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ON FOOT IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

NO. II.

AFTER crossing the Santa Clara, I entered upon a long terrace, sloping laterally from the Santa Ines range southward. These mountains here breast abruptly upon the terrace, without much frill of foothills; and at this time they stood grimly up against a dim heaven, all bared and blackened by one of those autumnal conflagrations, more fearful than the Achæan fire, which sometimes blast California. The tender, white-purple haze of the season was so thickened by the smoke of these mountain fires that I could discern a house two miles distant with the greatest difficulty. Looking southward, I could dimly see that the terrace swept down into a moister plain; and I could catch the ragged and obscure outlines of orchards, like men groping, in the yellow gloom. Before and behind me, duplicating the scathed track of the sun, the narrow terrace stretched away in the cadaverousness of its summer death into nothing, like the bridge of Mirza, with both abutments wrapped in murky mystery. Here and there arroyos shot down from the mountains through natural flumes, with adobe walls twenty feet in perpendicular depth—pit-falls in this bridge. So opaque was the smoky haze that the sun, before it was half-way down the afternoon, shone with a faint, saddening light, as if it was travelling into space. The sight of it gave me the most vivid conception I ever had of the terror which possesses certain tribes of savages during an eclipse. Jove help us! if we should lose the sun!

As I came up from one of these arroyos, I saw, apparently five miles before me, a sheeny surface, like burnished Carolinian gold, or something more copery, perhaps. It was directly beneath the sun, and seemed considerably lower than the level of the terrace. At first, I thought it was a mirage; but it remained too steadfast, and glowed with a radiance too brassy for that phenomenon. Slowly, very slowly, it grew

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HOLIDAY IN THE CHINESE QUARTER.

THE last OVERLAND made its monthly visit to its friends in the midst of their holiday season; the present number will reach them at the time when the Chinese amongst us are busily engaged preparing for their New Year.

The Chinese have many holidays, and they seem to appreciate them. Weddings and funerals are improved as occasions for rest and for feasting. Of course, at funerals, the near relatives who are especially bereaved, and who feel their loss, can have little enjoyment, and, so far as they are concerned, the term holiday would be inappropriate; but this is far from being the case with all who assemble to witness the funeral ceremonies, and to partake of the feasts, which have first been spread for the repast of the spirit of the dead, as well as for any other spirits that may choose to partake.

There are saints' days, or birthdays of the gods, many times more than enough to fill all the days of the calendar; and whenever any person or family feels religiously inclined, or can afford the time and expense, they may, in China, hear of gatherings at some one or other of their numerous temples. The first and fifteenth of every month are observed by many as religious seasons. More people resort to the temples at these periods than at others.

The times of the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, and of the winter and summer solstices, are noted by the Chinese, when more than usual activity is observed about the temples; more people than usual are seen in the streets with the sticks of incense, gilt paper, candles and other offerings, on their way to the shrines of the gods. Ancestors and household divinities are especially re-

membered at these seasons. Our market-men may have noticed that at these times there is a much greater call for ducks and chickens by their Chinese customers; and those engaged in efforts to educate and evangelize this people have occasion to notice that their congregations and schools are thinner when these holidays occur on the Sabbath, or near the beginning or end of the week. Of the equinoxes and solstices, the winter solstice is observed more generally and with more enthusiasm than the others; more people buy poultry, the temples have more visitors, the theatres are open day and night, and are more crowded, and more of the house-servants ask to "go and see their cousins."

On the fifteenth of the eighth month, at night—the season of our harvest-moon—this luminary is an object of adoration by people from their open windows; and in the courts, and from the balconies of their houses.

The proprietors of the little temples in San Francisco are accustomed, at various times, to extemporize special performances, in order to attract a multitude of worshippers, and thus replenish their revenue by the sale of candles, prayers, incense sticks, gilt paper, and the like. They also receive much in the form of subscriptions and presents. The ceremonies continue for three or four days, and crowds throng about the premises day and night. Almost every Chinaman in the city will so manage as to get some respite from his labors and cares to visit the temple, and perhaps treat himself to a sort of feast, or, at least, he will be more liberal in the supply of his table at such times than at others.

The arrival of friends from China, and

the leave-taking when friends are about embarking for home, are made occasions for social gatherings and for feasting. Formerly these occurrences were more irregular than at present, for the sailing ships might arrive and depart at any time; but now, since the monthly steamers come and go with considerable punctuality, the Chinamen look forward to the days of arrival and departure with great interest, and there are many who make this an occasion to take a whole or a half holiday, for the purpose of seeing neighbors or relatives fresh from the place where they were born, and gathering from them all manner of news and gossip; while in the case of those who are about to return, they have many letters to write and many messages to deliver, and they must needs eat and drink together before they separate.

In China the people have no Sabbath, but in this country they conform, in some measure, to the customs of the people. In the mines many work steadily on through the Sabbath, the same as on other days, while others imitate the example of too many of our miners, and take the day for cleaning up their gold, and for washing, mending, marketing, bargaining and adjusting accounts. Laborers in the employment of those who keep the Sabbath, often take the day for visiting, gambling, opium smoking, for washing and mending, or for a walk about the town; while a few go to their church, or assemble at the schools established for them. There is some reading done on this day, with much writing of letters, and a large amount of sleeping; while with the merchants it is a day for collections and for writing up their accounts. Amongst the employés along the line of the railroad, the Sunday, as we have had occasion to notice, is a day on which many pigs and fowls are brought to grief—as this seems to be the butchering day in those Chinese camps—while those not occupied in butchering and in preparations for an

extra dinner, and not employed in repairing garments, amuse themselves with games, or enjoy their pipes.

The Chinese have their "house-warming." On entering a new house, removing to new quarters, or opening a new business, or putting up a new sign, they sacrifice to the gods, and make the occasion one of feasting and social enjoyment.

The birthdays of the living are celebrated to some extent; also the birthdays of deceased ancestors are kept in remembrance, and distinguished by certain prescribed ceremonies.

All soul's day, or the day in which feasts are spread and other offerings prepared for the departed spirits who have no surviving relatives or friends to minister to their wants, occurs on the fourteenth day of the seventh month. This day is observed by the Chinese who are here, though not by any means to the extent that it is in their own country, where the towns and villages are gay with the miniature garments made of paper, which are suspended from cords run zigzag along the streets, high enough to clear the heads of pedestrians and the tops of the sedan chairs, and where, at frequent intervals, there are platforms covered with all kinds of cooked food, fruits and confectionery, together with many theatrical exhibitions and other shows, all provided by means of the contributions of the inhabitants of these streets, who are anxious that no hungry ghosts should be allowed to go cold or unfed, and therefore disposed to trouble them or their households because of any neglect in attending to their wants.

The feast of lanterns, the festival of the dragon-boats, and the season for kite-flying, together with many other noted days, are all marked in their almanacs; and as the almanac is a book which is kept within the reach of every Chinaman, and constantly consulted, there is hardly a possibility of any of

these festival days being entirely forgotten. Though none of these festivals are celebrated to the extent that they are at home, and some of them scarcely at all in a public manner, yet the recurrence of the day, and the thought of friends in the fatherland, and of the manner in which they are probably occupying or amusing themselves, awaken a desire, more or less strong, to sympathize with them and to engage in similar ceremonies or sports.

Chief of their holidays, however, or rather that which eclipses all the rest, is the festival of the New Year. On this occasion all China abandons itself to merry-making, one *feu de joie* resounds throughout the Empire; from north to south, from east to west, the country is wreathed in clouds of smoke perfumed with incense or laden with the smell of powder; while every habitation in the land, from the Emperor's palace to the beggar's shed, will look gay with its red and tinselled paper fluttering in the breeze; servants will be running to and fro everywhere, in city and country, distributing the red visiting cards and conveying to friends and acquaintances the congratulations of their masters; the walls of the houses and many implements of labor will be garnished with new inscriptions upon bright red paper. Every word spoken on this day must be of the nature of congratulation and well-wishing; nothing like sadness, complaint, reproof or foreboding will be heard without displeasure; even the religious teacher, should he hold his public services on this day, will better please the majority of his hearers if he dwells only upon those themes which bring to view the profits of godliness and the joys of the world to come, without any allusion to that place which, in some circles it is thought, should "never be mentioned to ears polite." Every Chinaman, whatever his business or his social position, and in whatever part of the

world he may be, will claim at least this one holiday during the year.

The next Chinese New Year will occur on what, in our calendar, is set down as the tenth day of February. The Chinese year now ending commenced on the twenty-fourth of January, 1868, and the previous year commenced on the first day of our February, while the year soon to commence will close on January 29th, 1870.

The year now closing has had thirteen months, or what amounts to the same thing. Instead of numbering on in order, so as to have a thirteenth month, they repeat one of the months, which, in this case, was the fourth, called the "intercalary fourth moon," or month; and this simple expression *fourth moon* will solve the whole mystery respecting the shifting of their New Year's day back and forth, making it sometimes earlier and sometimes later. Each Chinese month is one moon, while the commencement of the year is regulated by the sun; and the New Year must fall on the first new moon after the sun enters Aquarius, between the twenty-first of January and the nineteenth of February. This calls for an intercalary month occasionally. The incoming year will have six months with twenty-nine days, and six months with thirty days, being the average of the required twenty-nine and a half days to each lunar month, from which we will see that, during the space of about nineteen years, there will need to be seven years with intercalary months.

Each Chinese year has its particular designation according to its number in the cycle of sixty years. The next year will be called the year *K'i-Sz*, and will be the sixth year of the seventy-sixth cycle. The mode of computation by cycles commences with the year 2637 B.C. The commencement of each imperial reign also forms a new epoch in Chinese history, and as on our coming

February 10th the Emperor Tung Chi enters upon the eighth year of his reign, the date of any paper written on the next Chinese New Year, if written in full, will be "Tung Chi, 8th year, being the year *Ki-Sz*, the 6th year of the 76th cycle, 1st month, 1st day."

The Chinese compute their ages from the beginning of the year. A child born any time during this year will be called two years old on and after the next New Year's day, and after the following New Year he will be called three years old, so that there will, as we see, be some children, said to be three years old, who have not yet seen three hundred and sixty-five days.

The New Year is a period which is held in anticipation for weeks, or even months; indeed, the whole business of the year is conducted with the grand settlement day in view, when all liabilities must be met and all debts paid, so that every person may be able to commence the succeeding twelve months with a genuine, happy New Year; no one grieving over broken hopes; none angry with creditors who have failed to fulfil their promises, and none chagrined because they are unable to meet their obligations.

This leads us to speak more particularly concerning the preparations for this grand festival.

First of all is the financial question. Who do I owe, and who owes me? Can I meet all my liabilities, and will my debtors pay me? The business is closely watched and the books carefully written up and often examined, and an account of stock is taken. Collectors are early sent to any doubtful parties; in conversations with honest and solvent debtors, such allusions are made to former transactions and future necessities that they may not be in danger of overlooking "that little bill;" while accounts of long standing are again taken from the file and fresh efforts are made to press some drops of pay from the

oldest and least hopeful subjects. Our San Francisco merchants increase their collecting force, who traverse the State, and who visit Oregon and Nevada, and penetrate the snow regions of Montana; nor are they deterred by any obstacles when there is before them a prospect of securing the settlement of an account. Our Express Companies find the Chinese department of their business very brisk about these days, occasioned by the quantities of letters going out and the amount of treasure coming in.

Happy is that man who can close the year with no duns at the door, and no creditor's anathemas to pursue him to spoil the New Year's festivities; happy is that firm whose balance sheet is evenly poised, while cash in the safe and the goods in readiness for future use are gratifying evidence of the favor with which their god of wealth has served them; but woe, woe is for him whose petitions to this deity have fallen upon a closed ear and a callous heart.

As the year approaches its close, careful observers will notice how lean the stock is growing on the shelves of some of the stores in the Chinese quarter, and what a haggard, anxious look their occupants begin to wear; and if they follow up their observations they will see how appearances grow worse, until the "evening of the year" finds the premises closed and the proprietors *non est inventus*.

It is not uncommon for those who have no means for meeting their liabilities to secrete themselves until the old year has fully expired and the new year has come in, for during the New Year's congratulations and merry-makings no duns are tolerated. He who on such a day could have the temerity to present a bill, or to hint that any person's entertainment might relish better were it paid for, would be deemed unworthy the interchange of civilities with gentlemen.

Not only do the people strive to close the year with all old scores wiped out

and accounts adjusted between man and man, but they wish also to come to a settlement with the gods; therefore the unusual activity about the temples, and the throngs of men, women and children passing to and fro in their best attire, with baskets of incense sticks and other offerings; and therefore also the constant and abundant clouds of incense around the shrines of the household divinities and the ancestral tablets. These religious rites are hurried on as the year draws to its close; partly because of the tradition which all have heard, and which many believe, that before the close of the year—say on the twenty-sixth of the twelfth month—the local deities all gather up their accounts and journals, and ascend to report to the Supreme Ruler, the Pearly Emperor; and that they do not return till the first of the first month, and some say not till even a later day.

The approach of the New Year is signalized by the quacking of ducks and the cackling of fowls tethered by one leg in and about every habitation. Poor creatures! they might be even less happy if they knew the fate awaiting them so short a distance in the future. Unmistakable symptoms, premonitory of the approaching day of rejoicing, are seen in the more plentiful use of water and scrubbing brushes. Everything is cleansed to prepare for welcoming the coming year. The house is almost turned inside out; ceiling, floors and furniture are scrubbed, while of certain cheap articles in use about the kitchen a bonfire is made, with prescribed ceremonies, and new articles procured from the shops to supply the place of the old. Clothes are washed, the wardrobe is replenished, but there are not tailors enough to furnish all the new coats and garments that have been ordered; old clothes and old shoes are thrown away or burned; and, to use their own expression, "shoes are straightened up at the heel, the dog-eared books have their

pages smoothed out, and everybody turns over a new leaf." Amongst these renovations and ablutions their own persons are not neglected, but scrupulous attention is given to the washing of the body by every individual. The faded red papers on the walls and windows are torn down and solemnly consigned to the fire, and new inscriptions on fresh red paper are put up in the place of the old; and new scrolls, with the antithetical sentences, and perhaps with pictures, are hung upon the walls; while in some stores, where business has not been encouraging, and some plan must be tried to secure better fortune hereafter, the old sign is replaced by a new one, with a different device, hoping thus to court the favor of the god of wealth and to get again in luck.

That there is already a vacation in the schools, may be known by the number of children in the streets, who are as much animated by what is going on during these excited preparation days as are any of those children who spend so many of the December days in looking into the toy-shop windows, and in witnessing the preparations of the older people for the midwinter holidays, and who pass so many of their nights in dreaming what *Kriss Kringle* is going to bring them.

The red papers on the door are renewed, also those which flutter from the upper lintel, and which, in many cases, have some sentiment or prayer inscribed upon them, such as—"May the five blessings descend upon this house;" "May worthy friends arrive;" "May wealthy customers enter here;" "May heaven confer blessings;" "Happiness comes from heaven." The inscriptions upon the little shrines, where are lodged the household gods, are also renewed; and some of the articles of furniture and implements of labor are honored with a new red card, bearing its appropriate inscription. All paper used for these purposes is red—this be-

ing the color for joyous occasions. Old almanacs are laid aside, and new ones procured. No family would be without an almanac—for, then, how could they be aware of the lucky and unlucky days? how know when to begin any new enterprise? how know when the festivals and saints' days occur? At home, the almanac controls the people more than here. As dress necessarily changes with the change of seasons, and, as the almanac marks these periods, we used to notice that when the season arrived, the number and quality of the garments were changed, although the weather might not demand it.

Within the guests' rooms, outside of the door, and along the balconies, there are suspended many gaily-colored lanterns—some of which bear fanciful inscriptions; and, now and then, the little ones, as well as the children of an older growth, are amused with the revolving figures, kept in motion by rarefied air caused by the burning candle.

The characteristics of different families will be apparent as the last day of the old year draws to a close. The slow-moving and procrastinating have still many preparations to make, and with them, all will be hurry and bustle till late in the evening; while those who are habitually industrious and prompt have all things arranged in order, and they are prepared to sit with dignified composure during the fast-fleeting hours of the "old year's evening;" they can look around complacently upon the things provided for offerings to the gods, and on the stores which are to enable them to gather many friends during the coming days of merry-making. They have time, also, to sit and reflect how comfortable it is to know that all debts are paid, and that no other person has been hindered from making good his promises to pay because of their own forgetfulness, neglect, or inability to pay him what they owed. This class of people

usually retire at an early hour on the New Year's eve, so as to be up very early on the following morning. Many, indeed, arise, so as to perform the religious services prescribed for the opening of the year, at the very hour of midnight; while others prefer to remain up until midnight, and to retire after the performance of the ceremonies; so that, between these people of different minds, the entire evening of the old year, and the morning of the new year, are kept as a watch night. During the first half of the night there will be heard frequent explosions of fire-crackers; but as soon as the clock has tolled off the last minute of the departing year, there arises such a roar, such a crackling, such explosions, and such a din, as none can appreciate who have not heard it. In China, the explosions are heaviest during the first morning; but here, the cannonading is kept up at intervals during three or four days. Now, it is the rattling of musketry; now, the roar of artillery. At one time it sounds like the fire of armies in the distance; but soon the batteries are opened nearer to us, and no other sound is heard above the din which reigns all through the Chinese quarter; while the entire street is filled with columns of smoke and sheets of flame, and the ground is red, not with blood, but with the remnants of exploded fire-crackers.

The fire, it may be, is opened by one house upon the street, and kept up for ten or twenty minutes; then another follows; and then another—exploding immense bunches suspended from poles hanging over the balcony. We have, also, crackers exploded in jars, in barrels, and in tin cans.

The different establishments seem to strive, each to outdo its neighbor in the quantity of powder it will burn, and the amount of noise it can make. Several of these houses consume three or four hundred dollars' worth of fire-crackers during as many days.

No question is more frequently asked than this: What is the specific object of this noisy demonstration? The object is, first, to frighten away bad spirits, to dispel evil influences, and to bid a good-by to all the bad luck of the year that is past; secondly, to propitiate the gods, and to secure good luck for the future—nobody will undertake to explain exactly how; and, thirdly, this firing of crackers and paper bombs is continued with the quite common though rather undefinable impression, that the greater the noise one makes, the happier he ought to be, and the better, also, will he please the gods and the spirits of the dead.

The worship of the early morning is performed by each family in its own house, all the members dressed in their best attire; and, as we have sometimes witnessed, it is attended to with peculiar seriousness—the head of the family leading and directing the ceremonies—all the other members being present. Heaven and earth are first adored; then, all the idols in the house, whatever they may be. The god of wealth will surely be one of them; also, the god of the kitchen; and, very likely, an image of the god of war; another may be the goddess of mercy, with a tablet or shrine to him who guards the door. Low prostrations are made before the ancestral tablets, and likewise before living parents and grandparents. Abundant offerings are spread before all these gods, which consist of rice, tea, wine, and fruits—both fresh and preserved—with burning incense, and candles, and paper representations of money.

The fruits and other offerings are permitted to remain in their places, before the images and altars, for several days.

Many go early to the temples on the New Year's morning, to worship the gods, either individually or in companies; and, for several days at the beginning

of the year, the temples are much frequented. Amidst the waving of the incense and the many bowings, we observe the lips of the worshippers in motion, and we are told that they are rendering thanks for past mercies, and imploring aid for the time to come.

In all the religious rites, and in the entertainments in each family, the spirits of ancestors are supposed to be present, to participate in the joys, and to partake of the offerings spread for them; and the hope is, that by these displays and rejoicings their hearts will be opened to help their children and descendants, and especially to grant them a year of prosperity in business, and exemption from calamities of every kind. Those who visit the Chinese, at this season, will notice that much effort has been made to adorn their rooms with flowers, and that the living and blooming plants and flowers are particularly coveted. Especial efforts are made to procure the bulbs of the *shwui sien* flower (hyacinth), and by the New Year to have it in full bloom, with its golden cup and silver saucer—for it is an emblem of purity.

Very early in the morning of the New Year, the streets are alive with servants, in their best dress, carrying the cards of their superiors, with their congratulations to friends whom it may not be convenient to visit for a few days—for, it is etiquette for dignitaries and the older people to remain at home and receive the visits, with the congratulations and good wishes, of the younger people and of those lower in rank than themselves. Inferiors, before their superiors, bow very low, and drop on one knee; children bow and knock the head before parents and grandparents; while equals seem to strive which shall bow the lowest, and which shall be the most lavish of compliments and congratulations. Each guest is expected to take something for good luck, and wishing a blessing on the house, he merely tastes a bit

of cake or sweetmeats, and a sip of tea from a tiny cup, exchanges cards, and is away to visit other friends. The cards which are received are laid in a conspicuous place, and not a little pride is felt in the exhibition of them. In some cases we may notice that, after a few days, these cards are pasted to the wall, perhaps to keep the person reminded as to who his friends may be, or perhaps to let others see in what consideration he himself is held by his acquaintances. The good wishes expressed at this season are not merely complimentary, but are regarded, also, partly as prayers to the gods, and, therefore, a Chinaman's New Year's calls are more prized than they usually are with us.

The very rich dress in which people make their New Year's calls is sometimes borrowed. In China, there are shops which have such things to loan; and from these shops poor people and servants sometimes deck themselves to such a degree as not to be recognized at first by their neighbors or masters.

One feature of a Chinese New Year in San Francisco, of which account may be made, is the number of callers from amongst our own people. The merchants appear highly delighted to see and to welcome all of our citizens whom they can recognize as friends, and all with whom they have had any kind of business connections; and to provide for such calls a large stock of wines, cigars and other refreshments has been secured. It should be noted, however, that liquors and cigars are not usually offered to the callers of their own race, but only to the *white people*. Many entire strangers enter the stores merely from curiosity, and they also are treated with the same hospitality, and even with a cordiality usually extended only to old acquaintances. They are likewise exposed to a raid from that class who are always thirsty, who go from house to house washing their

throats with champagne and brandy, taking at each place a cigar or two; while troops of boys and half-grown men, who, at other times, pelt and hoot at "John" when they meet him alone and where they will not be in danger of arrest, are clamorous for cigars, fire-crackers and sweetmeats.

Amongst such Chinese as are religiously inclined and are desirous to begin the year in such a manner as will best please the gods and be most likely to secure their favor in the various concerns of the coming months, this first day is devoted in a large measure to religious rites; they restrict themselves to a vegetable diet, and feastings are reserved for the following days. But here in San Francisco, where the greater portion of the Chinese are so engaged in business, or as laborers and servants, that only one day can be afforded for recreation, they endeavor to make the most they can of this one day; therefore, feasting begins very early, and there is an incredible amount of heavy eating performed during all these holidays. Private kitchens being incapable of meeting the demands of these occasions, the restaurants, besides the successive companies served at their own tables, have as much as they are able to do in sending hot dinners and lunches to those who prefer to be served in their own apartments.

These holidays in the Central Flower Kingdom continue for several days, according as people can afford the time. The poor will be forced out to their toil again after this one day of recreation, and to many this is the only real rest-day of the whole year. A portion of the mechanics and small traders open their shops on the second day, more on the third, and more still on the fourth, while a few refuse to resume business until the sixteenth.

As before intimated, this is the season in which the entire nation abandons itself to enjoyment; the study seems to be how to crowd the most pleasure into

the period allotted for it. Each person seeks enjoyment in the manner suggested by his tastes or passions. Betel nut is on almost every table in the reception-rooms, and offered to guests; inner apartments are liberally supplied with opium and pipes; cards and dominos are in use everywhere, and men and women become equally engrossed in the games; the numerous gambling shops are crowded without cessation, except to give the operators time for refreshments; the owners of the tables relieving each other in order to get time for sleep. Day and night the theatres are open, and crowds go and come. While in the theatre, the people amuse themselves with eating nuts and fruit; in gossiping, or watching the play. There are three such places of amusement now in San Francisco, all of which appear to be profitable to the stockholders. Forth from many Chinese apartments, during this season, will come the sounds of their various stringed and wind instruments; and the performers seem to enjoy it, for they think it is music; there is also much of what they call singing. Children and young men congregate in the alleys for such sports as they are acquainted with, and practical jokes are occasionally played upon each other.

At their feasts, after too much of the game of "guessing fingers," and of paying the forfeit by drinking another cup of wine, faces grow red and tongues run rapidly, and sometimes the company breaks up with slight misunderstandings.

After several days and nights of such games, frolic and dissipation, it is not strange if Nature begins to assert her claims, and to inflict certain penalties for the transgression of her laws, or to demand payment in kind for the time of which she has been defrauded, and which she requires to be given to sleep and repose; consequently we will meet with many whose dull eyes, aching heads and troubled stomachs emphatically tell

us that they wish they had only let alone that one feast too many. There is, also, after the few first days of dissipation, a growing inclination to retire earlier to bed, and to rise later in the morning.

Our cities and towns which have Chinese streets will have a much larger population at these seasons than at others, because there is a general gathering at these centres; and all who can be spared, leave the ranch and the lonely mining camp to mingle with the multitudes around the places of amusement. Ships sailing for China during the later months of the year are well filled with passengers, all who were able having arranged their plans so as to spend these holidays with their families.

As the king of terrors is no respecter of persons, and has little regard for man's arrangements for pleasure, we find him going his rounds on holidays as well as at other times; but where deaths occur during this period, the funerals are conducted more quietly than usual, and fewer people attend the departing one, to bid him adieu as he starts on his journey through the realms of the unknown and dreaded future, while those who are wearing mourning for near relatives not long deceased, are not, according to the book of rites, expected to make or receive New Year's calls, nor participate very much in the festivities of the season.

There are some particular ceremonies appropriate to nearly every day of the first half of the first month, which concern now one and then another class of the people, and which are seldom forgotten in their own country, but here their observance is less regarded.

On the first full moon of the year, at night, we have in China the feast of lanterns, when houses are illuminated, and processions, with banners, lanterns and fireworks, parade the streets, in which practice Western nations are learning to imitate them very well.

The seals of office, which, in all the

public departments, before the close of the year, were formally deposited in their appropriate casket and secured by lock and key, and by another seal, are, on the twentieth day of the first month, again brought forth with many tedious ceremonies and religious rites.

During the time that has elapsed since the laying up of the seals till the opening of them again, all public business has been suspended, and public officers, from the highest to the lowest, have been keeping-holiday.

Kungh!, *Kungh!*—I respectfully wish you joy—is a form of salutation which may be heard at any time, but at this season it is on every person's lips. People are congratulated according to their age, occupation, or position. Meeting a man of letters or a student, they say: "We wish you joy *in the prospect that* this year you will be advanced and win *at the examinations*, and eat the skin of the roasted pig (in the feasts of congratulation for your success), and that by successive steps each degree may be obtained." Those already possessing honorable titles are thus saluted: "Venerable sir! we respectfully congratulate you, *in the hope that* this year you may ascend in rank and receive increased salary, and as continuing to mount till the highest grade of office shall be attained."

The mechanic and laborer are "respectfully" assured that the coming year shall be one in which much wealth shall be acquired, in which the hand shall obtain what the heart desires, and

all their expectations shall be realized. Merchants receive such compliments as this: "We respectfully wish you this year, the joy of fortunate purchases and good sales, with great profit, *even to* the making you rich, and may all things prosper according to your desires."

Indeed, every person is met with a hearty wish that the year may be prosperous, that every undertaking may succeed, that he may get rich; while all married people may hear the welcome prayer that this year a son may be added to perpetuate the name and to continue the ancestral offerings. People of venerable years are congratulated on their health and vigor, together with a wish for many added years, and ever-accumulating happiness.

As we did not, in the beginning of this article, propose to ourselves any such work as that of describing minutely all the usages and ceremonies to be observed on a Chinese New Year's day (for neither writer nor reader could afford to expend so great an amount of time and patience as the task would demand), we will here make our *Kungh!* to the reader, assured that he will feel very much like congratulating himself at being relieved from further reading on the subject; while, if so disposed, he will be at liberty to pursue these investigations by means of personal observation on and after the tenth day of February, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine, the same being the Tung Chi, Eighth year, First month, and First day.