

respects there is constant progress, and there is only need of the helping hands of those who go, to bring about a better state of things.

The last word of advice to would-be settlers is this: If you wish for full and reliable information in regard to California and all or any of its interests, apply for the same to the California Immigrant Union, No. 328 Montgomery street, San Francisco, and, if the writer may judge from her own experience, you will be served promptly, amply, and without cost.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE CHINAMAN IN CALIFORNIA.

JOHN CHINAMAN is too important an institution in California to be dismissed with a mere passing notice. There is no question connected with the development and present condition of the State to which the writer gave more patient and unprejudiced attention than to this. What has been the result of the immense emigration from the "Central Flowery Kingdom" upon the material interests of the Pacific coast? Have these almond-eyed laborers been a help or a hinderance? Truthful answers to these questions were sought for with diligence, and every means of gaining accurate information called into requisition. Personal observation and competent testimony were arranged side by side and compared. Among intelligent men there seemed to be no great difference of opinion as to the beneficial results of their labors as railroad builders, as miners, as gardeners, as agriculturists, and as assistants in manufacturing establishments.

As to their employment in any of these capacities, the verdict was almost always in their favor. That without their help in these directions the natural wealth of California could not have reached its present development in a quarter of a century to come, was generally admitted.

The old idea that Chinamen are specialists and imitators only has generally been thrown aside by those

who come to know them well. There is need of but little study of their character as a nation to show that such notions of the Chinese are *prima facie* untrue.

In all the world's history, China furnishes the sole and only example of a nation that has worked out its own salvation from barbarism and come up unaided into the light of civilization. Even ancient Egypt, the cradle of the sciences, kindled its lights at the hearth-stone of the race in western Asia. Greece borrowed light from Egypt, and Rome transferred the firmament, all ablaze with light, from conquered Greece to her own imperial realm. But China, walled in by a cordon that was almost impenetrable, grew up from a barbarism common to all the nations into the full stature of a civilized country from its own inherent power and genius, without help from abroad or any imported influence. When Buddhism was introduced into China, in the second century after Christ, the people had already advanced beyond anything that Buddhism could do as a civilizer.

Niebuhr made the assertion "that no single example can be brought forward of an actually savage people having independently become civilized." But China accomplished this impossibility without a model and without a helper. What no European nation has ever done this Asiatic people accomplished; and they were already well advanced in their progress when Greece was dimly spelling out its alphabet by the help of the flickering light brought from Egypt; when our own Saxon ancestors were clothed in skins and feeding on acorns; and when they were worshipping Odin, and making huge wicker images to be filled with smiling babes and rollicking children

taken from their mothers' arms and burned in honor of their god, the Chinese were already living in houses, obeying the law of marriage, draining swamps, clearing jungles and cultivating the ground thus reclaimed. Without admitting the full extent of their claims to antiquity as a nation, the laws of evidence require us to accept as true the words found in their annals, dating back to the reign of Fuh-hi, two thousand eight hundred and fifty-two years before Christ. They not only admit their original barbarism, but show by historical records how they advanced, step by step, from the starting-point. Fuh-hi himself gave a new impulse to their progress. He found the people dwelling in huts and caves, clothed in skins and living promiscuously together. He left them, at the end of his life and reign, occupying better houses, wearing better clothing, eating better food, and obedient to the law of marriage. In the second century after Fuh-hi the cycle of sixty years was introduced as a mode of computing time, and has been in use ever since, more than forty-five centuries. No other chronological era ever lasted so long. Two thousand years before Christ, when as yet Troy and Athens were not, the Chinese had an alphabet, rude to be sure, but still sufficient for a purpose. They knew the properties of the arch, observed and made records of solar eclipses, used iron in the construction of bridges, and had some practical knowledge of metallurgy, specimens in the workmanship of which have come down to the present day. The Chinese wall was built two hundred years before Christ. There is a story current, though not altogether well authenticated, that eleven centuries before the beginning of our Christian era a chariot was presented to certain ambassa-

dors which had box-compasses fitted to the wheels to direct them on their homeward way. Whether this be true or not, there is proof that the loadstone, and its power to affect iron, was known to the Chinese long before the coming of Christ. The daily newspaper, which we are accustomed to look upon as a modern invention, is an old, old story in China. The Pekin "Gazette" has for five hundred years been making its daily round throughout the empire. It is an official paper, and upon all subjects represents the opinions of the Government. At the commencement of cold weather, or of the opposite, the highest officer or viceroy in the province assumes the winter or summer cap, as the case may be; the circumstance is noticed in the "Gazette," and is a signal for every man under the government of said viceroy to make the same change. In this way everything of which it is desirable for the people to take cognizance is noticed. The "Gazette" is racy and spicy, but in one respect must be quite in contrast with some journals that we wot of; everything must be true that appears in its columns, and the Chinese Jenkinses can say nothing of ladies! They are an imponderable force in this empire, and unworthy of notice.

After the time of Confucius the advance of the nation was more rapid than before. Among all the sons of men there has been no more wonderful man than Confucius; no other whose influence has been so lasting and so far-reaching. Twenty-five centuries have only served to extend the range of his influence and increase its power. During all these centuries his teachings have molded the character and governed the lives of the most populous nation the world has ever known. There is still no sign of

desuetude in the customs he established and the principles he taught. When a foreign dynasty seated itself upon a conquered throne the systems of the conquerors were thrown aside, and the moral science and civil polity of the conquered were accepted in their stead. Therein was followed the example of the Romans, who took for their school-masters the very people whose national life they had extinguished. Confucius was born in the year 550 before Christ. Pope says of him:

"Superior and alone Confucius stood,  
Who taught that useful science, to be good."

No higher morality can be inculcated than he exacts. Among the great teachers that have come into the world he is second only to Him "who spake as never man spake." The difference between the former and the latter is the difference between the perfect skeleton clothed upon with flesh and blood, with muscle, sinew and integument, yet wanting vitality; wanting the informing soul and the living, breathing, moving being, having all the former attributes and added thereto the immortal spirit. Confucius taught the "form of godliness," but it was lacking in power because the spirit was wanting. He drew his motives from well-being in this life only, never referring to the Divine sanction or the rewards of immortality.

"What you do not want done to yourself do not to others," he says, putting into the negative form the "golden rule," which we have had from a higher Master. "When you know a thing, to hold that you know it, and when you do not know it, to allow that you do not; this is knowledge." A kind of knowledge for which none is the worse for being the possessor.

But Confucius made no pretensions to being a religious teacher. On the contrary, he expressly acknowledges his inability to give instructions in regard to a future state or anything that concerned men after death. He said: "I do not know what life is; how then can I explain death or declare what comes after?" The results are what might be expected from the character of the instruction. While the Chinese have advanced steadily in material prosperity, in coherence as a nation and in the knowledge and application of the useful arts, they have been, and are, spiritually dead.

One of the chief misfortunes that resulted from Confucius' ignorance of the Creator, and his plans and purposes in the creation of man, was the false position he assigned to woman. The consequences of error always fall most heavily upon those who are the least able to resist them. Therefore women have been, and are, the great sufferers on account of his mistake. Confucius did not place woman on a common throne as the equal of man—his consoler and inspirer; only Christ did that. He made her the handmaid of man, to minister to his pleasure and have for her "sphere" whatever he did not want to do; this was the vitiating principle in the Confucian system. As the fountain cannot rise higher than its source, the son can never rise very much above his mother. Therefore the status of woman is the true index to the grade of civilization. What Confucius thought of women, and what the character of his instructions was, may be judged by the following extracts from his teachings:

"Moreover, that you have not in this life been born a male is owing to your amount of wickedness, heaped up in a previous state of existence, hav-

ing been both deep and weighty; you would not then desire to adorn virtue, to heap up good actions, and learn to do well! So that you now have been haplessly born a female! And if you do not this second time specially amend your faults, this amount of wickedness of yours will be getting both deeper and weightier, so that it is to be feared in the next state of existence, even if you should wish for a male's body, yet it will be very difficult to get it!"

"You must know that for a woman to be without talent is a virtue on her part."

"No one desires that your *natura* should be intelligent, or your abilities of a high order. They only wish that your disposition be mild and obedient, and that, in looking after matters, you be diligent and economical."

"Wives! ye cannot but impress these words upon your memories. In the male to be firm, and the female to be flexible, is what reason points out as a proper rule."

Talkativeness on the part of the wife was among the justifiable causes for divorce. If, as some people suppose, the punishments of the other world bear some relation to the errors of this, may it not be that the spirit of this long-departed reformer is compelled to be one of the invisible throng who wait upon the lectures of Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony, and others of that ilk? What repentings he must experience, what fearful self-reproach! The very corner-stone of the system of Confucius was obedience to properly constituted authority. The will of the parent was supreme; while life lasted, the child was subject to it, no matter what age was reached. Then, by parity of reasoning, as was the father to the family, so was the emperor to the nation: the same obedience that was due from the son to the father was due from all the people to the emperor; he is their father, and they are his children. In this submission, this habit of obedience, is the secret of the stability of the government, and the long continuance of the empire.

Such are the people that come to the Pacific coast, and such are the formulas which have molded their characters, and by which they have been governed. Obedience and fidelity are the two leading traits of the Chinaman at home.

"They touch our country, and—"

do their characters change?

R. W. Raymond, United States commissioner on mining statistics, etc., in an official report says: "The Chinese put but little faith in the promises of employers, and are apt to stop if not promptly paid. They are the most reasonable in the matter of wages, and the most unreasonably exact, in the matter of payment, of all our laborers. Chinese skilled miners are quite equal to those of any other race. In some instances they surpass white men employed in the same mines. The greatest superiority of good Chinese miners over European miners is their fidelity. It is certainly true that they are far more earnest and faithful than any other miners. In every department they enjoy the universal reputation of conscientious fidelity. Apart from every other advantage or disadvantage attendant upon their employment, apart from the discrepancy of wages even, this one attribute of fidelity to the interests of the employer will certainly carry the day for the almond-eyed laborers, if our white workmen do not recognize the danger in which they stand, and avert it by more sensible means than they have yet used."

Upon this one point of fidelity to instructions the testimony among employers was quite uniform, no matter what differences of opinion there might be in regard to other matters. The stories with which we have been entertained

in regard to Chinamen copying even the imperfections and blemishes in a model, such as putting a patch on the elbow of a new coat because there was one on the old one, but illustrate this characteristic. Their work must be exactly like the prototype which is placed before them.

A pleasant-voiced, nice-looking Chinaman was employed as chambermaid (if the solecism may be permitted), in one of the beautiful homes in Oakland. He belonged to quite a retinue of servants, a half-dozen or more, and was the only Asiatic. The others were all Europeans, and trained for the particular department in which he or she was employed. But it was the testimony of the lady of the house that none of the others at all equaled the almond-eyed chambermaid in the faithfulness and perfection of the service performed. After once becoming familiar with the routine of his duties he needed no oversight or attention. On the day that the drawing-room was to be swept and garnished he did it, and did it so perfectly that the most exacting requirement was fully met. And so of the parlor, the library and the bed-chambers. He was never idle, never absent, never forgetful. Whoever else might be away from his post, he was always at his—"Faithful found among the faithless."

It was the testimony of the owner of a fruit ranch who had for a dozen years or more employed from six to fifteen Chinamen constantly, that he would not have any other laborers, for when he told a Chinaman to do a thing he knew that it would be done, and done exactly as he directed—an assurance that he would not feel in regard to any other laborers.

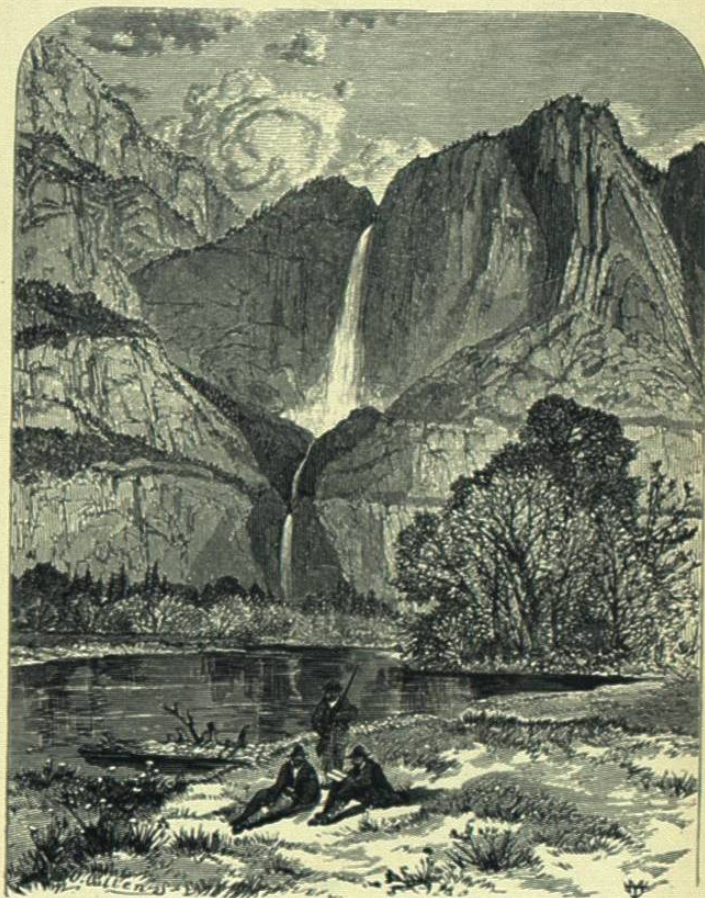
This characteristic of faithfulness extends to and in-

cludes all contracts and bargains. The Chinese merchants in San Francisco import thirty million dollars' worth of goods annually. This large business is conducted uniformly upon such correct business principles, with such regard to promptness in meeting liabilities, and attention to all the terms and conditions of contracts, that the credit of no class of business men in that city stands higher, if so high. They have not yet learned to be bankrupt and yet rich, and so to put themselves before the eyes of the law as to have nothing and still seem to possess all things that they need.

A man who has lived more than twenty years in California, and had to do with Chinamen in almost every capacity, as laborers, as renters, as transactors of business generally, declared that he had never yet lost a dollar by a Chinaman. When a Chinaman engaged to do a thing, or to pay a price, there need be no anxiety—he would surely do it.

That he is not a specialist and confined to one thing or kind of labor is proved by the fact that in a multitude of families a Chinaman is the factotum—the maid-of-all-work. He bakes and broils, he sweeps and dusts, he washes and irons, and does the multitude of things required of a servant where but a single one is employed. Although often serving as cook even in hotels, the evidence acquired on the subject is not sufficient to convince at least one observer that in this department John excels. Only in a single case was there seen any proof of unusual tact or uncommon skill.

In the year 1870 it was estimated that one hundred and forty thousand Chinamen had come to the Pacific



THE YOSEMITE FALLS. PAGES 214, 221 AND 222.

coast, and of these ninety-five thousand remained. And still they come. In 1875 eighteen thousand arrived, the largest number that ever came in a single year.

There are six Chinese companies in San Francisco, each having its own organization, its own officers, and its own place of meeting. These are in some sense mutual aid societies. Chinamen can do as they please about joining them, but so great are the advantages of doing so that almost every one connects himself with one or another. The initiation fee is from five to ten dollars. There are some incidental expenses, so that the entire cost of membership for ten years is from fifty to one hundred dollars. A member may dissolve his connection with the company to which he belongs at his pleasure. In return for what the member pays, the company take care of him if sick, rescue him, if possible, when in danger, and feed him when he is out of employment. No matter where he goes, or how far away, his company is still bound to care for him. If he is oppressed or wronged in any way, and makes complaint, he must be looked after and his wrongs righted. When a member wishes to return to China, a certain number of days before he expects to start he must report himself to the company to which he belongs and state his intention. The books of the company are searched to see if he owes any man anything; notice is also sent to the other companies to learn if there is anything against him on their records, and he must have a clearance before he can leave the country. It is the custom, therefore, if a Chinaman owes a debt, and there is any difficulty in collecting it, to send notice to the company of which he is a member, who see

that he pays it, at least before he leaves the State. Each company has a hospital for the benefit of its members, and some of them have temples for religious service.

The Chinese have many festivals and holidays; but it is extremely difficult to find out what day they celebrate, or why it is observed. There are very few who understand English well enough to make explanations. When asked about the nature of a holiday, the almost uniform answer is, "All the same as 'Melican man's Fourth of July." Fourth of July seems to stand to them as a generic term for holiday. But when their new year begins, there is no trouble in ascertaining what they are about, or why they eat and are merry. This is the chief of their holidays, and is celebrated with much parade and rejoicing. Their new year is a week in beginning, and sometimes extends over ten days. Like Easter, it is a movable festival, and, also like Easter, its commencement depends upon a certain conjunction of the sun and moon. The Chinese new year begins with the first new moon after the sun enters the sign of Aquarius, and may come at any time between the twenty-first of January and the eighteenth of February. The beginning of the new year is a grand event, and is prepared for with great industry and parade. Some of the customs connected with this season would bear transplanting, and would work no detriment to those who claim a higher style of civilization. Business men overhaul their books and close up all accounts; no debts can go over and stand upon the records of the new year. Great effort is made among debtors to pay up; but if it is found to be impossible, the debt is cancelled and the debtor goes free. But his credit is gone, and for the

future he is a dishonored man. Nothing can wipe out his disgrace but the honorable payment of the debt after he is no longer liable for it. Everything, also, is put into a state of perfect cleanliness. Houses are scrubbed and put into the best possible order; all garments are made as clean and pure as soap and water, with a liberal expenditure of muscular power, can make them. It is a time of suffering and death among pigs and poultry, for to these two orders of land animals Chinamen confine their attention. They have much affection for fish, and freely indulge their taste for them. All work is given up, and a general carnival prevails. So far as outside show is concerned, the jollification consists mainly in the explosion of fire-crackers. The authorities of San Francisco tried to confine this performance to a single day; but although there is more of it done on the first day than any time afterward, the practice is continued through the whole series of days. The usual economy of the Chinese seems to be thrown to the winds on this festive occasion. They go up into the verandahs and upper stories of their houses, and after igniting the crackers throw down bunch after bunch, which explode on the pavement below, and keep up such frequent detonations that the effect is like that of a constant discharge of artillery. By the time night comes the pavement will be soft to the feet, from the abundance of the fragments of the exploded fire-crackers, and the feeling is like that of walking on feathers. Men who do business to the amount of many thousands of dollars engage with apparent zest in this, to us, childish amusement. Of course this fire-cracker



burning is confined to the parts of the city especially appropriated to the Chinese.

The Chinese theatres are in full blast all through the holidays. The doors are opened at seven o'clock in the morning, and the play begins soon after. An intermission at noon gives time for dinner; after which the play is resumed, and with the exception of a couple of hours—from five to seven o'clock in the evening—it is continued until eleven. It does not seem to be considered essential to hear the whole play; but the spectators come and go to suit their convenience, apparently well satisfied with the snatches they get in that way. During these holidays the Chinese women are allowed the privilege of attending the theatre. The gallery is reserved for them, where they sit entirely separate from the men. They do not, however, take any part in the performance. The roles which should be taken by women are assumed by men. The dress is very gorgeous, and is said to be after the cut and fashion in use in China before the country was conquered by the present reigning sovereigns, the Mantchoo Tartars. This conquest took place two hundred years ago, and at that time the people were compelled by the conquerors to assume their present costume, including the shaving of the head, except the part on the top, which furnishes the hair for the long cue, which they still so universally wear.

The Chinese have not advanced beyond the ruder stages of the "mimic art." They borrow no aid from scenery, and have no division into acts and scenes. When a play once begins, it keeps right on to the far-off end. There are no curtains, which involves the necessity of doing

whatever is done openly—in the very face and eyes of the audience. A man is killed in a combat, or is decapitated in obedience to an official sentence. The poor defunct lies dead upon the stage until he gets tired of his deadness, when he gets up and deliberately walks off, without even having the grace to carry his head in his hand.

But of the appointments of a Chinese theatre, the music is what lingers longest in the memory. The orchestra consists of a row of men, who sit on the stage back of the performers. Each one is armed and equipped with the instrument that will make the greatest possible noise. Gongs, cymbals, and many strange instruments with unknown names, but of wonderful capacity, make up the collection. The efforts of the performers are never intermitted. When the stage-actors wax warm, and show their excitement by increased loudness of tone and more exaggerated action, the sympathy of the musicians is exhibited by intensified effort; the gongs thunder, the cymbals reverberate, and all the instruments seem to do their best to outdo any Pandemonium of which the most imaginative ever dreamed. If one can go to a Chinese theatre and not have his ears tingle for a week after, he must have put his nerves to sleep beforehand with some powerful anodyne. Yet go by all means. There is nothing in the Chinese quarter in San Francisco that pays so well.

The temples, also, are places much resorted to during these holidays. Of these there are several in San Francisco, but one outshines all the others in the number of its gods and the grandeur of its appointments. All are Bud-

dhist temples, Buddhism being the religion of the common people, to which class the Chinese who come to this country generally belong. The most noted temple was fitted up by Dr. Li-po-tai, a distinguished physician in San Francisco, with the aid of other rich Chinamen. The Chinese show the same disregard to show and outside appearances here that they are said to at home. These temples are in alleys that are absolutely frightful in the character of their buildings and the people. The best temple is in the third story of a brick building, to which access is gained by an outside, rickety stairs, that shakes under the tread. There are numerous gods and goddesses in the temple, some fourteen or fifteen in all in the different apartments. In one corner of the room first entered a gong is placed, over which a bell is suspended. Near these is an oven in which prayers and gifts are burned, or rather the representatives of prayers and gifts printed on paper, and bought of a priest who has a room near by. As these papers are lighted and put into the oven, the gong is struck and the bell rung to call the attention of the spirits who are to receive them to the offerings made.

The Chinese gods and goddesses were all once living persons who performed some worthy deed for which they have been deified. In the main room of the temple there are three gods, life size, sitting behind an altar. The central one is Joss, the supreme deity. The one on his left is the god of war, the special patron of the Ning Yung company, one of the six companies already described. His name is Rwau Tae. He lived about sixteen hundred years ago, and his history shows that the Chinese have both the power to do and appreciate what is generous and noble.

Rwau Tae was a soldier and a commander in early life, and was almost always victorious when engaged in battle. He was also kind and merciful, as well as brave, and conquered the hearts of his enemies by love and kindness after he had conquered them in war. When the strife was over he resigned his command. The Emperor was his personal friend, and importuned him to accept civil office, but Rwau Tae refused. He joined the order of Devoted Brothers, whose business it was to tend the sick, to heal the wounded, and to succor the distressed. In a few years a rebellion broke out in the empire, and like another Cincinnatus, Rwau Tae was called from his retirement to command the army of the empire and save the country. He succeeded in suppressing the rebellion, the rebels were defeated, but the leader escaped and a large price was offered to any one who would bring him dead or alive to the Emperor. All subjects were also forbidden to harbor or help him in any way.

Rwau Tae returned to the brotherhood and again devoted himself to works of mercy and charity. One day there came to him a poor man, who was sick, wounded, ragged, and in need of all things. Rwau Tae recognized in him the leader of the rebellion, but feeling that the claim of humanity was superior even to the command of the Emperor, he took him in and healed his wounds, relieved his distresses, and, when he had fully recovered, sent him on his way with the means to supply his future wants. Then he put his own affairs in order, arranged his property and estates, went and confessed his disobedience to the Emperor, gave himself up to suffer the penalty of the violated law, and was beheaded. But while the Emperor would not suffer

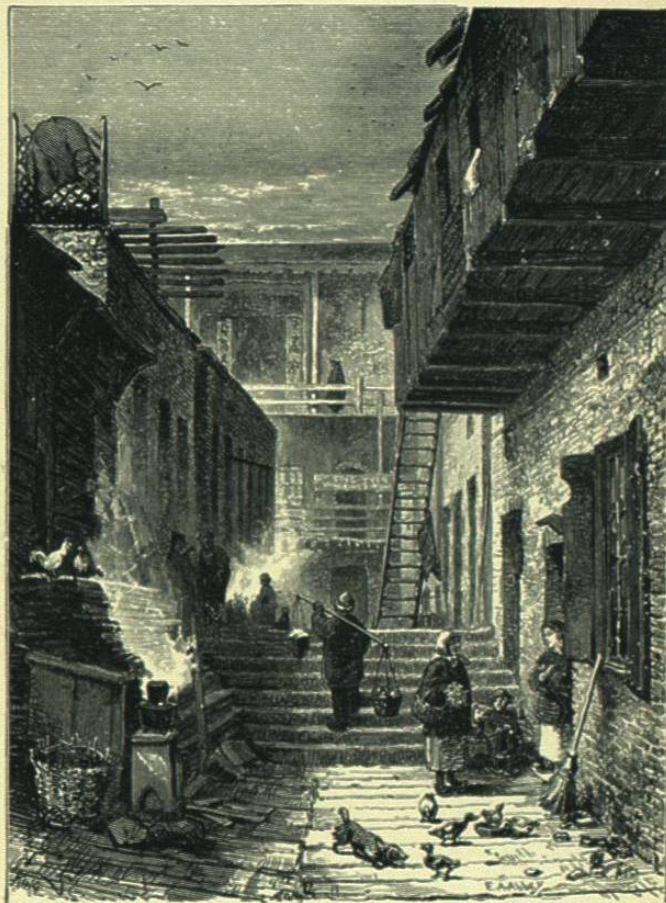
a broken law to go unavenged, he could appreciate the fine humanity of the man and his honorable regard for his duty as a subject. He, therefore, ordered his name to be added to the nation's list of deified heroes, and he has ever since been worshiped as a god.

The goddess of mercy is in another room in the temple above mentioned. This image was brought from China three or four years ago, by Dr. Li-po-tai, at a cost of eight thousand dollars. The story about her is this: She was a fine young woman, who, to escape a disagreeable marriage, left her father's home and took refuge in the house of a religious sisterhood. Her father burned the buildings, but her prayers saved the occupants. She has it for her benevolent mission in the other world to look after the souls of those who have no friends here, or who have friends that are unmindful and negligent.

This goddess is arrayed quite gorgeously, and has diamonds in her eyes for pupils, and a diamond in the center of her forehead. She is very popular among the Chinese and has many supplications made before her.

In one corner of a remote room in the temple there stands the most cadaverous, woe-begone, forsaken-looking being that could possibly be imagined. It is a man who has lost his soul! He brought this calamity on himself by some misdoing in this life. He is constantly in pursuit of this lost soul, and sometimes is just on the eve of grasping it when it eludes him, and he still goes on in the restless search.

There is no stated hour for worship in the temple. The Chinamen come in at their pleasure or convenience, and go the rounds of the gods and goddesses, joining their hands



ALLEY IN CHINESE QUARTER, SAN FRANCISCO. PAGE 192.

in front and bowing three times before each. Incense sticks are constantly burning, and the air is loaded with perfume. Colored candles, sometimes a yard or more in length, are burned before the idols. These are the offerings of different individuals.