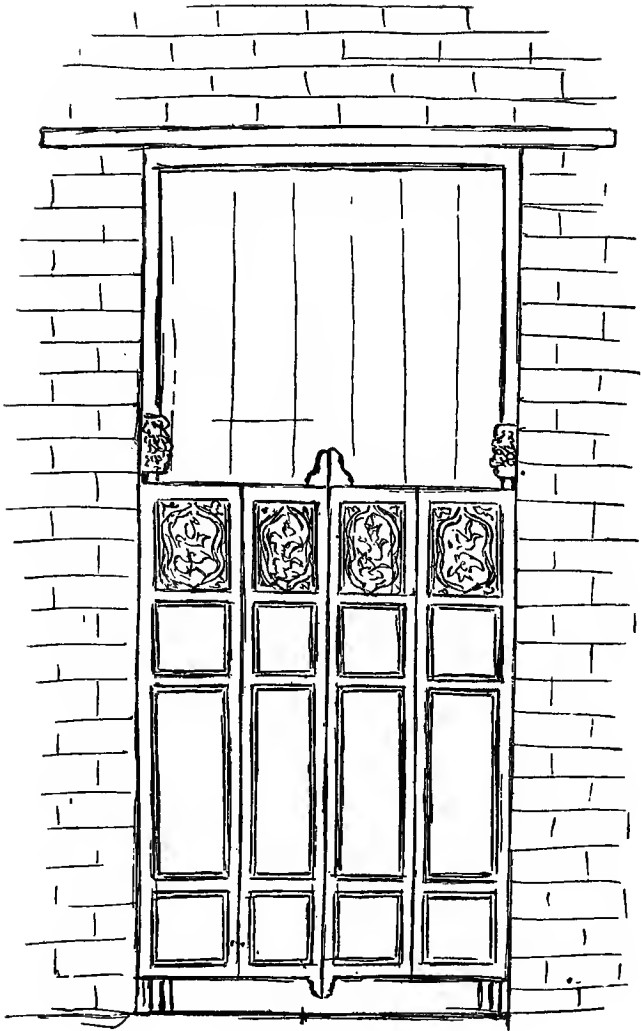
The doorways seen on the street were in many cases very high, evidently to give ample room for the palanquins to enter. The doors are elabo-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

rately panelled, and were double, and each door had two folds, and these were hinged together. The door itself, instead of being hinged to the frame, was provided with a pivot above and below and close to the frame; these were held in appropriate sockets, the upper one being in the form of a carved embossment on the frame, the lower socket being made in the sill. This device is very ancient, and may be found in the earliest Egyptian, Greek, and Roman structures.

In my interesting wanderings about Canton, my guide led me to the famous water clock. It was a high building which looked as old as the clock, which was said to have been running for four hundred years. The water clock consisted of four deep copper vessels arranged on steps one above the other. A flight of short steps was at the side of this contrivance to enable the attendant to fill the upper bucket with water, and this has to be done twice in twenty-four hours. The water slowly drips through a faucet in the upper bucket to the next in turn, and so on down to the lowest one. In this is a float, to which is attached an upright strip of wood having painted upon it the characters for





*Doorway of shop, Canton*

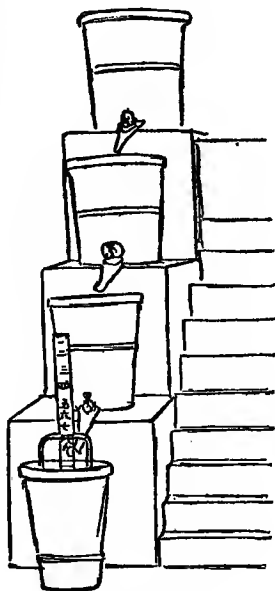
## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

one, two, three, and so on. This strip passes through a bail which spans the bucket, and as the float rises the numbers pass in succession through the bail, and thus the hours of the day are rudely indicated. The keeper has a set of large boards upon which numbers are painted in black, and as each hour is indicated by the float the keeper hangs out a board with the corresponding number, and this may be seen only by those who are in a line with it down a rather wide avenue. Here the number remains in sight till the next hour is indicated by the float; in the mean time, unless one has closely followed up these sign-boards, there is no way of determining whether the time is one minute past nine, for example, or one minute to ten. To know the time within an hour seems to be quite enough for these peculiar people. I did not learn that a gong was beaten or a trumpet blown or a bell struck to announce the hours. Nothing, it seemed to me, could better illustrate the stolid and disastrous conservatism, the mental apathy, or, better, the atrophy of all adaptive and inventive faculty, in the nation, than this crude and primitive device. Thousands of Chinese have

## TOBACCO PIPES, ETC.

been abroad, and while abroad have all had watches and clocks; in the poorest laundry place in America a clock may be found; in the Chinese theatre, in San Francisco, a large Connecticut clock is hung against the wall over the stage in full view of the audience, and yet, here in Canton, a wealthy city of a million of inhabitants, the hours of the day have been rudely indicated by this ridiculous device, with only a small number of this vast population getting the benefit of it.

I was naturally curious to see the prison in Canton, having seen the one in Shanghai. That was so vile that, in the more refined city of Canton, I was led to believe that there might be some advance in prison management. If anything, it was even worse than the northern horror. The prisoners looked starved, and were



*Water-clock, Canton*

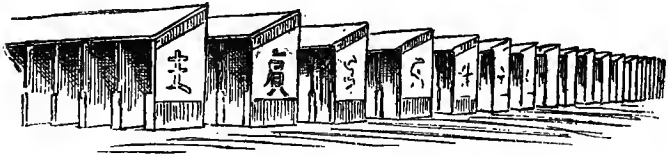
## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

in the most ragged and most haggard condition. Many of them were loafing in the prison-yard; others were in low coops, hardly high enough to accommodate a dog; some had their heads thrust through square, plank-like affairs, unable to reach their faces, over which flies crawled at will. They could not, of course, feed themselves, but had to depend upon relatives or humane friends to perform this service. Nearby was a simple enclosure surrounded by high walls, known as the execution-grounds. At the time of my visit, the ground was covered with pottery in the form of little kitchen braziers; apparently some one had hired the place for the temporary storage of his pottery stock. Near the walls were larger jars, in which the heads of the executed were placed. Judging from the description of the Spanish prisons in Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, Spain is the only European country which must be placed on a level with China in this respect.

Another of the many interesting features in Canton was the examination-hall, as it is called, though there was no trace of a hall on the grounds according to our meaning of the word. This famous place consisted of rows of long,

## TOBACCO PIPES, ETC.

narrow sheds running at right angles to a broad area which might be called a yard or avenue. These low sheds were divided by partitions open in front; if they had been furnished with doors they would have resembled the bathing-houses along our seaside resorts. These structures were built of brick, with brick partitions, and the individual cells were not over four feet wide.



*Examination hall, Canton*

The number of them has been variously stated to be seven thousand five hundred and ten thousand. The candidates who compete for examination come from all parts of the Empire. These include young men and old men, some of whom have reached the age of eighty or ninety years, who have been competing since they were boys, and appear again and again to win the coveted prize of recognition and, if successful, to get some office under Government with a modest stipend,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

the balance of their salary being squeezed out of the inhabitants by fraud and persecution. Early in the morning a single text from Confucius or some other ancient classical writer is issued to all, each one receiving the same text. On this they are all to write an essay and deliver it the next morning. An ignoramus on everything but Chinese classics may beat other numskulls in writing the best composition on the text given, and attain some office dealing with matters pertaining to the nineteenth century. As an illustration, a competitor has secured a position in the army by passing a literary examination on the art of war, not as understood to-day, but with the art as set forth by authorities three thousand years ago. One of these authorities, held in highest repute, Sun-Tse by name, solemnly recommends such a manœuvre as this: "Spread in the camp of the enemy voluptuous musical airs, so as to soften his heart." No wonder, in the recent war with Japan, Chinese generals were found with singing-birds in cages, and a retinue of concubines, while every soldier carried a fan, and every third one a banner. How inferior to the Japanese in these matters! Un-

## TOBACCO PIPES, ETC.

daunted by the slurs of English writers, who have repeatedly stigmatized the Japanese as a nation of copyists, they sent their students to military academies abroad; their men graduated at our Naval Academy; then they established a naval college of their own, and to-day their army and navy, in effectiveness and morale, are fully abreast of the armies and navies of Europe, and, according to an English military critic, superior to many of them.

The matter of literary examination for public office has been repeatedly dwelt upon, yet no one can realize the overpowering absurdity of it until he comes to examine the conditions minutely. China is supposed to have an army and navy, arsenals and departments of telegraph, customs, etc. Now, let one open a page of Confucius, the "Doctrine of the Mean," or the "Analects," for example, or any ancient classic, and find if he can a single line which would enable him to perform any of the duties involved in the above departments. Everywhere he would find admonitions to be just, good, and honest. References to an honest judge and upright ruler, etc., frequently occur in these venerable pages, but of telegraphy,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

railroads, medical and surgical practice, or anything else pertaining to nineteenth-century civilization, not a word. These moral admonitions of Confucius are evidently taken in the usual Chinese reverse sense; for, outside of the municipal affairs of New York and Philadelphia, no greater corruption or dishonesty exists than can be found in China. Despite the fact that their armies have been repeatedly beaten by small bodies of European soldiers, and, within recent years, suffered an ignominious and crushing defeat at the hands of Japan, in each case paying enormous indemnities, the Chinese still go through these antiquated examinations in order to secure positions in these modern departments. It is said the appointments in the British Army are nearly as absurd as the Chinese practice, though based on a different method.



XI

A SOLDIERS' DRILL-ROOM



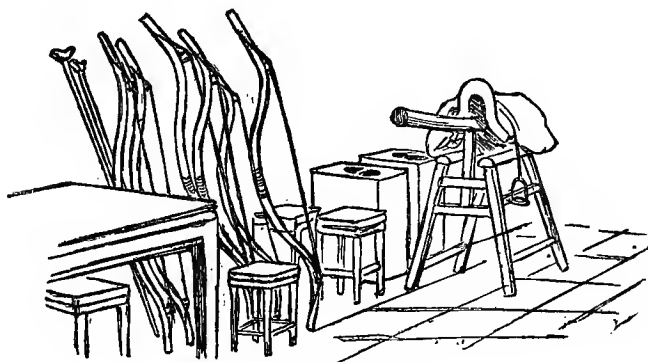
## XI

### A SOLDIERS' DRILL-ROOM

**V**ERY near my hotel was a school for archery and other military exercises. My Portuguese landlord offered to guide me to the place. There were a number of Manchu soldiers practising at the time, and they looked up frowningly as we came in. In this place were not only implements for archery practice, but evidently for bow and spear exercises on horseback, as there was a saddle mounted on a big wooden support, and numerous appliances were at hand for these exercises. Heavy blocks of stone were on the floor, upon which the soldiers developed their lifting muscles. Huge iron implements with short cutting swords at the end rested against a heavy framework of wood; these had an iron shaft seven feet long and at least two inches in diameter, with the additional weight of what appeared to be a small grindstone at one end and massive ribs of iron at the other. They

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

were so heavy that I could not lift one from the floor, yet I was told the Manchu would twirl one over his head and thrust and parry and fence and go through a variety of evolutions with great celerity. There were bows of immense size and stiffness, and I

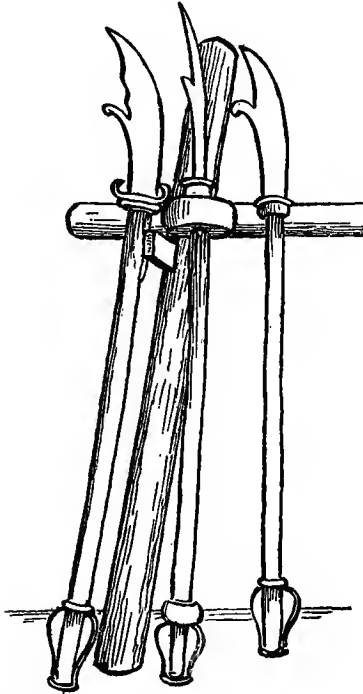


*Drill-room, Canton*

got permission to try one. In my archery days I used to shoot with what is technically known as a forty-eight-pound bow, that is, a bow which requires a weight of forty-eight pounds to draw the bow down the length of a twenty-eight-inch arrow. With all my strength, and hands clutched to the bow and cord, I could not pull it more

## A SOLDIERS' DRILL-ROOM

than an inch. It was like stringing a telegraph-pole. A Manchu then took it, and not only drew

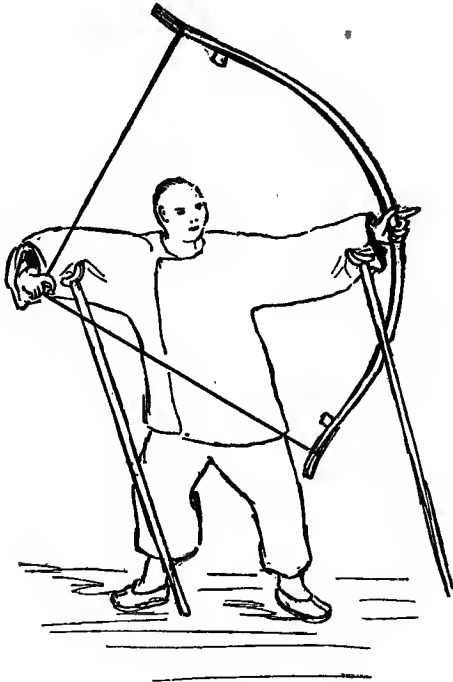


*Huge iron implements resting against frame*

it up to his ear, but back of his head, and held it quivering in this position for several seconds. The bow was so heavy that an assistant immedi-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ately placed props under the archer's arms to support the weight while he drew it in this way. It



*Drawing heavy bow, Canton*

would almost seem that an arrow shot from such a bow by such a giant in strength would have pierced a dozen elephants in line.

## A SOLDIERS' DRILL-ROOM

The men who were drilling were Manchu Tartars on their way to fight the French in Tonkin, and as I made rapid sketches of them they seemed ugly and suspicious. Suddenly, and without a word, my Portuguese guide grabbed me by the arm and hurried me out of the room in a very unceremonious fashion, nor did he explain this urgency until we had got some way from the building, when he told me that what they had said made it very dangerous to remain there. Certainly by no act had they displayed any hostile intention, though they were chattering continually, and were not very gracious in their actions. I had evidently been taken for a spy, or an emissary of the French, as it was beyond the comprehension of a Chinese mind that any one should have the slightest interest as to the stiffness of a bow, or precisely how an archer held his hands in the act of drawing the string.





XII

A POTTERS' TOWN



## XII

### A POTTERS' TOWN

**W**HILE in Japan I had been greatly interested in the potters' art, and made a study of their furnaces and the various devices used in their work. I looked forward with interest to the chances of comparing Chinese methods with those of the Japanese. Shanghai did not offer the opportunity, though the jars and flower-pots seen there in such profusion must have been made in the immediate vicinity. I was told that to see the art in its fullest development one would have to go inland four hundred miles. At Canton my guide informed me that he knew of no potters' works near by, though bricks, tiles, and earthen braziers were made in Canton and its neighborhood. There was a place up the river, about thirty miles, famous as a pottery centre, but to go there safely, my landlord said, would require a passport, and this was only to be procured at Peking. Of course there was no time to secure one, so to

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

the American consul I went, hoping that he might get a letter from some high official in Canton, or from the Governor of the Province, in which might be set forth the innocent object of my visit. But this could not be obtained; the consul, however, informed me that only a few weeks before two Americans had gone up the river in a covered boat, and, on landing at the place, had been mobbed, stoned, and driven to their boat, the sides of which had been smashed in; and even the Chinese magistrate, who had endeavored to protect them, came in for a share of the mobbing; and yet these men were not only provided with a passport from the Government, but with a letter from the American Minister. It is true these men were missionaries, and so I accounted for the rough treatment they had received. Not wishing to go alone, I tried to induce the consul to accompany me, but official duties prevented; it was impossible to give up the trip, and with a feeling that if one behaved himself with becoming humility one might travel anywhere, I got my landlord to engage a boat with a crew of six men for the journey. A little Chinese boy who had waited upon me at the

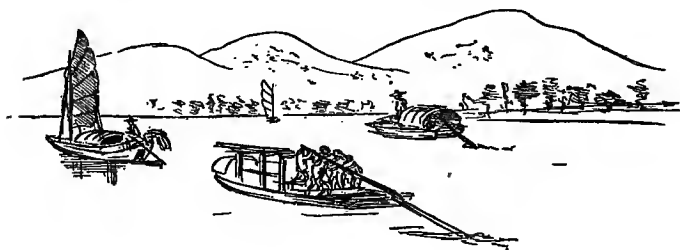
## A POTTERS' TOWN

table, and who knew a few words of English, was allowed to go with me as guide, as he said he knew all about the place. For the first and last time in the East I put a revolver in my pocket. The crew were a sturdy set of fellows, the boat was quite broad and flat-bottomed, and the men stood at their work facing the bow and pushing rather than pulling. The oars were very long and spliced, as one sees them in Japan. I sat in the bow with just room enough to avoid being struck in the face by the forward man; indeed, I had to be very careful in moving about, as the handle of the oar came within six inches of my head. We were five hours and a half going up the river, and this against a hardly perceptible current. During the entire time of the journey the men never stopped for a single moment in their work, but kept it up with the greatest energy, at the rate of thirty-two strokes a minute. It was a somewhat dubious adventure, going into the country even this short distance, at a time when the region was in a ferment over the French aggressions in the south.

In going up the river we passed one little settlement, and then a village. The banks were low,

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

and here and there a solitary tree was seen; but the land on both sides was probably under cultivation, and the people were too busy at work to saunter on the banks, and so a native was rarely seen. It was quite different on the river, for a large boat-traffic was in evidence, both in the vessels we overtook and passed, and the vessels



*On the river above Canton*

we met. Everywhere along the banks the earth seemed to be charged with old bricks, fragments of roofing tiles, broken pottery, and white porcelain, and this was certainly an indication that the river was bordered by dikes. There were no traces of river jetties, such as one so often sees in the rivers of Japan. It was curious to observe beyond the banks on either side of the river large sails slowly gliding along apparently as if

## A POTTERS' TOWN

the boats were sailing on the land. Our boat was so low, and the dikes were so high, it was impossible to see the land beyond, yet these large sails indicated, what every one is familiar with, the remarkable extent of the canal system in China. I was informed that a boat could go by canal from Canton to Peking, a distance of twelve hundred miles, with only one obstruction in the course, — a mountain-chain.

My experience on the river was anything but encouraging, for in every boat that passed us, and there were many, the occupants showed their hostile attitude by shouting "Fanquai" (foreign devil) and other vile epithets, and, what was more interesting, the men often making up the most hideous faces at me. To see a toothless, dirty, old, wrinkled Chinese thrust out his tongue, contort his features, and gesticulate in a threatening way was a new experience and a very unpleasant one. We finally arrived at the town at which the pottery was made. It stretched a long way on the river, and before we reached its southern border the banks were marked by huge dumps of broken pottery and porcelain, in some cases these accumulations forming conspicuous prom-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ontories jutting out from the shore. The banks also seemed filled with pottery, and here and there were tall cylindrical piles of wood, interspersed with piles of pottery such as have been already described at the city gateways in Shanghai. Here, indeed, was a pottery town, but imagine my apprehension as to the treatment that might be accorded me after running a gauntlet of insults and hostile gestures for some twenty-four miles. If the boat's crew had only returned the epithets, it would have been some assurance that I had at least six men as allies, but their cold and forbidding attitude showed very clearly that they indorsed the sentiments of the river population.



XIII

A CHINESE MOB



### XIII

#### A CHINESE MOB

THE place where we landed was covered with stacks of jars and pots of various kinds, and I hoped that a pottery was in the immediate vicinity, but, on inquiry, my guide found that the pottery was at the upper end of the town, a place we might easily have reached in the boat. I then discovered that the guide had never been to the town, and really knew nothing about it. However, there was no backing out now. The boat's crew had pulled out into the river, and the guide started ahead, and I after him. I certainly did not relish going through the narrow streets with a hooting mob as an escort,—a mob, that had begun to collect the moment I landed. A troop of the dirtiest and raggedest hoodlums one could imagine started after us, and ran ahead yelling "Fanquai" at the top of their lungs. Men joined this mob, some of them insolently thrusting their heads

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

under the broad brim of my sun-hat and grinding their teeth at me; indeed, I believe that the looks of withering scorn and hatred can be better portrayed by a Chinese face than by that of any other race in the world. It was useless to make any friendly advances, and so I did not attempt it, but looked as firm and defiant as possible under the circumstances, and kept one hand in my pocket holding on to a cocked revolver. I had already got one scare when I was so unceremoniously hustled out of a Manchu drill-room the night before, and, somewhat depressed by the treatment I had received on the river since early morning, this stern appearance I was assuming did not at all comport with my feelings. My little guide was in a complete funk, and I feared he would sneak off into the crowd and leave me alone. The boat's crew had pulled off into the middle of the river, for even they, though Chinese, came in for rough treatment, probably for being in the employ of a foreigner. I went into a shop to buy a piece of pottery, and the man looked deeply insulted by the intrusion. The extravagant sum I offered for a modelled bird, fresh from the oven, could not be resisted, and I

## A CHINESE MOB

brought back with me a single trophy of my adventures. We had gone over a mile and passed large shops of pottery, but no sign of its manufacture. The guide frequently and timidly inquired, and was told to go on. Mr. Drew, at Shanghai, had informed me that the potters were a rough class compared to others, and my landlord had told me that I was to visit a region from which most of the Chinese came who landed at San Francisco, and to which region they returned with stories of the heartless cruelties and indignities they had received in a Christian country, the persecutions coming from a class whose religion is most widely presented by missionaries in China, the Catholics. I could not wonder, then, at my reception. The streets were very narrow and literally stinking; the crowd increased in number and turbulence; boys ran far ahead to tell their people that a foreign devil was coming up the street. It reminded me of the way boys run ahead of a circus, and a circus it was, and I would gladly have been out of it.

Finally, and to my great relief, we turned up a narrow alley, followed by the howling mob of roughs. The alley led directly into a pottery.

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

The potters left their work as they heard the racket, and so when I entered the place work had ceased, and a number of rough and savage-looking potters surrounded me with angry and inquiring looks. I made my way through the crowd, found a potter's wheel, and made gestures



*A potter at work*

to a man, evidently the boss, that I wanted to see how they turned a pot, and the sight of a fee that was probably equal to a month's wages induced him, without an expression of thanks, to shout to a fellow to go to work. I was at last to see the working of a Chinese potter's wheel. I crowded back the mob, stepped on a naked toe now and then, and fairly bluffed myself into a place where

## A CHINESE MOB

I was enabled to make a hasty sketch of a potter at work. The wheel rests on the ground, and the potter squats beside the wheel. A helper stands near by, steadying himself with a rope that hangs down from a frame above; holding on to this and resting on one foot, he kicks the wheel around with the other foot. The potter first puts sand on the wheel, so that the clay adheres slightly. He does not separate the pot from the wheel by means of a string, as is usual with most potters the world over, but lifts it from the wheel, the separation being easy on account of the sand previously applied. The pot is somewhat deformed by this act, but is straightened afterwards with a spatula and the hand, as was the practice of a Hindoo potter whom I saw at Singapore. The ovens were like those of the Japanese; they were built in a much more substantial manner, however. The roof above them was well made and supported by brick columns. In this pottery there was not a sign of a green leaf or flower; it was as barren as a brickyard. What vivid memories came back of the Japanese potter with his charming surroundings, the offering of tea and cake, the children in the neighborhood bow-

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

ing as one passed, the potter himself, a courteous soul with a love and knowledge of his craft and the work of the generations preceding him. In contrast, this Chinese pottery in a desolate yard, the ground strewn with pottery fragments, a number of workmen shouting to each other or at me, a horde of ragged men and boys howling vile names, and I thought of my long walk back through the city, followed by this venomous mob of thoughtless brutes. I no longer wondered that magistrates could order these people to be beheaded by hundreds without a quiver of feeling, and, at the moment, I should have enjoyed the ordering of such a performance, and might have witnessed it with equanimity. By their disputes and gestures it was evident that they could not understand the reason of my visit. That a barbarian and foreign devil should hire a boat's crew of six men and a guide, and come all the way from Canton just to see a pot turned, was simply preposterous, and I must be a spy. A shout of contempt went up when I turned my back on the pottery and started down the narrow lane. The crowd kept up such a yelling that my approach was



## A CHINESE MOB

signalized far ahead, so that I passed through a serried array of frowning and angry faces. It was a relief to find that my boat's crew had not deserted me, but, hearing the uproar, had pulled in to the landing and was ready to row out the moment I got aboard. As we pulled into the stream, a salute of contemptuous shouts and a few stones followed us. Why they had not assailed me and smashed the boat, I could not understand, unless they had noticed that one hand had been in my pocket all the time, through which the outline of a rather heavy revolver might have been detected. We pulled across and down the river some distance, and running the bow ashore I prepared to eat my lunch, feeling a great relief in having left the Chinese devils behind, when a number of shadows fell across me and, looking up, I found the high embankment fringed with a lot of peasants, men and boys, who began jeering at me. These twenty or thirty seemed so harmless compared to the hordes in the city that I felt bold, took out my sketch-book, and began to set them down. This act instantly frightened most of them away, evidently disturbed by some superstition in having

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

their pictures taken. A few men remained and defiantly made up faces at me, and jerked their arms in a peculiar gesture which the guide said meant to choke me.



*The crowd on the river bank*

If one soberly considers the manner in which the Chinese have been treated by Christian nations, he cannot be surprised at the attitude of the Chinese towards him. In the plainest way, it may be stated that the "Foreign Devils," under the guise of a diplomatic phrase known as "spheres of influence," have stolen thousands

## A CHINESE MOB

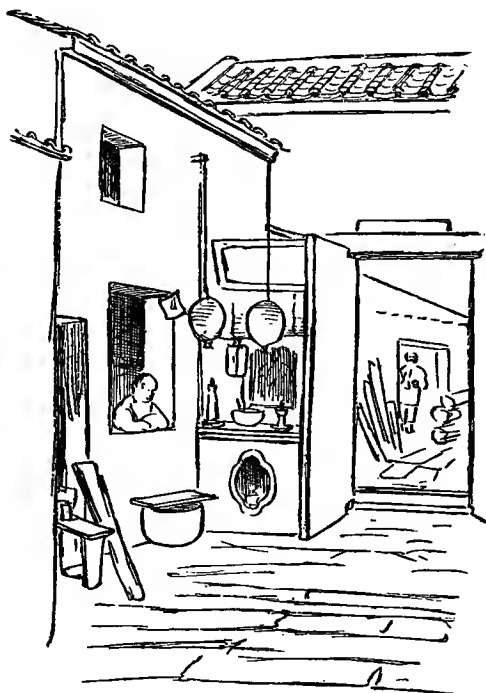
upon thousands of square miles of territory, have robbed them of nearly every open port, and have extorted untold millions in indemnities.

It was a relief to start for Canton, and leave these justifiable ruffians to their filth and superstitions. On our way down the river, we landed at a village which my guide said was the home of his family. He did not find a relative even, and it is probable that some ancestor lived there many hundreds of years ago, for such is their way of inaccurate statement that it is often impossible to find out what they do mean. (This is stated on the authority of Dr. Smith, in *Chinese Characteristics*.) We entered the village by one gate, passed through the place, and out by another gate. The village being an agricultural one, the men, women, and children were in the rice-fields at work, so there were few to greet me, hostile or otherwise. It was curious to see at this city gate conveniences for burning incense to propitiate the evil spirits, and bring good luck to the community.

The single trophy I brought back (see title-page) from the pottery town shows fine taste and skill in modelling. In this town I discovered the

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

origin of the common brown and green glazed pottery figures that one finds for sale in our coun-



*Gateway of village*

try,— figures that are more curious than beautiful, and sell for a few cents. I secured one of these in Canton, and also have in my possession a figure

## A CHINESE MOB

which had been handed down in an old Salem family, and is known to have been brought from Canton over one hundred years ago. It is made of precisely the same clay and glaze as the modern one just alluded to, and must have been made in the same place. The fragments of pottery jutting out from the river-dikes were also of the same material, so that from time immemorial a succession of generations have continued making the same pottery, — an illustration of the fixed and unchangeable character of these people. The interesting fact about these figures is that the modern one shows a marked deterioration in the art, — a change that is seen in Japan as well as in other regions of the world.

I got back to Canton late at night, wearied with the strain and anxiety of the day's adventure. In my brief experience in Canton I could not recall a single friendly or approving look, not a sympathetic return of a smile that even the lowest savage will respond to; on the contrary, a contempt and hate of me was everywhere manifest. In a Japanese town in a single day's sojourn I would establish kindly relations with a number of men and children, who would come to

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

the borders of the village to bid me good-bye. At one place milk was sent to me every morning by some one who knew that the foreigner drank milk; at another place some little souvenir was given me by the servant of some one just as I was about riding away.

I wanted to see the good points of the Chinese, but utterly failed to get in touch with any one save my companions at Shanghai, who had lived in Hartford for a few years, and had, doubtless, been slightly affected by this foreign contact. Artificial as the politeness of the Japanese is said to be by some English writers, I recall the expression of one who said that politeness was like an air-cushion: there was nothing in it, but it eased the jolts wonderfully. In my short experience with the Chinese I do not recall the faintest indications of kindness, politeness, or urbanity; whether high or low in station, their attitude was always the same. Now, I know there must be kindness, gentleness, and politeness among them. In the higher classes etiquette is developed to a degree unknown with us.

The reception a foreigner encounters in China is due to an intense dislike of us, coupled with an

## A CHINESE MOB

absolute contempt for all we do and for all we have accomplished. It seems strange that the cheap crowd of Chinese who come from the poorest regions around Canton, and follow the menial occupation of washing clothes, despise us and all that our civilization has acquired. They burn our gas and kerosene, ride in our cars, profit by our medical practice, appear in our public courts for justice, follow time with a Connecticut clock, use our mails, yet look on their own ways as infinitely superior to ours in every respect. They are, undoubtedly, deeply impressed and flattered by the fact that in some matters we imitate them. If they are taught history in our mission-schools, they know that many of our arts originated in their own country. The art of making paper, printing, the mariner's compass, the manufacture of gunpowder, white porcelain, and silk, are all due to the Chinese. They further note the use of raised beds, tables, and chairs, and probably laugh at our limited use of the wheel-barrow, which, with them, conveys passengers as well as merchandise. They notice the same activity and bustle on the streets, our food is in many respects not unlike theirs, and they go

## GLIMPSES OF CHINA

to our markets and without trouble find articles of food to their means and taste, and they observe their national drink dividing the honors with coffee. They further notice that, like their own people, we love noise, and in this matter they probably regard us as superior, in that our barbarous factory whistles wake up invalids in the next county, while their racket may reach only a few squares. The factory whistle and the grinding trolley car with its clanging bell they delight in, and we make no effort to suppress. Their pride must be flattered, too, when they discover that we celebrate our great national birthday precisely as they celebrate their great days, and, what is more, we send to their country for the fire-crackers with which to do it. If our people die in any part of the world, the body is transported across continents and oceans to be interred in home burial-places. The Chinese transport their remains in the same way to their native country.

In recognizing these similarities, they see an approach to their own people, but beyond these matters they are totally blind. Cleanliness, sanitation, good roads and schools, coinage, postal-system, fire-apparatus, and all the wonder-



## A CHINESE MOB

ful development of steam and electricity and the thousand instrumentalities of life that we have acquired through the persistent study of the behavior of nature's laws make no more impression on their brains than it would on the brain of an ox. In these respects they represent a savage race, and for these reasons the Chinese Exclusion Act is justified.

The Chinese must certainly lament that they are not strong enough to issue an edict excluding the foreigners from their country, for the foreigners have already wrought untold calamities for their people, just as the free admission of the Chinese to our country would, in the end, work untold miseries for us.



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