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IN YOSEMITE SHADOWS.

“Yosemite, Sept.—: Come at once—the year wanes; would you see the wondrous transformation, the embalming of the dead Summer in windings of purple and gold and bronze—come quickly, before the white pall covers it—delay no longer. The waters are low and fordable, the snows threaten, but the hours are yet propitious; and such a welcome awaits you as Solomon in all his glory could not have lavished on Sheba’s approaching queen. * * * ”

There was much more of the same sort of high-toned epistolary rhetoric, written and sent by a dear hand, whose fanciful pen seemed touched by the ambrosial tints of Autumn. So the year was going out in a gorgeous carnival, before the Lent-like solemnity of Winter was assumed.

I had only two things to consider now: First, was it already too late to hasten thither, and enjoy the splendid spectacle so freely offered and so alluring; secondly, could I, if yet in time, venture so boldly upon the edge of winter, and risk

the possibility—nay, probability—of being snow-bound for four or six months, thirty miles from any human habitation?

I did not long consider. I felt every moment that the soul of Summer was passing. I scented the ascending incense of smoking and crackling boughs. What a requiem was being chanted by all the tremulous and broken voices of Nature. Would I, could I, longer forbear to join the passionate and tumultuous *miserere*? It seemed that I could not, for gathering about me the voluminous furs of Siberia, I bade adieu to friends, not without some forebodings awakened by the admonitions of my elders, then, dropping all the folly of the world, like a monk I went silently and alone into the monastery of a Sierran solitude, resigned, trusting, prayerful.

What an entering in it was! With slow, devotional steps I approached the valley. There was a thin veil of snow over the upper trail. It was smooth and unbroken as I came upon it, following the blazed trees in my way. Footprints

OCCULT SCIENCE IN THE CHINESE QUARTER.

A CHINAMAN is not often astonished at any thing. From infancy up, he has been accustomed to hear very wonderful stories. Most of the people believe the accounts of the strange and miraculous feats performed by their innumerable gods and goddesses, and any new story of a similar character does not awaken much wonder. This credulity, as will be perceived, is in the way of teaching them the truth, it being very difficult to induce them to examine evidences, and to discriminate between the true and the false.

Chinamen seem, indeed, to have a fondness for the marvelous; and, never having been taught to trace many of the ordinary phenomena of nature to their true causes, they are easily persuaded to attribute them to supernatural agency. Thus, thunder is the voice, and lightning the messenger, of the thunder god; clouds are the dragon of the air, and rain is the water ejected from his mouth. The sea roars, and is troubled, when the dragon of the great deep is enraged, and is stirring himself up; and when the dragon of the earth chooses to move his body, or stir his limbs, the ground will be agitated: and that will be what we denominate an earthquake.

It is extremely rare to find a Sadducee among the Chinamen; on the contrary, every person, so far as we have learned, believes in the doctrine of a future state, and in the existence of spirits; and they believe in the existence of many orders or classes of spirits, and that those spirits interest themselves in all the affairs of mortals, and that their agency is potent: consequently, there is no manner

of business that a Chinaman might engage in but he would do well, as he thinks, to consult some of the spirits about it—no calamity may befall him, or sickness visit him, but that the spirits have had some agency in bringing it on; and therefore their aid must be invoked to remove it. As the spirits are invisible, and dwell among the things unseen, they may be supposed to know more of the future than we who are yet in the body: consequently, there is a continual resort to the gods, or to those who have a reputation as being the mediums of the gods, for information respecting the future; or, in general terms, Chinamen believe in signs and omens, and in the responses of the gods, and are liberal patrons of the fortune-tellers.

That the Chinese, as a nation, should be thus superstitious, is not surprising; since their ancient sages, whom they worship, and whose writings are held in the highest veneration, were believers in omens, and thought that the spirits were interested in the affairs of men.

Confucius, the chief of their sages, was a believer in Fate. He said: "Life and death have their determined appointment [or Fate]; riches and honors depend upon Heaven." He said: "If my principles are to advance, it is so ordered; if they are to fall to the ground, it is so ordered." He said: "Without recognizing the ordinances of Heaven, [the Fates] it is impossible to be a superior man." He was superstitious, as may be seen from some things which are related of him, such as these: "On a sudden clap of thunder, or a violent wind, he would change countenance; if his mat was not straight, he did not sit on it; when eating, he did not converse; when in bed,

he did not speak; he required his sleeping dress to be half as long again as his body;" and many other trifles of a similar kind. His admirers contend that most of these peculiarities were simply because of his extreme desire to preserve "propriety" under all circumstances; while most readers will be likely to see in them some indications of superstitious notions lurking in the heart.

Without encumbering these pages with dry details respecting the principles and modes of operating in fortune-telling, astrology, soothsaying, demonology, geomancy, etc., we will merely give an example in each department; designed simply to illustrate the state of Chinese life and ethics, as they exist in California.

FORTUNE-TELLING.

Near the corner of Jackson and Dupont streets may be seen a smallish, cunning-looking man, seated on a stool or chair, with a little table before him. On the table is a can containing a few slips of wood, and on each slip is inscribed a Chinese character and a few cabalistic words; also, in a flat dish are little rolls of red paper, on the inner side of which are similar characters or marks. He has writing materials; and there are cards lying on the table, which, being translated, read as follows:

Card No. 1. "Good and evil fortune have their exact [or prescribed] limits." The reverse side reads: "Calamities and blessings do not come by mistake."

No. 2. "Examining with deep penetration, we understand the successes or disasters of the future days." "Pointing out with perspicuity the period when troubles and annoyances of long standing will be turned to gladness and prosperity."

No. 3. "Fortunes told by means of the eight diagrams; destinies determined by a study of the face and hands: and all like the gods" [as unerring as the gods].

And here follows a list of a few of the subjects concerning which he professes to give information, viz.: "Trade; plans and hopes; removals; about selecting partners; seeking wealth; lawsuits; health; buying servants; family matters; as to burial-places; about journeying; as to when one's friends will arrive, and how they are faring on the way; in regard to sickness; what town to go to for trade; about going to work; about digging gold; about gambling; changing business or occupation.

"For information on either of these topics, separately, a charge of ten cents each. The price for revealing the destiny by the face can not be fixed beforehand. [This, we infer, depends upon the paying ability of the applicant.] For writing out a chart of destiny: a brief one, half a dollar; a more extended one, a full dollar.

"We also write letters for people, as they may dictate."

No. 4 is his medical card; for he seems to practice the healing art, as well as tell fortunes:

"Ko Poi On [the doctor's own name, or title] gratuitously cures external and internal diseases of every variety, and those wonderful and difficult to be cured by others.

"Prescriptions, [written] and plasters, pills, and powders [for sale].

"The party having received an entire cure, we will receive his thanks." [That is, we will receive such money, or other gifts, as his gratitude may prompt him to present.]

This fortune-telling doctor once showed us, for inspection, a written agreement between himself and a female patient, in which, in the event of his curing her of a certain malady within a certain specified time, she obligates herself to pay him the sum of fifty dollars.

The "eight diagrams" are principally depended on by this professor in revealing future events, and in bringing to

light things which are hidden from other mortals. These original eight diagrams, by combinations, are multiplied to sixty-four; and one is written on the wooden slip, and another upon the roll of red paper. The person who has come to consult about his fortune having drawn out one or more of each of these slips, the diviner takes them, separates the diagrams, re-arranges and recombines them, and, together with other signs, and by the use of the arts which he has studied, deduces an answer, which, while it may contain some distant allusion to the matter inquired about, is sufficiently obscure and mysterious to be received with confidence by ignorant and superstitious people.

These diagrams are said to have been invented by Fuk Hí, the founder of the Chinese monarchy, to whom they were suggested by his seeing one of them upon the back of an animal which came toward him once as he was walking upon the bank of a river. That animal is reported to have had the head of a dragon, and the body of a horse. The same diagrams were afterward modified by one Mun Wong, of the Chau dynasty. "The diagrams are merely trinities of straight lines, upon which has been founded a system of ethics, deduced by giving names to each diagram, and then associating the meanings of these names, according to the changes which can be rung upon the sixty-four combinations." [See "Middle Kingdom."] The "Yik King," one of the Five Classics, is called also the Book of Changes, and is held in great veneration for its antiquity and its occult wisdom, which is supposed to be contained in its mystic lines, viz.: in these eight diagrams, which form the basis of the philosophy and cosmogony taught by Fuk Hí. As may be supposed, therefore, this book, the Yik King, is very much studied by diviners, astrologers, and all who affect an acquaintance with the occult sciences. But it is a

book about which ordinary scholars profess to know but little, and concerning which Confucius himself said: "If some years were added to my life, fifty might be devoted to studying the Yik, [the Yik King] and then I might come to be without great faults."

The commentary on this passage reads thus: "By studying the Yik one comes to understand the doctrine of the lucky and unlucky, of decreasing and increasing, of gaining and losing, of advancing and retiring, of abiding and perishing, of living and dying: therefore, having learned all these principles, one need have but few faults. Because the sages have seen that the Yik was deep and unfathomable, therefore Confucius said, that in teaching men he would cause them to know that by no means might they omit the study of the Yik; and yet he would not have them suppose that it could be easily learned."

ASTROLOGY.

Having occasion, not long since, to step into the cellar of one of the Chinese stores on Commercial street, we found there a man busy with his pen, and quite absorbed in calculations of some kind or other. It was a store-room for goods, and there was little space left when half-a-dozen people had crowded in; moreover, the light in the apartment was very dim. But what might this man be doing? His paper is covered with Chinese characters, and with diagrams of various kinds; some of which are in black ink, and some in red. There are squares, and circles, and arcs, and triangles; there are straight marks, and crooked marks; perpendicular, horizontal, and oblique lines. It is not geometry, nor trigonometry, nor conic sections. On a shelf within reach are piles of books, and all of them evidently treatises upon the subject of this man's art, whatever that art may be.

We examine the sheet upon which he

is engaged, and we find a strange mixture of characters and signs. We find the names of certain stars and constellations, in combination with the "ten heavenly stems and the twelve earthly branches," which are the characters, being combined in pairs, that form the terms by which the respective sixty years of the cycle are named. We see, also, the characters which designate the hours of the day and night; also, the names of the five elements, as metal, wood, water, fire, earth. The characters forming the names for the years of the cycle represent, some of them the male, and some the female principle of the dual powers. On the sheet before us, these different sets of characters are arranged in many different combinations, and occupying various positions; alongside of some of the characters we notice a red mark, and we learn that these are the lucky signs, while the others are unlucky. We now satisfy ourselves, by inquiry, of what we suspected from the first: that this man is a fortune-teller; and, on further examination, we gather that the principal element in his system is astrology.

We borrow one set of his books; though but little light is to be gained from the books alone. To understand them, one needs a teacher, and that teacher should be the fortune-teller himself, who has spent a life-time in the study of this subject. In China, fortune-tellers—the blind ones especially—have boys apprenticed to them, who lead them about, and observe how their masters manage different cases; and, when they are at home, the master, by degrees, lets his pupil into the mysteries of his profession. Therefore, it could not be presumed that those learned in the art would gratuitously impart to others the knowledge which has cost them so much pains to acquire, and by which they obtain their support. Very many books have been written on this subject; "more than

a donkey could carry," as the people are accustomed to say. These books which we borrow were written, as the title-page asserts, by one Chín Hí, about nine hundred years ago; with additions by subsequent authors.

We ascertain that our astrologer is "working up" the fortunes of his customers. They have given him certain data, such as the year, month, day, and hour in which they were born; and in the hands of this astrologer these few facts seem to be sufficient. Like the "nervous centre" of the human system, they appear to be the centre or source out of which grows a diagram, and other diagrams grow out of that, and these diagrams swell into a chart, which continues to expand until we have a book of many pages. The book, however, will be large or small, according to the pay which the astrologer is to receive. He consents to lend us one of these completed manuscripts, on condition that no other person shall see it. The individual whose destiny is here "demonstrated," is thirty-one years old. As the fortunes of the following years will depend in many respects upon the events of the past, our professor has begun back at the twenty-first year of the age of his subject, and has written out a chart of the ten years up to the present time.

Having finished that decade, he next gives a synopsis of what the following decade will be, and then proceeds to particularize respecting the fortunes of each year—of which we offer a translation:

"*The Thirty-first Year*—[being by his arrangement the last of the third decade of the man's life] will have the seventh month with good and bad fortune intermingled, because the stars which govern at this time are some of them lucky and some unlucky: therefore, the man must be uncommonly careful, and walk with circumspection. Possibly, there may be deaths in the family. Still, the year will have some good fortune, with presages

of better luck in the year to come." Here follows a synopsis of what the next ten years will be.

"*Thirty-second Year*.—The evil has passed, and good luck has returned. What was lost may now be recovered; but unfortunately the *tai han* [the great circuit of ten years] will not be wholly good. Nevertheless, this being the beginning of a ten-year series, it is encouraging that it is so favorable; for it is a key to the remaining nine.

"*Thirty-third Year*.—This will be a favorable year for accumulating wealth, and for the general success of whatever is undertaken; with this disadvantage, that there will be a lack of the countenance and support of worthy and influential men: consequently, there will be need of particular caution and attention to business, without indulging any negligence whatever. In the second month, be doubly circumspect. In the seventh month, look out for something strange. In the midst of evil fortune, good fortune will suddenly arise. Putting this and the previous year together, they will on the whole be favorable for the increase of wealth; and the purpose of returning home may now be realized.

"*Thirty-fourth Year*.—If during this year the voice of the crow [a bird of evil omen] and of the magpie [a bird of good omen] should both be heard together, do not undertake any new enterprise. The first and fourth months will be remarkable for liability to losses: therefore, at these seasons be uncommonly careful. Expect to be somewhat troubled and vexed, and not altogether in good spirits.

"*Thirty-fifth Year*.—Much good fortune: prosperous business: wealth accumulating: all things to your mind: enjoying comfort and happiness.

"*Thirty-sixth Year*.—The *tai han* [the great circuit of ten years] and the *siau han* [the small circuit of one year] being both favorable, although there will be bad fates as well as good, yet the good

will overcome the bad. You may expect to meet with things which are to be feared, but the star *Kai Shan* will help to neutralize the evil influences; so that, on the whole, it will be a year favorable for general prosperity. The ninth month will not be one of unmingled good; still, there will not be cause for serious anxiety.

"*Thirty-seventh Year*.—Means of support less certain. Wealthy friends less reliable: therefore, avoid planning new enterprises; sweep before your own door, [be economical] and have few people in your employ—they may deceive you. In the second and eighth months, you may have to put on mourning: expect bereavements and sickness, and diminishing of estate; nevertheless, the omens are for the most part favorable.

"*Thirty-eighth Year*.—This all favorable. Wealth increases; a son is born. Two lucky stars. Within and without the house every thing succeeds, so that the adversity of the previous year is forgotten by means of the prosperity of this.

"*Thirty-ninth Year*.—Good and bad are intermingled; but the good predominates. The good and bad omens are combined in such a way as to show that the evil will turn to good, and that the year, as a whole, will average well. The sixth month will be bad; the other months better.

"*Fortieth Year*.—Good-omened stars predominate; but the star *To Lo*, of evil omen, may cause sickness: therefore, avoid exposure to either heat or cold; then there will not be danger. In the second and fifth months, things may not all go to suit you; but the other months will be better.

"*Forty-first Year*.—Omens bad. Can not promise good luck. Therefore be careful. Hold fast what you have. Hazard nothing, nor launch out into speculations."

Thus ends the second chapter of ten

years, and then we have a syllabus of the following decade, and afterward the specifications for each year—making, altogether, a book of twenty octavo pages, for which a fee of five dollars is exacted. The man might have had his destinies revealed up to his sixty-first, or seventy-first, or one-hundredth year, just as easily, had he been willing to invest more money in this way.

In a book called "The Mirror of the Mind," we have the remark: "If you desire a prosperous future, do nothing to destroy your future; then why inquire about your destiny?" Our astrologer's advice seems to amount to nearly the same thing; for where he indicates that such or such a month will be unpropitious, or that there will be certain unlucky omens, he recommends the use of especial caution, economy, or industry, in order that the evil influences may be counteracted. He might have added: By employing the proper means, a person may hope to succeed in his undertakings, though the omens be bad; while without the use of such means he can not succeed, whatever the omens may be.

This astrologer in the Commercial street cellar appears to be well patronized, for we find him busy at his diagrams every day, from morning till night; and he constantly has on hand a variety of subjects, whose fortunes he is working up.

People who frequently pass up and down Jackson street will encounter a very tall, lean, and somewhat stooping Chinaman, with a long, grizzly beard, a pipe in one hand, a quick, nervous step, and a rather sinister look from his flashing little eye. He also is an astrologer; but he better understands how to keep his arts and himself wrapped up in mystery than his brother professor of whom we have spoken. He locks himself within his room, and when called, comes and merely puts a portion of his grizzly head

out at the partly-opened door. If the caller is on legitimate business, he may come into the little anteroom; but the *arcana* of the inner sanctum few are allowed to inspect, although we once visited him at his rooms, when he was following his profession at Marysville. He evidently spends many hours of every twenty-four in sweet communion with his precious opium pipe, and often may his spectral form be seen darting in or out of the gambling-houses.

Besides the stars and constellations, with the heavenly stems and earthly branches, the horary characters, and the characters which are used in forming the sixty-year cycle, the dual powers, the five elements, and twelve animals—besides all these agencies which are employed by the astrologers, they also make use of certain other diagrams, which we find in their almanacs, viz.: the pictures of what are termed the "kings of the four seasons." Each season has its king; and on the head, hand, shoulder, belly, pelvis, knee, and feet of the figure are inscribed the characters designating different hours of the day and night; the location of these characters being shifted in each of the four figures. Therefore, whenever a child is born a record must be made, not only of the star or sign of the zodiac under which it is born, and of the year of the cycle, but of the season and particular hour. All these data are entered—in some cases, at least—in a great register, which is deposited in one of the temples within the district; and thus it becomes in a certain sense the Book of Fate. Should this register be lost, a fearful consternation is excited; such as was once experienced at Ningpo, when foreigners were charged with purloining this register from a temple, in order that by this means, as was asserted, they might, by their spells and supernatural influences, be better able to bring calamities on the people, and destroy their lives.

The data above referred to are impor-

tant elements in making out the horoscope of an individual.

The almanac in which we find these diagrams gives a brief statement of the popular belief respecting them, and we are told that "to be born in the ruler's head, [that is, at that hour of the day or night which belongs to the head of the ruler of that particular season] during all the life one will have no sorrow; those of a lowly condition will become rich, with sufficient food and raiment; those seeking political positions shall obtain them, and those of honorable parentage shall be advanced to greater dignity; and women born at this season and hour shall have peace, prosperity, and honorable marriage."

Those born at that period of time belonging to the hand, shall be successful in trade; going abroad, honorable men shall receive them; at home, they shall have plenty; their youth shall be peaceful, in middle age all things shall prosper, and in old age both hands shall be filled with accumulated wealth.

To be born at the time controlled by the shoulder is favorable; belly, ditto; knees, mixed—neither altogether favorable, nor altogether unfavorable; but to be born at the time indicated by the feet is decidedly unfortunate; yet, if one so fated practices fasting, (becomes a Buddhist priest or devotee) he may enjoy happiness and a life of peace; but he must not abide at his paternal home. If a female, she will be doomed to widowhood and a second marriage; if a male, to loss of wives, or to journeyings in distant lands, over hills, and far away from his native place.

DIVINING STICKS.

A common method of divination, and practiced universally by the Chinese, is by the "spiritual slips" and the divining sticks, with which the persons seeking responses go directly to the gods, presenting their offerings, performing the

prostrations, and offering their petitions; and then expecting the gods to answer by means of the slips or the divining sticks. These sticks may be seen on the altars of every Chinese temple. They are a pair of blocks, shaped like the new moon; flat on one side, and round on the other. The flat side represents the male principle of the dual powers, and the round side the female principle. To get an answer by these instruments, the individual, after worship and prayer, frames mentally his question, to which the answer, either "yes" or "no," may be given; as, for example, he asks: Shall I go to sea to-day? or, Shall I take Sam Kí for a partner? or, Shall I bet on such or such a letter on the next lottery ticket? Then he throws the blocks. One round side up, and one flat, is favorable; while both flat, or both round, are unfavorable. The favorable may be his answer "yes," and the unfavorable "no." If, out of three throws, he gets two favorable answers, he is satisfied; if not, he tries three times three throws. The method of divining by the spiritual slips has been already described on page 456, Vol. I, of the *OVERLAND*, and need not here be repeated.

MEDIUMS.

Like people in ancient times, who were rebuked for not only "seeking to the idols," but "to the charmers, and to them that had familiar spirits, and to the wizards"—"wizards that peep and mutter," so here in our city there are wizards—women that peep and mutter—and people "seek to them," "for the living to the dead." Living men not only seek to the dead idols, but through pretended "mediums" they seek to dead men. Their witches profess to be able to summon from the shades any person who may be called for, whether he be recently deceased, or whether he has lain among the dead longer than has *Sámuel*. *K'wai Ma* is the term by which

these women are generally designated by their own people; and the English word *hag* is a very suitable translation for it.

The objects about which they are consulted are various. A person finds himself involved in difficulties, and he fancies that a spirit from the other world can inform him of the cause of his troubles, and point out the course by which to escape from them; another wishes to know how to get rich, or whether a certain contemplated journey shall be undertaken; another desires information about absent friends, or missing property; and they presume that the spirits are able to tell them: therefore they apply to the mediums, to summon a spirit and interpret its communications; or, as they express it, "lend their mouth and their body to the spirit for the occasion."

In China, the rule is, when you apply to a medium, to take one pint and three handfuls of uncooked rice, thirty-six copper cash, and three incense sticks. These are ostensibly for the purpose of inviting the spirit, who may be supposed to be in need of provisions or money. If the spirit does not carry off the money and rice, the old woman can keep it; and this may be her fee. In California, should silver pieces be substituted for the copper cash, no objection will be raised by the *Kwai Ma*.

Having put herself into the proper state, and learned as much as possible of the circumstances, history, and expectations of the applicant, the old woman proceeds to summon the spirit whose presence is desired. A small handful of the rice is scattered around, the three incense sticks are lighted and stuck in the medium's hair; she begins to act strangely, and to mutter; her eyes close, and her head drops on the table which is placed before her, and still she continues to peep and to mutter. At length the spirit announces its presence, and a colloquy commences be-

tween it and the person on whose account it has been summoned. In many cases, as we are told, (for this is gathered from reliable parties, not from personal observation) the spirit begins with its own complaints, and with charging that the cause of the difficulties from which the applicant is suffering, is, that it (the spirit) has been neglected by surviving friends, and has been allowed to go naked and hungry; and, therefore, the very first thing to be done, even before proceeding further in the business before them, should be to bring in a plentiful meal. Whereupon, the person hurries off to a restaurant, and collects the articles which were ordered by the spirit, and all the repast of the most superior quality. The provisions are placed before the medium, who all this time remains, of course, in an unconscious state; and immediately the spirit, by its medium, addresses itself to the feast, eating and muttering still; expressing satisfaction with the taste of the viands, and pronouncing blessings on the giver of them. The spirit may give scraps of information touching the future; but it is quite common—indeed, it is its almost universal practice—to prescribe a course of penances and religious rites as the means by which the individual seeking its counsel may either escape from present calamities, or avoid troubles in the future, or secure that favor which he has come to ask. He, very likely, will be told what particular temple to patronize, what amount of offerings to purchase, and what number of masses to have said.

It is shrewdly observed by some of the incredulous people that the medium herself, not being *altogether* unconscious, has an eye to personal advantage in these directions, as she will doubtless receive a percentage of the profits on the articles sold, and on the fees paid in by those people whom she sends to the temple.

EXORCISM.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the Chinese consider it fortunate that the ghosts can be summoned from the spirit world when their services are needed; but they seem, also, to think that there may be too much even of this good thing; for they often fancy that they are visited by ghosts who come unbidden and stay too long, and who cause much annoyance while they stay; therefore, while they think it convenient to have at hand those who can raise the devil, they are, also, glad to know where to find those who understand how to lay him again if he is troublesome.

The Chinese live in constant dread of evil spirits: therefore, the exorcists, of whom there is no lack, find abundant employment.

There are various expedients for casting out devils, for expelling evil influences, and for guarding the door so that evil spirits may not enter; and there are charms designed to be hung up in the house, or worn about the person, which may prevent the approach of these spiritual adversaries, or render invulnerable from their attacks. We shall not undertake a full description of these till our readers and we have much more time to spare than at present; and on this occasion, one brief account must suffice.

The Chinese have no regular priests in this country; but there is a set of men who get their living by performing the offices of the priest, and sometimes by adding to those offices the functions of the conjurer. These people, whether they be men or women, are commonly termed *Nam Mo*—which means witch, wizard, sorcerer.

When a *Nam Mo* is summoned to expel a troublesome spirit from the premises, or to turn the devil out of a person, he generally proceeds in the following manner:

With his hand he seizes a pen and

dips it in a vermilion dye; with his mouth he repeats the form of a curse, then writes that curse upon a sheet of yellow paper; next, this charm, or curse, is burned, and the ashes mingled in a cup of water. Now he fills his mouth with this bewitched water; with one hand he seizes a piece of wood on which are engraved three stars and the words *Lui Ling*, the mandate of the Thunder god (Jupiter Tonans); with the other hand he grasps a sword, and assuming ferocious looks and attitude, he spurts the water from his mouth in all directions, smites upon the table with a crashing noise the mandates (or the bolts) of Jove, brandishes high in air his sword, striking and thrusting right and left, while rushing hither and thither, and stamping with his feet; and all the time cursing the devil, calling him by his name, in case he knows it, and saying: "I adjure you [such or such a devil] to come out of this person, or to leave this house and these premises, and betake yourself again to your own infernal regions."

By this time the devil is expelled; or, at least, he ought to be.

CHARMS, ETC.

We have spoken of charms as a means of protection from evil spirits, and preservation from evil influences.

Some people of other nations nail a horse-shoe over the door to keep out invisible enemies: the Chinese paste over the door, or in other parts of the house, a strip of paper with something written on it as a charm. The pictures or images of tigers or lions which may be seen in Chinese houses are for the same purpose, viz.: to guard the place from evil demons. Such charms are also worn upon the person, inclosed in a little bag, suspended from the neck or from a button-hole. An ear-ring with mystic character inscribed upon it is a charm; also, the image sometimes seen upon the children's caps. To lock up the life, or to

secure from death and procure longevity, a silver or gilded lock with certain characters engraved upon it is hung, in many cases, upon the necks of children. Ancient coins and other relics of antiquity are preserved as charms.

The Chinese are endlessly troubled with omens, and are very voluminous in their interpretations of them.

The flying of a crow or hawk over one's head is a bad sign; but the voice of a singing-bird in the same position is a good sign. Still, these signs are modified by the direction from which the birds may come, the course toward which they fly, together with other contingencies. There are auguries connected with the involuntary twitching of the muscles of the eyebrows, and arms, and other parts of the body, which have their peculiar import, according to the times of the day at which the twitching was experienced. Good or bad luck is announced in the hum of the tea-kettle, the fizzing of the frying-pan, the flame and sparks of a candle when first lighted, the whistle or moaning of the wind, the crowing of the cock, the chirp of the cricket, and so on; but it would be long before this chapter would come to an end were we even to give a catalogue of all the omens and signs.

This regard for omens, fear of the spirits, and anxiety about luck, is a source of endless annoyance and expense, not only to the people who are thus troubled, but to their neighbors, also. In China, if a man builds a house so high, or in such a position as to interfere with his neighbor's good luck, he may have to pull it down or remove it. If changes are made in the neighborhood of tombs, so as to disturb the propitious influences which had existed there, then some remedy must be found: either the disturbing cause must be removed, or the tomb must be rebuilt in another place. Sometimes, when families have continued mis-

fortunes, sickness, or troubles of any nature, they desire to know the cause; and so, by means of the priest, the *Nam Mo*, or *Kwai Ma*, they may learn that some relative is not resting comfortably in his grave; whereupon another resting-place must be found for the bones and for the spirit of the dead. A new house erected, or any other structure, may steal the good luck away from other houses, especially if the new building is higher than the old ones. When Selby & Co.'s shot-tower was erected, a few years ago, in this city, the Chinamen shook their heads, and presaged a fearful loss of luck to somebody.

Any want of success, miscarriage of business, or calamities of whatever nature, are wont to be attributed to the displeasure of the gods, or to some unpropitious circumstance. Storms at sea and continual head-winds are generally laid to the account of some unlucky thing, and, perhaps, to some unfortunate Jonah; and search is sometimes made to ascertain "for whose cause it is that this evil is come upon them." About fifteen years ago, a ship, with several hundred passengers, from China to this port, had a long and dreadfully stormy passage. The Chinamen were sure that the gods were angry; but what might be the particular cause of that anger they were unable to ascertain, until one day a wise one of the company discovered a venerable gentleman reading in the Confucian Analects. Here, then, must be the reason for all their raging winds and angry seas: Confucius, while living, never went to sea, and he taught that people should stay at home, cultivate their paternal acres, comfort their parents, and guard their ancestral sepulchres. Confucius was no friend to the ocean, and his books are like himself: therefore, these books must be disposed of. The old gentleman was forced to deliver up his favorite classics, and to see them cast overboard—an offering to the spirits of the deep.