CHINESE
BIRTHDAY, WEDDING, FUNERAL,
AND
OTHER CUSTOMS

BY

MRS. J. G. CORMACK

LA LIBRAIRIE FRANÇAISE

PEKING & TIENTSIN

PRINTED BY

THE COMMERCIAL PRESS, PEKING BRANCH WORKS.

1923

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION.

The Papers on Chinese Wedding and Funeral Customs were first prepared for and given before the "Things Chinese" Society of Peking. So much interest was shewn in these that I was asked to read them before other clubs and groups of people, and repeatedly urged to print them.

It is because of this interest shewn that I now, after careful revision, present them to the public in book form.

I am very conscious of the shortcomings of these papers, but what I have written is not meant to represent the customs of the whole of China, as to write such a book would require extensive travel and much time.

I have tried to ascertain and record the customs followed in Peking chiefly, and those observed by official and wealthy families.

Annie Cormack

FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION.

The booklet "Chinese Births, Weddings, and Funerals" had such a kind reception and ready sale, that I have been encouraged to prepare a second edition considerably fuller than the first and with a quantity of new material added.

The contents of this edition all pertain to interesting customs observed by the Chinese, and to special days of the year.

The bulk of the material has been gathered at first hand from the Chinese one meets every day, but I have been indebted to several books for suggestions connected with some of the customs which are given, such as the first use of mock money in the worship of the dead, the posthumous marriage, marriage of the dead, and the marriage of widows; and I have tried to verify these suggestions locally before incorporating them in the new edition. In the few instances in which extracts from books have been used, the names both of the title and author of the books are mentioned.

I wish to gratefully acknowledge the kindness of Miss B. Reed in allowing me to use her article on "The Presentation of the Seal" (to the bride-elect of the Ex-Emperor Hsuan Tung). I also desire to thank R. F. Johnston, Esqr. for permission to use his article on the "Marriage of the Ex-Emperor." These two articles form Chapter V of this book.

I have again confined myself chiefly to customs as observed in Peking; and though I have endeavoured to record these as fully as possible, I am conscious of the shortcomings of this little work. So closely bound up with the life of the people are these customs, that it is only by close questioning that many of them can be found out.

Some of the chapters on the festivals and special days were written by me for "The Far Eastern Times", and I have the Editor's permission to re-publish them in this form.

I desire to thank Mr. Sheldon Ridge for all the generous help he gave in reading proofs and seeing my first booklet through the press.

Annie Cormack

CONTENTS.

THE CHINESE ALMANAC

Death and life have their determined appointment; riches and honour depend upon Heaven.

Confucian Analects.

(Legge)

Your herdsmen shall dream,-
Of multitudes and then of fishes;
Of the tortoise-and-serpent; and then of the falcon banners.
The chief diviner will divine the dreams,
How the multitudes dissolving into fishes,
Betoken plentiful years;
How the tortoise-and-serpent dissolving into the falcon banners,
Betoken the increasing population of the kingdom.

She King. (Legge)

CHAPTER I.

THE CHINESE ALMANAC.

IN considering matters of human interest in the life of any nation or people, the most interesting are those customs and usages connected with the daily life of the people. It is probably quite correct to say that in most countries, funerals and weddings are events of daily occurrence. This can hardly be said of China, because, in the Chinese Almanac, there are many days recorded which are said to be altogether unpropitious for anything.

This Almanac is prepared annually by the astrologers appointed by the ruler of the land, who have their offices near the east wall of the city of Peking, in close proximity to the astronomical instruments set up by the Jesuit fathers on that wall in the seventeenth century, and which have had such a chequered career.

The Almanac which is in book form, is made of soft Chinese paper and printed closely in Chinese characters. It is illustrated with pictures of gods, dragons, and other animals, which help to explain the letter-press.

It is not used or understood by ordinary people otherwise than as a calendar and recorder of days, but it is indispensable to the diviner, who earns his bread by the telling of fortunes to the credulous, and by the casting of horoscopes and the vending of occult lore.

The contents of the Almanac include :—

Interpretation of dreams.

The cure of sickness as given in the book of the sages.

Methods for ascertaining the lightness or gravity of an illness.

The influence of the Five Elements—Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth—on the life and fortunes of a child.

The correct days and hours for worshipping special stars; by merchants, that their profits may be increased; by scholars, that they may obtain preferment; by women, that they may bear sons; and so on.

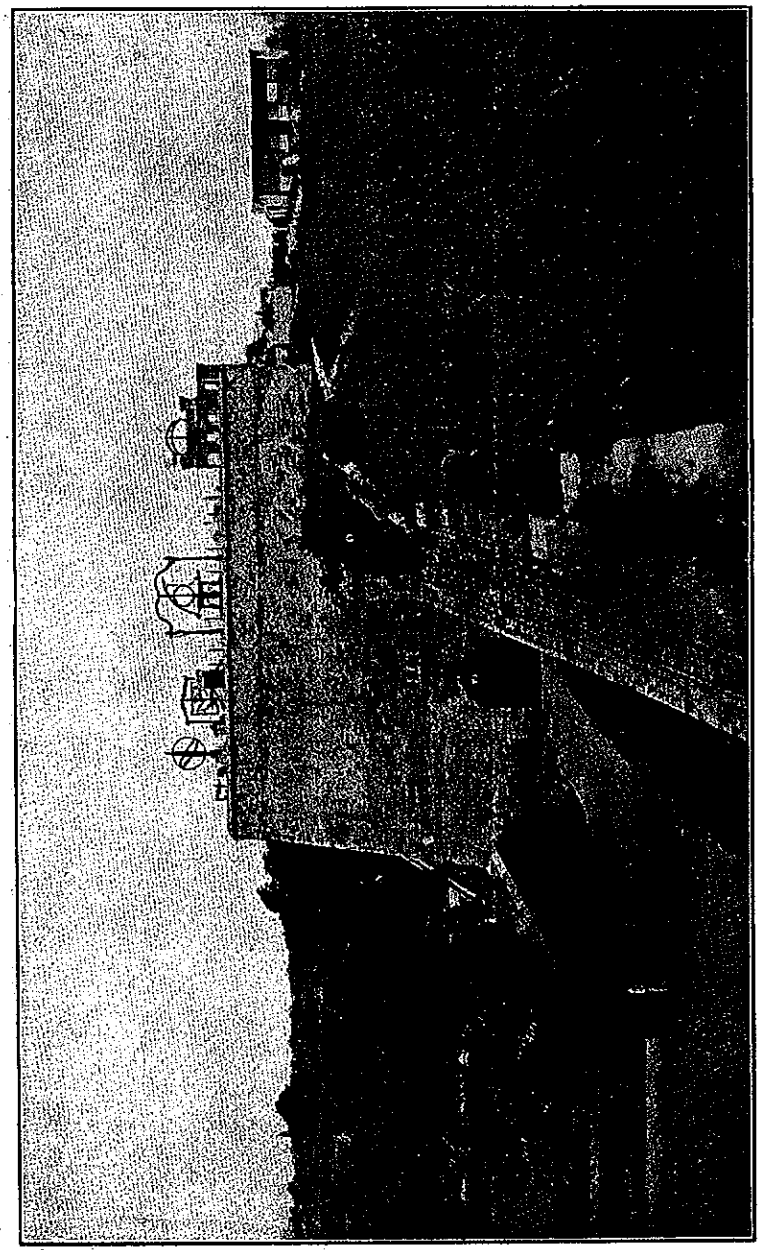
All the particulars regarding the casting of horoscopes.

The birthdays of all the deities.

Palmistry.

Fortune-telling by means of coins.

Anniversaries of special days according to the solar calendar.



ASTRONOMICAL INSTRUMENTS ON EAST WALL OF PEKING *Photo by Hartung.*

(See p 11)

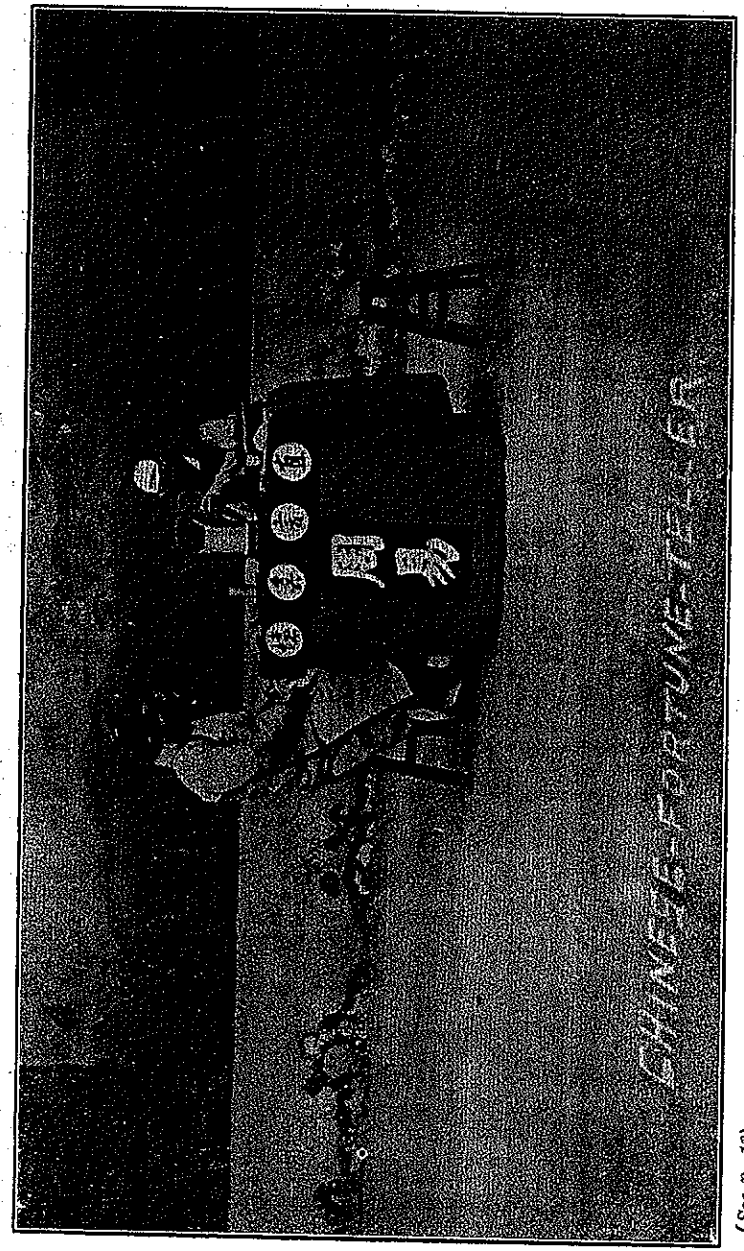


Photo by Hartung.

CHINESE FORTUNE TELLER.

(See p. 13)

The days and months of the year, lunar and solar calendars.
The twenty-four solar terms.
What it is lucky or unlucky to do each day.
Predictions and current proverbs regarding certain days.

The following two dates are chosen at random from the Almanac, and this translation from the text may serve to illustrate what is meant by lucky and unlucky days:—

"On the twenty-first day of the fourth moon, it is suitable to offer sacrifices, to go to the temples to pray for happiness, to pray for sons, to assume hereditary rank, to set out on a journey, to take over official duties, for Emperor or President to attend to affairs of Government, to arrange a betrothal, to send betrothal presents, to marry, to receive new inmates into the home, to move house, to take a bath, to shave the head, to trim and cut the toe and finger nails, to set up pillars in house building and to put up the roof tree, to open a new business, to make a covenant, to buy and sell, to receive money, to open the granaries and deal out grain, to sweep the house, to take out sheep and cattle, to sell cattle, and for peaceful burial."

"On this day it is unsuitable to meet relatives and friends, to take over land which has been bought, to disannul a covenant."

"On the twenty-eighth of the fourth moon, it is suitable to pray for happiness, to pray for sons, to assume hereditary rank, to take over official duties, to enter school or college, to start on a journey, to arrange a betrothal, to send betrothal presents, to marry, to move house, to take anything apart, to consult a doctor, to cut out garments, to start building, to begin digging foundations, to put up a roof tree, to start a business, to collect money, to open the granaries and deal out grain, to buy cattle, to prepare the threshing-floor, to plant trees and flowers, to sell animals."

"On this day it is unsuitable to build a kitchen range, or to go hunting or fishing."

It is rather remarkable to find such a paragraph as the following, inserted after several sections telling the fortunes of those born in the different seasons of the year.

"Men are born throughout all the four seasons, and their calamities and happiness are decided by Heaven. The positions obtained by the side of kings and princes, and the positions of ordinary men, are all decided by

Destiny. Use your wealth as occasion arises, for wealth and honour are decreed for you; but if you are able to bestow your gifts on others, why worry about your rank."

In the chapters which follow, references will be made to lucky and unlucky days for different usages and ceremonies. When such references occur, the reader will know that in the fixing of these days, the Almanac had a place.

BIRTHS AND BIRTHDAYS.

Divine for me my dreams.
What dreams are lucky?
They have been of bears and grisly bears;
They have been of cobras and other serpents.

The chief diviner will divine them.
The bears and grisly bears
Are the auspicious intimations of sons.
The cobras and other serpents
Are the auspicious intimations of daughters.

Sons shall be born to him:—they will be put to slepe
on couches;
They will be clothed with robes;
They will have sceptres to play with;
Their cry will be loud.
They will be hereafter resplendent with red knee-covers,
The future king, the princes of the land.

Daughters shall be born to him:—
They will be put to sleep on the ground;
They will be clothed with wrappers;
They will have tiles to play with.
It will be theirs neither to do wrong nor to do good.
Only about the spirits and the food will they have to
think;
And to cause no sorrow to their parents.

She King. *(Legge)*

O my father, who begat me!
O my mother who nourished me!
Ye indulged me, ye fed me,
Ye held me up, ye supported me,
Out and in ye bore me in your arms.
If I would return your kindness,
It is like great Heaven, illimitable.

She King. *(Legge)*

CHAPTER II.

BIRTHS AND BIRTHDAYS.

IT is generally believed that Chinese like boy babies better than girl babies. There is a great measure of truth in this, in the case both of rich and of poor families, but more especially among poor families and those who are not very well off, because, when the time comes for the girls to get married, their parents have to provide so much for them, and they go away and are no more use to their own people; while the sons grow up and take to themselves wives who help in the home; and the families of the sons live in the paternal home and make it merry and carry on the family name. The sons also work and contribute towards the upkeep of the home.

Owing to the fact that daughters become members of their husbands' families after marriage, they are not to be depended on for the carrying on of the worship of ancestors. For this reason, sons are desired, as they always belong to the family of their own parents, and the ancestral worship devolves

upon them. When there are no sons in a family, the parents often adopt a boy and treat him as a son of the house, in order that there may be some one responsible for the carrying out of the proper rites when they die.

In families where there are several sons, the parents often desire a daughter; also, many Chinese wives wish that the first child should be a daughter, in the hope that she will be a help when the family increases.

Regarding the stories told of the destruction of girl babies, they have been and are, alas, too true in many parts of China. The practice is said not to be common in Peking; on the contrary, in the majority of cases, a girl baby receives the same welcome as a boy. Unwanted girl babies are sometimes left on the doorsteps of prosperous families because the parents are poor and cannot afford to keep them. These babies are also often deposited at the doors of Mission compounds, because the missionaries have a reputation for kind-heartedness and performance of good works. In many places, homes have been established where these children are cared for and brought up to be respectable citizens.

When a woman wants a son, she goes to the temple and prays to the Niang Niang Shen. She takes a red cord with her and ties it round the neck of one of the clay figures or dolls in the Pei Tsz Tang, or Hall of Numerous Children. Sometimes the little figure is taken away by the supplicant. She also makes a vow to the goddess that if her prayer is heard and a son given to her, she will present the goddess with new clothes and other gifts. If her prayer is heard, she presents another doll or little clay figure to the temple.

In some places, when a woman is expecting to become a mother, she places a long, sharp knife on her bed to frighten away evil spirits. The shape of a pair of scissors is cut out of paper and pinned to the bed curtains, a tiger skin is hung over the bed, and various fierce-looking articles, and forms of wild animals cut out of paper, are put about the room and by the windows, all with the same purpose, to frighten away evil spirits.

At the time of birth, the expectant mother prays to the spirit of the goddess whom she had previously petitioned, and offers sweetmeats and burns incense to her.

A midwife who has been engaged about a month before the expected birth, attends the expectant mother. These midwives have no special training for their work further than that handed down from one to another, and in many cases they do a great deal of mischief, as they do not know the first thing about proper cleanliness or asepsis.

With the coming of the foreign doctor to China, came help and relief, and in many cases, life, to countless Chinese women; though, at first, until suspicion of the queer foreigner was allayed and trust established, fear kept many from seeking the help they so much needed, and only in the last extremity, often, alas, too late, was his or her aid sought. In later years, in places where hospitals have been established and the work of the doctor known, this fear has to a large extent given way to trust; and among the more enlightened the doctor is consulted and his or her help sought, several months before the birth of the child is expected. A happier day for Chinese mothers has dawned, now that women and girls from among their own people are being trained as competent nurses, and are able, and do go out when sent for, to act instead of the dirty, incompetent midwife. Christian Missions have

led the way in this much-needed work, and at the present time there are numbers of these trained nurses doing their merciful work in different parts of China. Women are also being trained as doctors in larger and larger numbers, so that modern and sanitary methods should in time to come take the place of the unsatisfactory methods which have held good for so long.

After the birth of the child, it is not bathed until the third day and then it is bathed with some ceremony. Friends and relatives arrive to bring gifts to the happy mother and to offer congratulations. It is not considered good form to do so before the third day. Before the baby is bathed, a bunch of incense is lit and stuck in a bowl of uncooked rice. This is placed before the tablets of the ancestors. The woman who is looking after the mother prepares a brass basin or bath and puts water in it.

Eggs are put into the water, one for a boy and two for a girl. Beside the bath is put a dish containing tepid water and a spoon, also a plate on which are red and white hard-boiled eggs, an equal number of each. While the baby is being bathed, each guest takes a

spoonful of water and adds it to the water in the bath, at the same time expressing a wish for the child that it may have many years added to it. Each guest also takes one of the eggs and puts it into the bath, and while doing so, expresses another wish for the child's long life, health, wealth, or happiness—the white egg denoting a wish that the babe may grow to old age and white hair, and the red, denoting a wish for abundant luck, a play on the sound of the Chinese words meaning 'red' and 'abundant'. Each guest also puts into the bath a present of jewellery or money, all with the hope of influencing the Fates to do handsomely by the child.

All the gifts that are put into the water by the guests are the perquisites of the attendant, as also is the rice in which the incense is stuck.

In the bath, besides these things already mentioned, is put a slice of green ginger; this is rubbed on the navel to charm away sicknesses. With an unpeeled onion which has been dipped in the bath water, a line is drawn down the body of the infant, after which the onion is taken out to the front door by a tall man, who is esteemed as being clever, and thrown into the street. Here again is a play upon the

sound of two words, the sound for 'onion' and 'clever' being the same. This action expresses a hope and a wish that the babe will by-and-by be well-grown and clever.

When the bathing is over, the incense which was lighted previously, is taken out to the courtyard and allowed to burn out, along with a bundle of gold, silver and sheet-paper money which is set alight by it. At the same time, a paper sedan chair and paper horses are burned; all of these articles are offered to the goddess in token of gratitude, and to give her a good send-off.

When the babe is clothed, an open lock is moved over its body from the head to the feet, and when it reaches the ground, is locked, thus locking the child to this world.

Sometime during the day, usually in the afternoon, some white paper money is burned outside the street door to the spirits of the ancestors, congratulating them on gaining another descendant.

Offerings of cakes are also presented to the deities who preside over the k'ang or bed—K'ang Kung and K'ang Mu. They are supposed to watch over the child to see that no harm comes to him. Incense is burned to

them in the same way as to the goddess, and the ash of this incense is wrapped up in a piece of paper and put under the mattress of the baby's bed to act as a protection to him. The sweetmeats and rice thus offered are also the perquisites of the attendant.

The gifts presented to the mother on that day are such things as chickens, sweetmeats, uncooked eggs, and cooked eggs coloured red; red being the colour symbolising joy. The relatives and friends are invited to a feast and there is great rejoicing.

On the 12th day after the birth of the baby, meat dumplings are made, often by the maternal grandmother, and given to the mother to eat to help her to get strong.

When the baby is a month old, this is the occasion for another feast, and it is then that gifts are brought for the baby.

In well-to-do homes this feast is quite a big affair. Invitations are sent out to all friends and relatives, and from early morning until well on into the night, the merriment goes on. An awning of matting, having windows decorated with flowers and "Joy" characters, is erected over the courtyard of the house. Under this awning an almost continuous

marionette show goes on, sometimes paid attention to by the guests and sometimes not. Guests arrive at all hours, and each brings a gift for the baby. A friend sits beside the gift table and chronicles the name of the giver and the style of gift. Many and various are the gifts, but they chiefly consist of garments, shoes, caps, silver-gilt ornaments, silk, and money. The latter is put up neatly in red envelopes, on the outside of which are written the name of the giver, and words of congratulation to the little person who has just attained the age of one month. Cooks are busy all day, very often in an improvised kitchen in a corner of the courtyard, and all the guests are pressed to partake of a meal. The baby is on view and must be duly admired. A silver-gilt padlock on a red cord is hung around the baby's neck to secure him to the world. In Peking, a celebration such as this is given whether the baby be a boy or a girl.

On the twenty ninth day a boy gets his head shaved, and a girl on the thirtieth. The hair that is shaved off the head at this time is wrapped up in a piece of red cloth and attached to the end of the baby's pillow. When the child is one hundred days old, this packet of

hair is taken out and thrown into a river or lake. This is done to ensure that the baby will be courageous and fearless in after life.

Very early in the little life the diviner is called in, and many questions are asked by the anxious parents as to the child's future. A horoscope is cast, and the diviner tells what he finds as to the health and prospects of the child. The Chinese say that every one has some of each of the five elements in his constitution. The five elements are metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. If in the child metal, wood, or earth is lacking, then the character for the element lacking is put into the name of the child to make up for what is missing. If, however, water or fire is lacking, that is considered to be good. On the other hand, should fire be too prominent, the parents are warned to be always careful of the child lest he should be scalded with boiling water or in some way injured by fire. Should water be too much in evidence, then special care must be taken of the child when near wells, rivers or open water lest he be drowned.

On the hundredth day of the child's life, friends and relatives take presents of fish and chickens to the house. When the chickens are

cooked, the tongue of one of them is pulled out and rubbed back and forward between the lips of the child. This is to ensure that he will be a good talker in years to come. On this day also, his paternal grandmother is expected to present him with a rocking chair.

On the child's first birthday a feast is given, the idols are worshipped and incense burned. Also, on that day the child is made to sit in a large flat basket which is placed on a table. All sorts of articles are put in the basket within reach of the baby's hand, such things as pen, ink, ink-slab, a shoe of silver, and an official seal for a boy, with needle-work requisites added for a girl. While the child sits in the basket, he puts out his hand and takes hold of one of the articles, and whatever he takes hold of indicates what he well be in later life. Thus a pen would indicate that he will be a scholar; the shoe of silver, that he will be wealthy; if he takes hold of the official seal he will be an official. If the girl baby takes hold of any of these things, it means that her husband will be what the article indicates.

An important time in the baby's life is when he takes his first steps. This is always an exciting event to fond parents, but in the

minds of the Chinese parents, it has a greater significance.

It is believed that the child's life is a reincarnation, and that in a previous existence, when he died, his feet were bound together with a hempen cord, so that his dead body should not get up and jump about in an uncanny fashion. On account of this belief, when the baby begins to walk, one of his relatives goes behind him, and with a meat chopper makes a stroke between his feet backward, thus cutting the cord which bound his feet together when lying dead, and causing him to walk freely.

After the first birthday, little attention is paid to birthdays of children and young people.

Such things as birthday parties, as arranged by Western parents for their children's birthdays, are unknown among the Chinese.

The first birthdays after marriage of a newly-wedded pair are usually observed by the two families, each family sending gifts on each of the birthdays.

Birthdays only become of importance again when the ages of fifty, sixty and seventy years are reached. Then there are great celebra-

tions. A reed-mat covering is put over the courtyard and numbers of guests are invited to celebrate the occasion. Feasting and theatricals go on from morning until midnight, and gifts of all kinds are presented to the one whose birthday it is. The members of the family do reverence to the person, but outside guests do obeisance to the God of Long Life whose image is there.

There are many customs connected with child life which are interesting, though having nothing to do with birthdays.

When parents are especially anxious about a small son lest he should come to any harm, they often either put earrings in his ears or put a girl's garments on him, hoping thus to deceive the evil spirits into believing that he is a girl, so that they may leave him alone.

When parents have lost several children by death and they have only one left, or in the case of an only son or daughter, they have a curious custom by which they hope to retain the child in this world. They set about getting what is called a "Po Chia So", or "Hundred Persons Lock." They get ten of their friends to subscribe a copper each; these in their turn, get ten more, and so on until a

hundred persons have subscribed a copper. With this money, and some added by the family, a silver lock and chain are purchased, and these are hung around the neck of the child. In this way it is hoped that the child will be securely locked to earth.

When infectious sicknesses are rife, children may be seen about the streets with little pieces of red cloth stitched to their frocks. This is to act as a charm against sickness.

If a child is timid and nervous, it is thought that because of the very clear vision which small children are believed to have, it is able to see evil spirits and such like sights which are invisible to those of maturer years. As a remedy, the mother makes a little bag of red cloth and in it puts a small quantity of vermilion. This is attached to one of the garments worn by the child and is supposed to make it courageous, and unafraid.

BETROTHAL.

"Mencius said, 'When a son is born, what is desired for him is that he should have a wife; when a daughter is born, what is desired for her is that she should have a husband. This feeling of the parents is possessed by all men. If the young people, without waiting for the orders of their parents, and the arrangements of the go-betweens, shall bore holes to steal a sight of each other, or get over the wall to be with each other, then their parents and all other people will despise them'."

Mencius. (Legge)

CHAPTER III.

BETROTHAL.

In many wealthy families, when a son is born, a number of middle-men arrive on the scene and say that they know of good families where there are girls who would be suitable as brides for the little boy. A list of the names of the different families is taken, along with the respective horoscopes of the little girls, and investigations are made. In some cases a diviner is called in to compare the horoscopes of the most likely girls with that of the boy. The diviner writes out eight characters on two sheets of red paper; these characters indicate the hour, day, month, and year of the birth of each child. These are compared, and if it is found that the animals representing the years of the birth of the two children are incompatible, then that little girl is rejected as being unfit to mate with the little boy. For instance, if the years were represented by the dog and cat, then there would be no peace in that union. Should, however, the animal of the boy's birth year be

the dragon, and the girl's the snake, that would be a good union, as the dragon would dominate the snake. If, on the contrary, the animal of the boy's birth year were the snake, and the girl's the dragon, that would be most unsuitable, as in that case the wife would dominate the husband. The boy's animal must always be the more powerful. Then, as regards the surname, it is not considered good that those bearing the same surname should marry; however, should the two surnames have the same sound but be represented by different characters, it is considered to be all right. Then, if the boy's surname has the character for water in it, and the girl's the character for fire, it is good; but should the reverse be the case, it is quite unsuitable, as water can quench fire. Again, if the boy's surname has fire in it and the girl's wood, that is all right; on the contrary, if the girl's has fire and the boy's wood, that is all wrong. So there is much to be done and considered by the diviner before he can say that the match is suitable.

When, after careful examination and comparison of horoscopes, a girl is selected as being a suitable mate for the boy, the red papers on which the eight characters are written are laid before the ancestral tablets in

the boy's home and left there for three days. This is done so that the intended bride may be brought into subjection and know her place. If, during these three days there is peace in the home, that is considered to be a good omen, and the hearts of the parents are at peace in the thought that the union will be a harmonious one. If, on the contrary, there should be quarrelling and strife and high words, or if accidents should happen resulting in the breakage of dishes or other household utensils, then the hearts of the parents are not at ease, as the omen is not a good one for the future union, and in some cases, after such occurrences, the engagement is broken off, and the red paper with the girl's eight characters is returned to her parents.

The custom of comparing the horoscopes was formerly observed in all betrothals, whether of small children or those of maturer years, but now the custom is not so generally observed; mutual approval through a middleman of the two families concerned, being all that is considered necessary. When the wedding day is fixed, a marriage agreement is written out and signed by both parties. This is retained as a marriage certificate, and is considered as binding.

On the day that the betrothal is settled, the mother of the intended bridegroom sends two or four rings and a pair of embroidered pockets to the newly betrothed girl.

In many cases the diviner is not called in. When two families are on good terms with one another, the respective parents arrange a marriage without his help. In poorer families, betrothal and marriage take place later in life, when the young folks are in their teens; though sometimes the arrangement is made in early years, and the little future daughter-in-law is taken to the mother-in-law's home and is treated as a little servant, sometimes having a very hard life. This is mostly done in the country, not so much in the city. Among the poorer classes, ceremonies are few.

When the boy who was betrothed in childhood has grown to the age when his family considers that he should be thinking of marriage, for three successive years, on the three principal feast days—New Year, the 5th of the 5th month, and the 15th of the 8th month—his parents send presents of flowers, sweetmeats, and other gifts to the prospective bride. This gives the girl warning to get her trousseau ready. In the year that the marriage is to take place, the bridegroom's parents

engage a middleman and instruct him to go to the girl's home with an offer of marriage. The girl's parents name a time that will be convenient for them, and the bridegroom's people, with the help of a diviner, fix a lucky day. Supposing that they want to have the wedding in the 10th month, they ask the diviner which is a lucky day in that month. If he finds that there is no lucky day in the 10th month, he suggests that it be fixed for the 9th or 11th month when a propitious day appears in either of these months.

The bridegroom's parents, on being informed which day is chosen, procure two or three middlemen who go to the bride's house, taking with them presents of various kinds for the bride, such as flowers, powder, jewellery, sweet cakes, tea, and other things. These are conveyed in red lacquered boxes. Besides these presents, they also take two pieces of red paper on which are written the day fixed for the marriage, and the birth years of the bride and bridegroom. These are wrapped in red silk or satin and put in a red box. Along with these presents from the bridegroom's home are sent the wedding garments for the bride. Usually two garments, a skirt and a coat, are sent, but sometimes four garments are sent if the

family is a prosperous one. These garments are made of flowered silk, and are of suitable colours to be worn at the wedding. In summer they are of unlined silk; in the temperate seasons, they are lined; and in winter, they may be fur-lined.

The presents are conveyed in three different ways—some are carried on trays, some in the usual coolie fashion on a bamboo pole over the coolie's shoulder, and some are carried by two men together, as the Chinese put it, "twan, t'iao, t'ai." In Peking it is the custom only to use the third of these modes of conveyance, not the first and second.

Besides the gifts already mentioned, special cakes called "lung feng ping," (dragon and phoenix cakes) wine, pork, two live geese, and two legs of mutton are sent. The legs of mutton are the perquisites of the middlemen of the bride's family. In very wealthy families and in the families of princes, it is the custom to send live geese, pigs, and sheep—two of each kind being the smallest number to be sent, and eight the largest number. In some parts of China the custom in ordinary families is to send two live ducks and two live geese. In such a case, one duck and one goose is returned to the sender.

When sending the presents to the bride, there must be a pair of everything. When the bride receives the presents sent to her in the year fixed for her marriage, she distributes some of them to her friends and relatives, thus intimating to them that the wedding day is approaching and warning them to prepare their gifts.

The bride's family is supposed to provide everything that the bride will require in her new home—furniture, bedding, crockery, and kitchen utensils, as well as her own clothing and ornaments. If parents have land, they often sell it to buy their daughter's providing. So it is not altogether to be wondered at that large families of daughters are not popular in this country.

A story is told of a man who sold much of his land to provide a marriage portion for his daughter. After a few years he became very poor. On one occasion when there were birthday festivities going on at his daughter's house, he went to see her; but because he was wearing poor clothing, his daughter kept him in the background, and would not permit him to see any of the guests or have food with them, as she was so ashamed of him. The father returned home and hanged himself

leaving behind him a paper on which was written, "What a fool I was! I sold my fields so that she might have a good portion, and now, because of my poor clothes she is ashamed of me. I shall be better dead."

Invitations are sent out ten days before the day fixed for the wedding, the two families each inviting their own friends.

All the things that the bride has prepared for household and personal use are sent to the bridegroom's home a day before the wedding or on the wedding day. At the two homes there is feasting for two or three days before the wedding, each family inviting its own friends, not feasting one another. In some cases, a few days before the wedding, the bridegroom's family sends a present of mutton, pork, fish, sweetmeats, and other things, to help to provide for the guests of the bride.

In the bride's home, decorations are put up, and "Joy" characters pasted on the doorposts. A reed-mat awning is put up over the court-yard, and under this, the numerous guests are entertained. On the evening before the wedding, guests are invited to a special feast. At dark, incense is lighted, and the bride comes out and kotows to the ancestral tablets and to the guests. In this way she says farewell to her

ancestors, as, after her marriage, she will belong to another family. She then goes into her own room and weeps. The Chinese say that a girl "ch'uh chia"—goes out of the home —when she marries; and this is fitting, as it is a veritable going out of the home. After she has left her home to be married, she is not supposed to spend the New Year holidays in her father's home, nor must any of her children be born there.

The evening before the wedding, after she has finished weeping, the bride is supposed to go to sleep, as the noise and fun and jesting and teasing are such for several days and nights in her new home, that there is little chance of sleep.

MARRIAGE.

At the marriage of a young woman, her mother admonishes her, accompanying her to the door on her leaving, and cautioning her with these words, 'You are going to your home. You must be respectful; you must be careful. Do not disobey your husband.' Thus, to look upon compliance as their correct course is the rule for women.

Mencius. (*Legge*)

CHAPTER IV.

MARRIAGE.

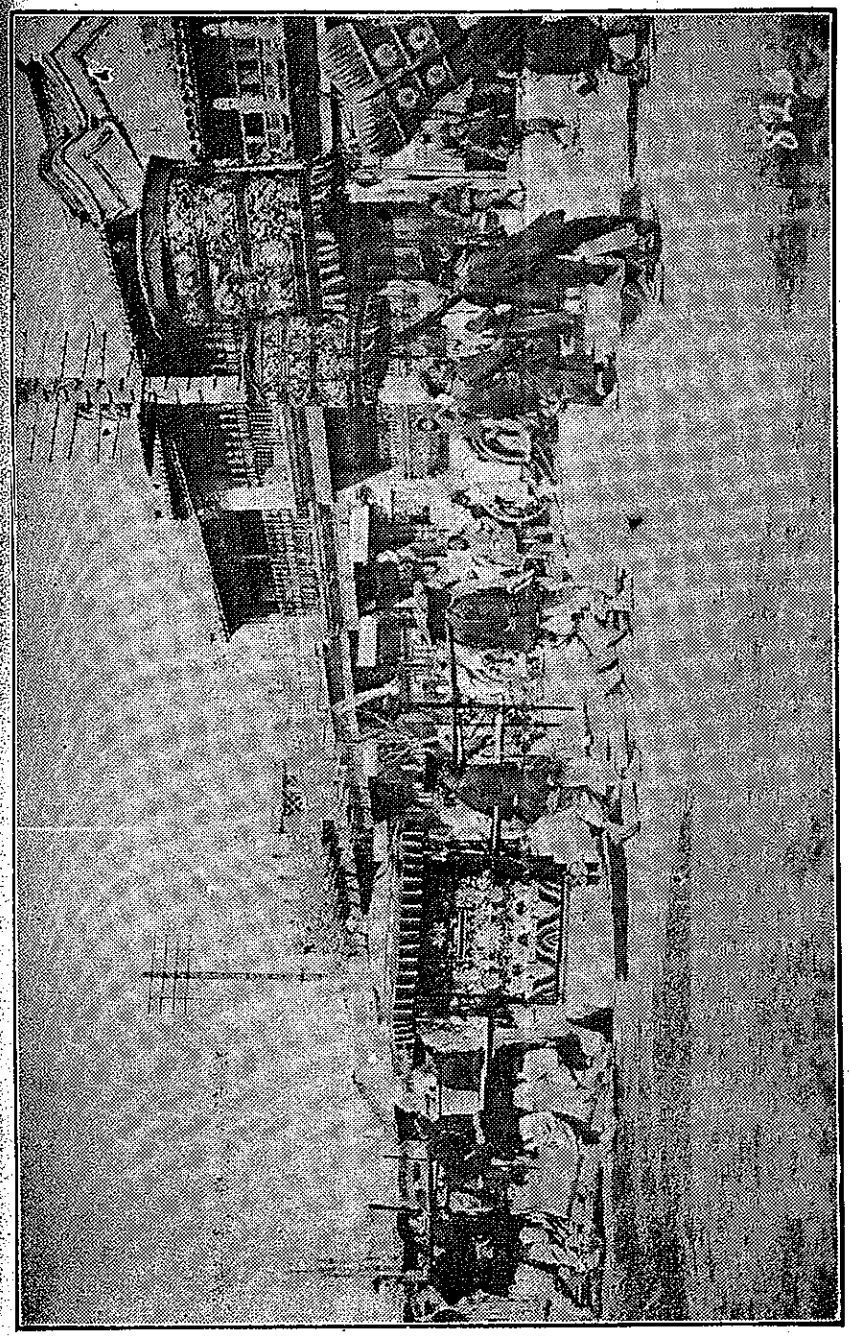
A married woman in Western countries is known by the plain band of gold on the third finger of her left hand, but for the sign of a married woman in China, it is necessary to look at the hair on her forehead. In some parts of China, the night before the wedding, women friends of the bride trim the hair on her forehead. The trimming is done by the use of two threads twisted and rolled over the forehead with the fingers, the twist of the thread pulls out the fine fringe of hair around the forehead, giving the forehead a square appearance. In Peking, this is done after the bride arrives at her new home. After marriage this must be done periodically to keep the shape correct. Many have now given up this custom and use the ring as Western nations do.

In the meantime, a large awning made of reed mats has been erected over the courtyard of the bridegroom's home to accommodate the numerous guests. On the four sides of the courtyard, high up near the top of the awning,

are placed windows adorned with red bats and red "Joy" characters. Thus the guests are overshadowed by joy and happiness, the bats denoting happiness. On the door posts are put up red "Joy" characters, and this character figures largely on gifts and eatables also.

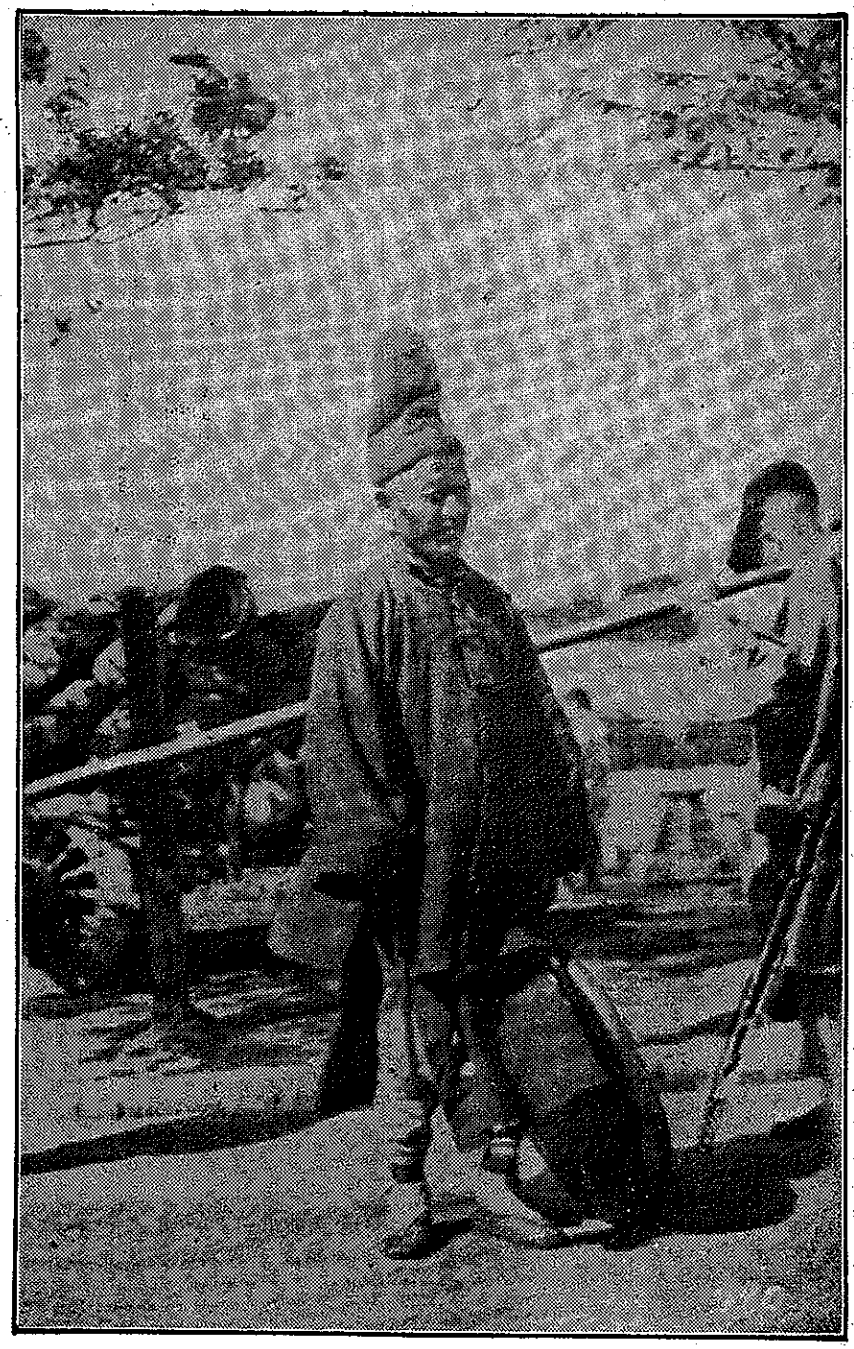
On the morning of the wedding day, the red bridal sedan chair, decked in fine embroideries, is brought to the bridegroom's house and put down in the courtyard to await the arrival of the fixed hour, when it is sent to the bride's home, carried by four or eight bearers arrayed in costumes for the occasion, and accompanied by musicians, drums and gongs.

Before the chair leaves the bridegroom's house, the family gods are worshipped and incense burned. The chair is then thoroughly searched inside and out by the mistresses of ceremonies, who must be married women whose husbands are still living and who are mothers of families. These women make a spill of red paper and dip it in oil and, after having lit it, use it to illuminate every corner of the chair to make sure that no evil spirits are lurking within. Sometimes a lamp is used instead of a spill. After they have gone over it with a light they then go over it carefully with a mirror, the idea being that if the evil



A BRIDAL CHAIR AND PART OF A WEDDING PROCESSION. *Photo by Camera Craft.*

(See p. 48)



GONG MAN IN WEDDING AND FUNERAL PROCESSIONS. HIS HIGH CAP IS OF RED FELT.

Photo by Camera Craft.

spirit catches sight of his own face in a mirror, he runs off in a fright. The chair is then sent off accompanied by at least two middlemen. After the chair has left the house for the bride's home, the bridegroom goes in a carriage or car to her home, and after she has left in her chair, he goes into the house and kotows to her father and mother. Also, as the chair leaves the door of the bride's home, trays of fruit and viands arrive as a gift from the bridegroom's people. In Peking, one of the attendant married women usually goes to fetch the bride, often riding in the bridal chair, a green embroidered chair following on behind to bring her back. She takes with her the bridal robe which is made of red flowered silk, and lavishly trimmed. This robe is put on the bride just before she steps into the bridal chair, and the red silk kerchief is put on her head at the same time. The robe may be the property of the bridegroom's family, but on the other hand, it may only be borrowed or hired for the occasion, as only about one out of ten families possesses such a robe. The red kerchief, as well as the gilded vase and wine cups mentioned later, are all the property of the firm from which the bridal chair is hired, and are hired along with it. The bridal robe

is only worn until the marriage ceremony proper is concluded.

The bride's family also sends an attendant married woman in a chair or carriage to accompany the bride; so that, in a wedding procession, one may often see the bridal chair and two green covered chairs following.

Before the chair leaves the bridegroom's home, in it, on the seat, are placed a Chinese almanac and a looking glass. These are put in also to frighten the evil spirits, because it is believed that the days of the year and the seasons as represented in the almanac are all reckoned out by Heaven, and because of this, the evil spirits dare not stay in the chair with it. Before the bride enters the chair, or if an attendant matron goes in the chair, these things are placed on the floor of the chair.

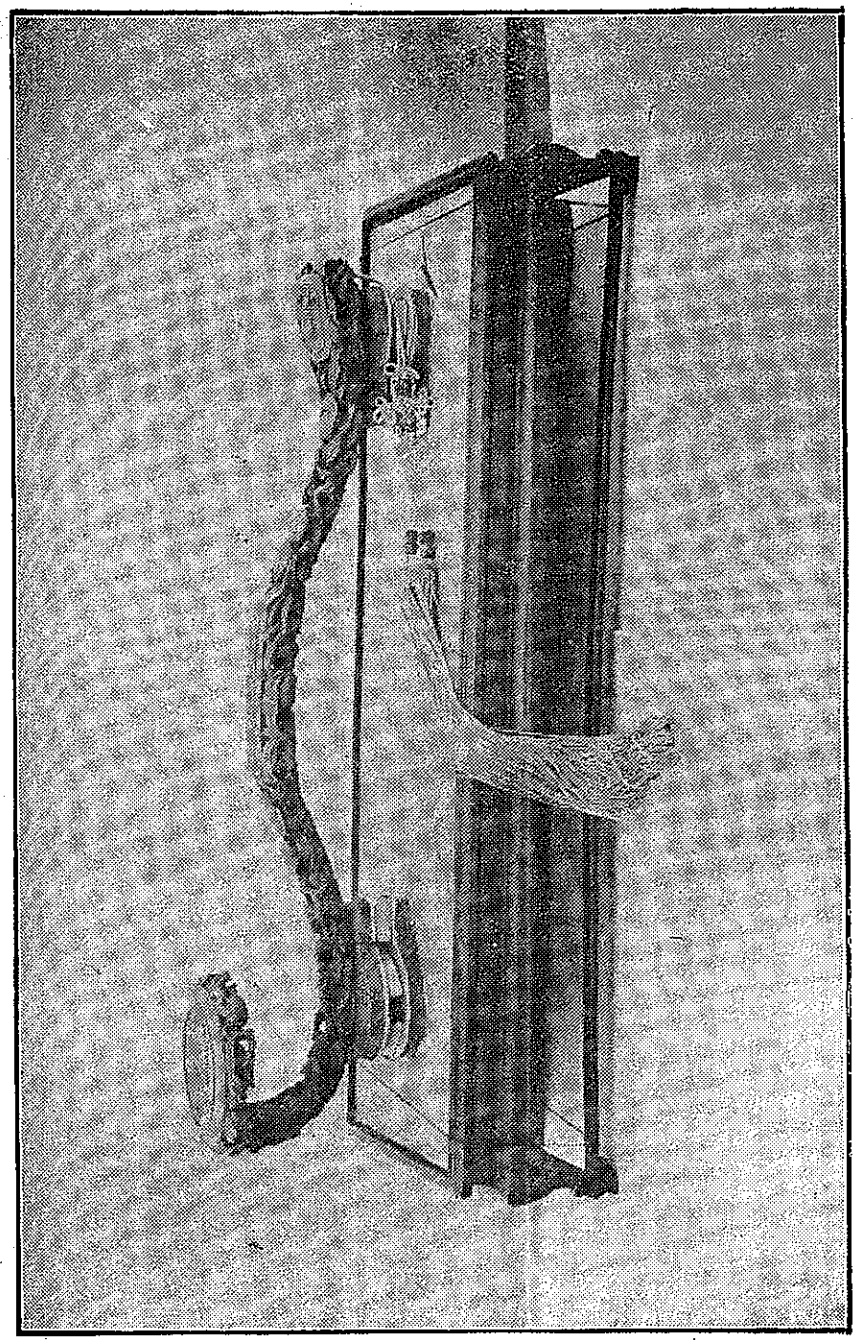
The bride awaits the arrival of the chair all ready dressed in gay garments. A large red silk kerchief is put over her head as she enters the chair, and an apple is offered to her of which she takes a bite only, and leaves the rest behind. This bite of apple she holds in her mouth until she arrives in her own bedroom in her new home, and then she puts it out on the k'ang. This is done to secure peace; "p'ing" being the first of two characters meaning

apple, and also the first of two characters meaning peace.

When the chair containing the bride arrives at the front door of the bridegroom's house, a string of fire crackers is set off to scare away any evil spirits. In the courtyard through which the bridal chair is carried, a "ho p'en" or "fire basin" containing a fire of glowing red charcoal is placed, and the bride's chair is carried over this. When the chair arrives at the door of the middle or public room of the house, the bridegroom shoots three pointless arrows under the chair, to scare off evil spirits so that they may not enter the house along with the bride. The chair, from which the carrying poles had previously been removed, is then carried into the middle room and set down by the bride's bedroom door, and the two attendant matrons open the chair and assist the bride to alight. As she alights, she steps on a horse's saddle which is just inside the door of her room, and under which had been placed two apples. This is done to ensure peace in the new home, as "p'ing" stands for "peace" and for "apple," while "an" has the same sound in "peace" and "saddle." As she steps out of the chair, two apples are put into one of her hands and a

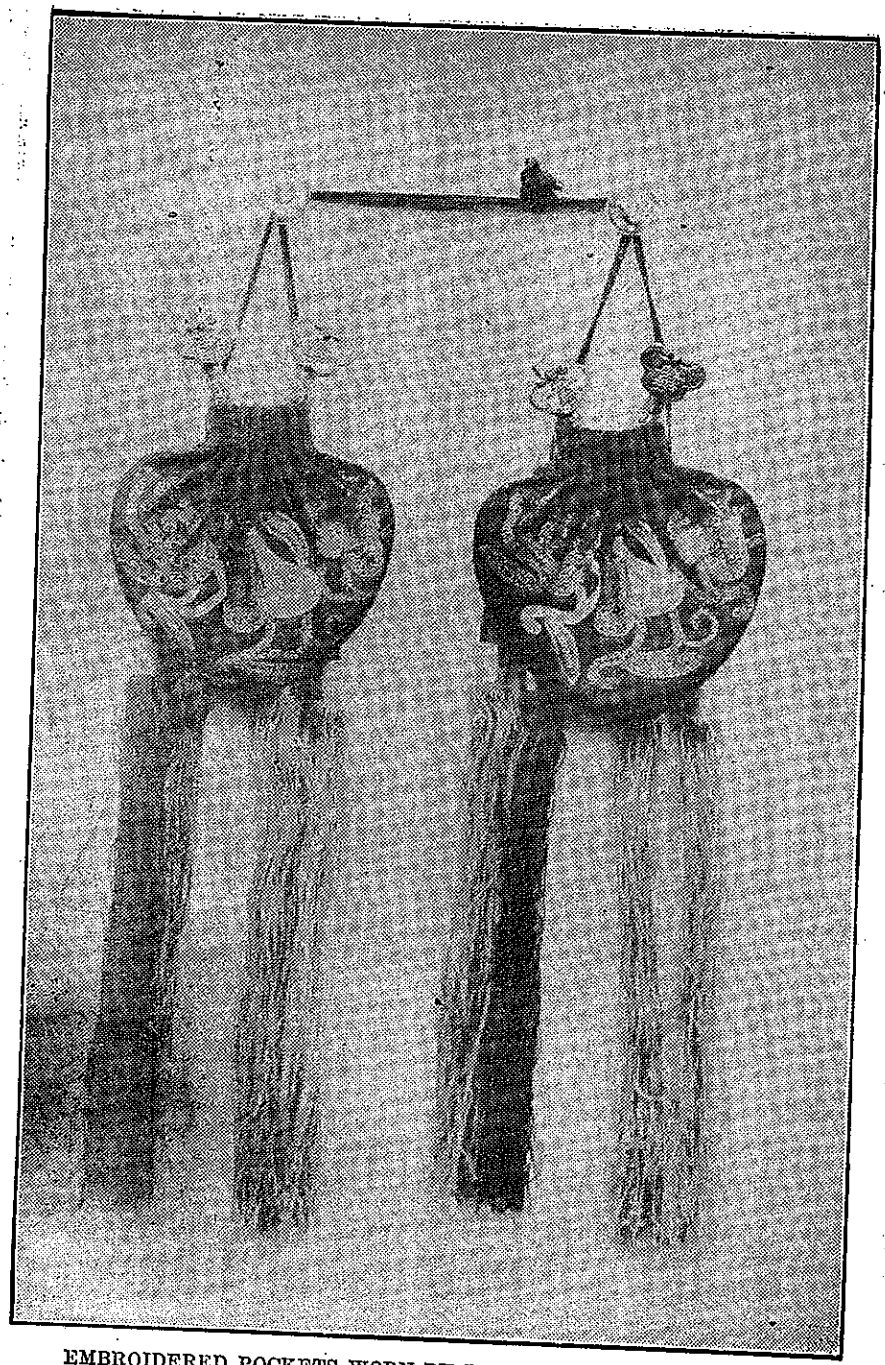
gilded vase into the other. The contents of this vase are a tiny ingot of gold and one of silver, a gold and a silver "Ju Yi" (the meaning of which is "According to your desire"), a little white rice and a little golden millet. The vase is called the "Chin Yin Pao Ping"—meaning "The gold and Silver Precious Vase," its contents all being white and yellow, or gold and silver. She holds the apples and this vase in her hands until she is seated in her room, when she lays them down on the k'ang or bed. She wears, hung on the side buttons of her gown, two embroidered red pockets, each containing two "Ju Yi" crossed. These she wears until she takes off her gown at night.

The bride, still supported by the attendant ladies, goes with the bridegroom and worships before the white paper tablets representing heaven and earth which are set up for the purpose in the middle room. She is then led to her bedroom and set down on the k'ang or bed, and her bridegroom sits down there too, he in the more honourable place, the left, and she on the right. The bridegroom then uncovers her face by lifting off the red silk kerchief which covered it. A gilded pot of wine is then brought and two gilded wine



PICTURE SHEWING A "JU YI"—A SYMBOL OF GOOD WISHES.

(See p. 52)



EMBROIDERED POCKETS WORN BY BRIDE ON THE SIDE BUTTON OF HER GOWN, AND CONTAINING TWO "JU YI" CROSSED.

(See p. 38)

cups. A little wine is poured into each cup, and one cup is given to the bride and the other to the bridegroom. The groom takes a sip from his cup, then one of the attendant matrons takes it and holds it to the lips of the bride, she being too embarrassed to do it herself. Then a little wine is poured from the groom's cup into the bride's cup, and a little poured from her cup into his. They then sip some of the mingled wine. This is called "T'wan Yuan" viz. to make a perfect circle, meaning that the married life of the couple will be harmonious and agreeable.

After this ceremony, a brass basin is brought and placed on the k'ang near them, upside down. Underneath it are put two apples and a small box, the characters for these being "P'ing ho," meaning "Harmony." Before the bride left her home, thirty-two meat dumplings (chu po po) were prepared. These are taken to the bride's new home by a serving woman and cooked for the bride and bridegroom. After the wine ceremony, these are brought in and placed, with chopsticks, on the upturned brass basin instead of on a table. Thus the first meal is eaten in harmony, though the bride only nibbles off a tiny bit of a dumpling. The bride may not get down

from off the k'ang until the representatives of her own family arrive.

Before seeing the assembled guests, the bride and groom bow before the household gods, the ancestral tablets, and finally before the father and mother of the bridegroom. Afterwards they go out to the middle room and receive the greetings of the guests. They stand up, while a chair is placed for the guest opposite to them. The guest sits down and the bride and groom bow to him or her, or kotow, as the case may be. The kotow is for guests who are older or of higher status.

A bride is not allowed to speak after her marriage until permission to do so is granted by her mother-in-law.

On the third day after the wedding, about eight o'clock in the morning, guests are again invited, and the ceremony of emptying the "Gold and silver precious vase" is performed. The bride and groom sit on the k'ang, tailor fashion, with their knees close together, their long gowns covering their knees. A matron who has a prosperous family is chosen to empty the vase. She removes the multicoloured silk threads tying down the red cloth which covers the mouth of the vase, and empties its contents over the two laps. The one into

whose lap falls the most of the contents, will have the most happiness and wealth. Should the contents be equally divided between both laps, then the happiness and wealth will be equally divided and the union will be a harmonious one.

On the 4th, 6th, 8th or 10th day after the wedding, the bride returns to her father's home, having first bowed before the household gods in her father-in-law's home. On arrival at her father's house she bows before the gods there also. If her home is far off, she does not go home until after the first month, as she is not supposed to sleep under any roof but that of her new home during the first month.

In the first month after marriage, the bride, after dressing, goes every morning and salutes her parents-in-law with a "Ch'ing An," a bow which means a greeting of peace. She also salutes them thus before each meal.

After the first month, it is her duty as the newest bride in the family, to wait on the guests who call on her seniors, and to see that they are kept supplied with tea and smoking requisites. The life of a young wife is not always a bed of roses. If the mother-in-law is a harsh and tyrannical woman, she can make the lives of her subordinates miserable,

for a daughter-in-law is supposed to wait on her mother-in-law, and be submissive to her, bearing all sorts of treatment with patience.

There is a custom in China, not so common now as formerly, which to the Western mind seems a very strange one. This is the marriage of the dead which takes place when a girl's bethothed dies before the marriage is celebrated. In such a case it is considered the height of virtue when the girl announces that she will go through the ceremony of marriage with the dead youth. She leaves her own home and goes to her mother-in-law's home, just as a bride does, and is lost to her childhood's home. After this, she is reckoned as a widowed girl and does not marry.

There is very strong feeling among the Chinese regarding the marriage of widows. Among people of the better class it is considered a disgrace to the family of the deceased should the widow of one of the sons marry again. Among those of the poorer class, however, it is not uncommon for a widow to take a second husband. Compared with her first marriage, a widow's marriage is very quiet and commonplace, lacking altogether display and ceremony. A widow, also, may not ride in a bridal sedan-chair, as only

once in her lifetime is a woman permitted to do so.

Another strange marriage custom which is still adhered to is the posthumous marriage. If a son dies unmarried, his parents, through a go-between, find a family in which a daughter of about the same age had died at about the same time as their son. Arrangements are made, and the betrothal and wedding ceremonies are duly carried through, the tablets of the young people taking the places of the bride and bridegroom. The coffin of the bride is then placed by the side of that of the bridegroom in the family burying-ground, and she is from that time looked upon as a deceased daughter-in-law in the young man's family.

Times are changing in China as everywhere, and as modern ideas and ways gain ground, so do many of the old customs and ceremonies give place to new ones. In Peking it is not uncommon to see a gaily decked carriage or motor car carrying the bridal pair, preceded by a brass band in foreign style uniforms, and playing tunes which sound strangely familiar to the ear of the Western onlooker. The marriage ceremony which unites such a pair is very simple and straightforward and modern

in comparison with that set forth in these pages. Nevertheless, such marriages are in the minority, the usages and customs of Ancient China still holding good with the majority.

MARRIAGE OF THE EX-EMPEROR.

Kwan-Kwan go the ospreys,
On the islet in the river.
The modest, retiring, virtuous, young lady:—
For our prince a good mate is she.

Extract from an Ancient Ode.
(Legge)

The peach tree is young and elegant;
Brilliant are its flowers.
The young lady is going to her future home,
And will order well her chamber and her house.

The peach tree is young and elegant;
Abundant will be its fruit.
This young lady is going to her future home,
And will order well her house and chamber.

The peach tree is young and elegant;
Luxuriant are its leaves.
This young lady is going to her future home,
And will order well her family.

Ancient Ode. (Legge)

CHAPTER V.

MARRIAGE OF THE EX-EMPEROR OF CHINA.

Even an ordinary wedding is an event of great interest, but a world-wide interest centres round the nuptials of a ruler or emperor. Though China is now a Republic, the Emperor of the Manchus still lives and holds his court in the heart of the Forbidden City. In December 1922 great interest was aroused by his marriage, and this chapter is made up of accounts by two eyewitnesses of the ceremonies of the presentation of the seal, and the wedding.

Presentation of the seal.

"The wedding was set for the eighth of December. On the preceding day, the emperor was to take a concubine, who was to aid in receiving the new empress. It was said that he did not wish to do this, but the older ones of the court insisted that custom must be followed. Various presents were sent to the home of the empress, and after the engagement she wore ornaments adorned with the dragon, the symbol of royalty.

On the day preceding the wedding, the family most graciously consented to receive a call from a visitor from America, and a small party of others went with her, to interpret and entertain. After reaching there we were told that at ten o'clock the seal from the emperor was to reach the house, and we might remain and see the important ceremony of receiving it. This seal was to be of gold, engraved with the new name to be borne by the empress, a name that would not be known until it was read on the seal. Its presentation would establish the young bride as empress. We waited with eagerness to watch its coming, realizing that we were to see a historic ceremony, to which in the past none had been admitted except those most closely concerned.

This home of the new empress, where we were waiting, was a large place, with large courts and high rooms. The central court was gorgeous with the red decorations for the wedding. The high shelter built over the square court was of fine straw mats, and its border had all around an elaborate finish of lattice work combined with red. All the posts were wound with red cloth, and there were many large horn lanterns hanging about, each one with red characters on the sides, and with

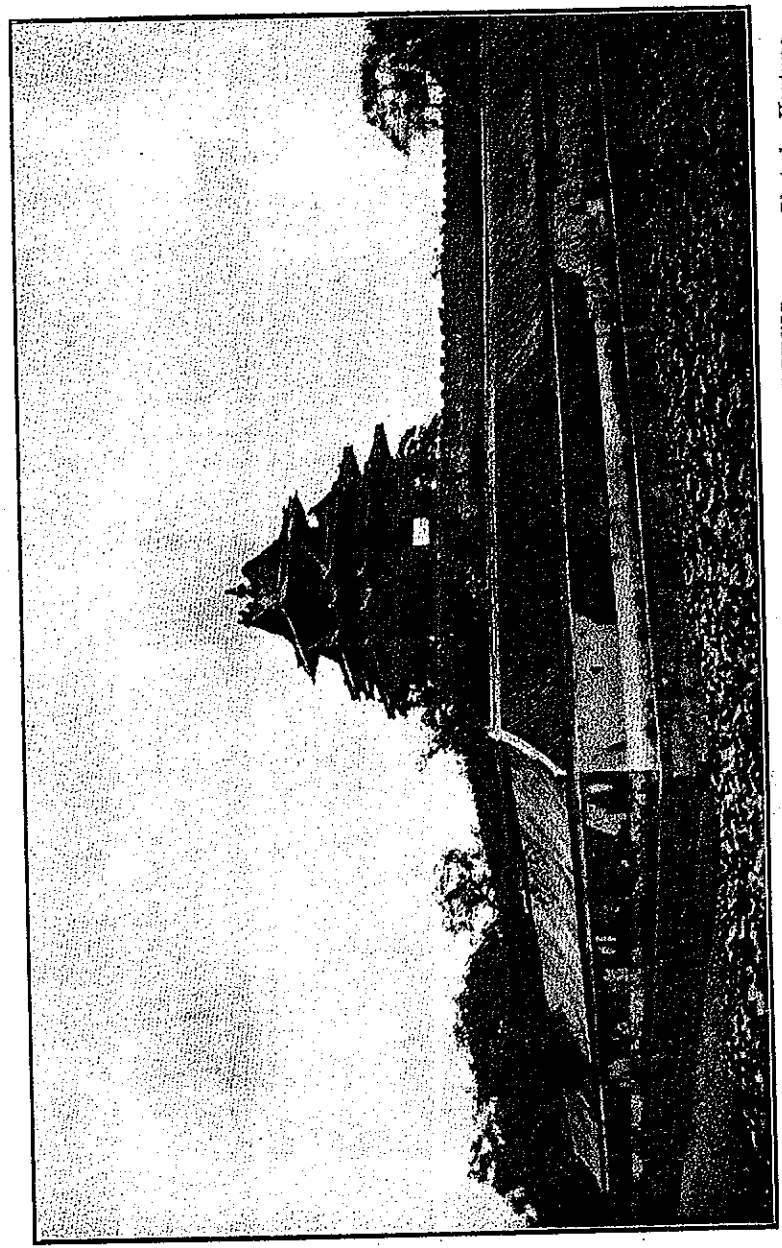
long fringes of red silk both above and below the lantern. The stone paving was covered with brown matting, and a sloping approach led to the platform that was built out from the narrow porch in front of the large central room.

While we waited, we were taken to another court where tables with the wedding presents and the outfit of the bride, were ready to be carried out through the streets to the palace. These tables were covered with yellow cloth, the imperial color, and the dragon was often to be seen in decoration. On one table were beautiful mirrors, with large carved dragons forming the frames. Some tables held clocks, some jewelry, some large boxes of clothing or household things. It was interesting to watch the dignitaries going back and forth, and to see again the satin coats with their embroidered squares, and the hats with the button and the peacock, all a part of the picturesqueness of the Peking of the past, which we have missed in these republican years. At last, just before noon, came the event of the day. The small number of guests went to a platform on the west side of the court. Ladies of high rank, in court garments of red silk covered with gold thread embroidery in a dragon

pattern, and wearing high, flower-decked head-dresses, came out and stood in two lines along the platform. The company of eunuchs and officials stood on the ground below. Then, last of all, the bride came slowly out, supported by two court ladies. She is a beautiful young girl of sixteen, and her beauty completed the picture which was before us. Her gown was also covered with embroidery, but the color was darker than that of the others.

Her head-dress was unique, a historic one to be worn at this particular moment. It was rather small and flat, of a bright red, with a decoration of small symbolic gold figures, and in the centre a pagoda-like ornament about six inches high. She came to the front, where a yellow cushion had been placed for her, and stood waiting with the others.

Then music was heard outside, and the gate of the court was opened. As the first official entered, bearing the gift of the emperor, the company knelt where they stood, the bride sinking down upon her yellow cushion. This official carried with great care and dignity a long staff, to which was attached the imperial golden seal engraved with the new name, the whole covered with yellow gauze. After him came several more officials, each carrying a



CORNER TURRET ON WALL OF FORBIDDEN CITY, PEKING. *Photo by Hartung.*

(*See p. 64*)

(*See p. 65*) LARGE HEAD-DRESS WORN BY MANCHU WOMEN.

Photo by Hartung.

rather large box covered with yellow cloth, on a yellow base; in each box was some symbolic gift, with a meaning brought down out of the past. They passed into the large room, between the rows of kneeling ones, and placed the gifts on tables. Then the new empress and the others went in, and knelt again during a long chant in the Manchu language, sometimes going through a further ceremony of kotowing. At last this too was finished, and the company scattered.

Then we could look in at this room of ceremony, and after a little were even told to enter. This permission showed the relaxing of the old exclusive customs, for in the days of the reality of empire, no outside eye could see these things. The decorations of this room were all yellow, and of the gifts and symbols some were gold, and some were made to look like gold. Just as we had decided that we must leave this room of treasures, we were urged to wait a little longer, and then, to our joy, the young empress herself, now in her Manchu costume and high head-dress, came to greet us, and smilingly shook hands with each one. She was very charming, in her slender, graceful beauty, and we wondered if she was not trying to see all that was possible

of the outer world, before she went into the seclusion of a Chinese palace. As she stood there, the moment came when the company of officials and eunuchs were ready to kotow to her. Quite simply she went to the ceremonial chair just inside the main door, and sat with her head slightly bowed, while these dignified men knelt in two circles, facing her, and three times bowed their heads to the ground. Whatever one thinks of these oriental forms, one must still have been impressed by this sight, with its contrasts; the fair young girl, with bowed head, symbol of an empire of centuries that has now fallen away; and the men, none of them young, who had grown through the years with the tradition of reverence for emperor and empress, and for whom the glory of the past seemed for a moment to be revived. To us, too, as we left, the empire seemed a part of the country and the people that could not be forgotten. We came through streets crowded with thousands, waiting to see the wedding outfit carried past. In the hearts of all this crowd, too, was the regard for empire.

The last part of the wedding was to be in the night, or rather in the early morning between three and four, and many who were ambitious came out to see it. The yellow chair

went from the palace at midnight to get the bride, and returned with her at three o'clock. The night was beautiful with moonlight, and not very cold, and the procession held much to wonder at. There were many men carrying great horn lanterns, and other things were carried as symbols. There was the beautiful chair, covered with yellow silk heavily embroidered, and other chairs carrying those who attended the bride. There were officials marching, and bands at intervals, playing music that seemed worthy of the occasion—a touch of the modern added to the old. So with light and music they went to the palace, where the emperor and many attendants were awaiting them.

The next day was to be one of many ceremonies and much kotowing and on the second day there was to be a large reception for Chinese and foreigners—again a departure from old ways."

The Wedding.

"Hurrying at 2 a.m. to the Gate of Divine Valour (the northern entrance), I found the great square outside it already nearly full of cars and carriages belonging to "iron-capped" Princes, Manchu and Mongol nobles, members of the Imperial clan, and ex-officials of the old

Empire. Ten minutes through the labyrinthine ways of the Forbidden City brought me to the large open space which is used as a parade ground for the Imperial Guard, and also as a place of reception for the camel caravans which still—even in these Republican days—bring "tribute" to the Manchu Emperor from the Princes of Outer and Inner Mongolia.

The "Great Within."

It was through this parade ground that the new Empress's procession was timed to pass at 4 o'clock in the morning. In the north west corner is the Gate of Propitious Destiny, which leads directly into the central and most sacred portion of the Imperial precincts. Through this gate the Empress would pass out of sight of the crowd of privileged spectators and into the seclusion of the "Great Within." A short walk brought me to another great triple gateway surmounting a marble staircase on the northern side. This is the Ch'ien-ch'ing Men—the Gate of Cloudless Heaven—so named after the Palace which lies beyond.

In the company of Prince Tsai T'ao, who, as a prince of the blood-imperial, was in charge of all the wedding ceremonial, I crossed the quadrangle and entered the throne hall. It was into this hall that the bridal chair was to

be carried, and here, at the foot of the throne, it was to be set down. The narrow pillared terrace immediately in front of the palace was carpeted with scarlet cloth, and in front of the throne were placed a number of *huo-p'en*—"fire vessels"—containing glowing coals. This is in accordance with an old Chinese custom, which decrees that a bride should be carried over fire to the nuptial chamber.

Meanwhile the sound of music was drawing nearer, and the great throne-hall was rapidly filling with princes, princesses, *nu kuan* (ladies-in-waiting), all resplendently robed. Nearer and nearer came the procession, but the music was now silent. What we heard now was something far sweeter, far more mysterious, far more like strains from elfland. Not till the procession, or a small portion of it, was actually entering the throne-hall in which I stood did I perceive the source of that ethereal music. It was caused by nothing more than the rhythmical swaying of numbers of little censers slung on silver chains and carried by a dozen eunuch-acolytes in front of the Phoenix Chair—so called because among all its sumptuous and beautiful decorations and embroideries the phoenix is the design that figures most prominently.

Having previously made a study of the wedding ritual (which through the kindness of his Majesty was made accessible to me), I knew that the procedure now to be observed was this. The Emperor, standing before the throne, would await the arrival of his bride at the entrance to the Palace of Cloudless Heaven. Without waiting, however, for the bridal chair to be set down, he would retire from the throne-room and proceed straight to the building which contains the nuptial chamber, there to await the bride, who would follow him on foot, after having descended from her Phoenix Chair in front of the throne. The Emperor played his part to perfection. Exactly as the ritual enjoined, he turned his back on the bridal chair with its precious contents and left the hall by the small door at the back. He was preceded and followed by chamberlains, some bearing lamps, others carrying incense-burners. He passed into the darkness of night, and we saw him no more. The remainder of the male company also left the hall.

The Bride's Arrival.

We may assume that everything now took place in strict accordance with the rules. A princess went up to the chair and raised the

screen; a eunuch lifted the front cross-pole and the Empress was ceremoniously invited to come forth. She did so, and then received from the attendant ladies-of-honour a *pao p'ing*, or "precious vial." Here we have one of those plays upon words of which the Chinese are so fond. Two differently written characters, but with precisely the same sounds as *pao p'ing*, mean "to maintain peace," suggesting the idea of perpetual harmony. The ceremonial presentation of a "precious vase" is therefore equivalent to the greeting "Peace be with you."

The Empress was now conducted towards the door through which the Emperor had lately passed. She was supported by six princesses and ladies-in-waiting, and in front went a group of other ladies of the Court carrying lamps. The foremost of them opened the door, and called out in a loud voice *"Nan To"*—"Let men make themselves scarce." From my position in the darkness outside the door I saw the procession of women come slowly forth. The slender, girlish figure of the young Empress, exquisitely draped, was clearly visible to us, but her face was hidden by her great bridal head-dress. And so the sixteen-year old Princess moved slowly,

timidly, silently, to meet her sixteen-year-old Prince. She had not far to go. Immediately behind the Palace of Cloudless Heaven is the Chiao-t'ai Tien (Hall of Heavenly and Earthly Fusion). Following the path taken by the Emperor, the bride walked past the Chiao-t'ai Tien to the much larger building that stands behind it. This is the K'un-ning Kung—the Palace of Earthly Peace—surely a name of happy omen for the first meeting place of a newly married couple.

At the door of the Palace of Earthly Peace the bride was met by princesses and ladies-in-waiting, who knelt to receive her. As soon as she had passed within, the doors were closed, many of the lanterns that stood outside were extinguished, and all was silence. Once more the ceremonies that followed were witnessed by none but women and eunuchs. But they are no secret from those who have access to the prescribed ritual. In the first place, on crossing the threshold, the Empress had to step on or over a horse's saddle, under which had been placed two apples. Another play upon words. The Chinese word for "apple" is *p'ing,* which is also the sound of another word (differently written) meaning "peace." An apple can therefore be used as a symbol of peace. In

this case there are two apples, because the peace that is invoked is to be shared with another. It is curious that in the West we speak of the apple of discord, whereas in China they speak of the apple of peace.

As soon as the Empress had gone within she was relieved of the "precious vial" and also of an apple of peace which she had brought with her from her father's house. Now comes one of the most important ritual-performances of the whole ceremony. This is the raising of the bride's head-dress by the bridegroom and the unveiling of her face. The Emperor (assisted, if necessary, by the ladies-in-waiting) must himself perform this rite, and when he has performed it he gazes for the first time on the face of his Empress.

Without a pause, bride and bridegroom now approach the bridal couch and sit down together on the edge. The Empress sits on the right, the Emperor on the left. Ladies-in-waiting bring forward a vessel full of little cakes which have the significant name of *Tzu sun Po po*—"Sons-and-grandsons cakes," of which they invite their Majesties to partake. This is merely a preliminary to the wedding feast, which is now brought in and spread, not on a table, but on a mat on the floor by the

side of the couch. The all-important rite to be observed by bride and bridegroom in the course of this feast is the ceremonial drinking of the Nuptial Cup. As they raise their goblets to their lips, the "Song of the Nuptial Cup" is chanted outside the bridal chamber, the singers being an aged man and an aged woman who have been faithful to one another all their days.

There are other minor rites to follow, such as the eating of the *ch'ang shou mien*—"the bread of long life"—but the solemn drinking of the Nuptial Cup may be regarded as the culminating part of the ceremony.

It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that the simple rites of the wedding day do not by any means constitute the whole marriage ceremony. If we include, as we should, the elaborate betrothal rites, the joint worship of the Imperial ancestors, the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth and various spiritual beings, and the State ceremonies of congratulation, we may say that the marriage rites began as early as October 21st, and did not close till December 14th, on which date the Emperor and Empress took the leading part in a religious service in the Palace of Earthly Peace."

FUNERAL PREPARATIONS.

Mencius said, "The nourishment of parents when living is not sufficient to be accounted the great thing. It is only in the performing their obsequies when dead, that we have what can be considered the great thing."

Works of Mencius. (*Legge*)

CHAPTER VI.

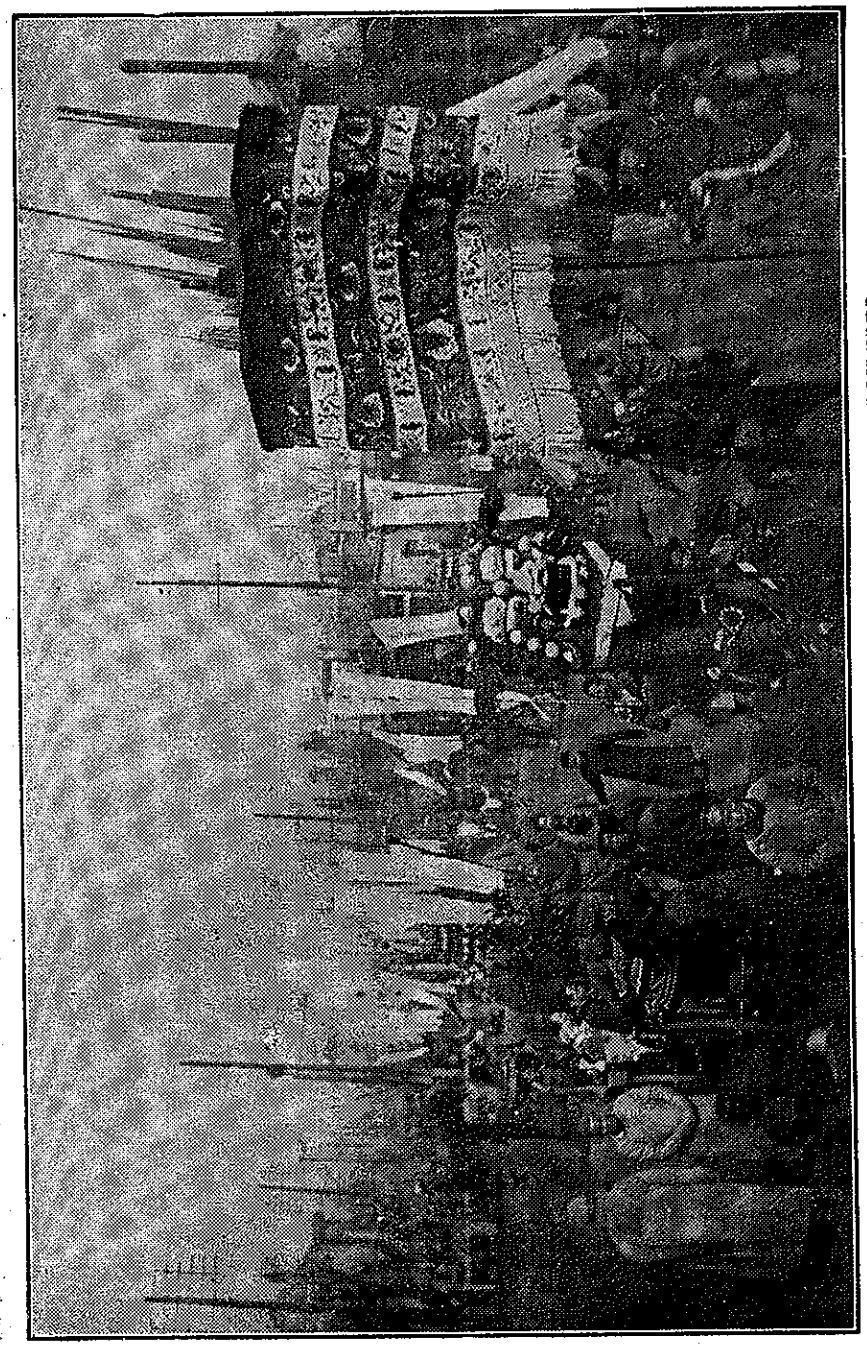
FUNERAL PREPARATIONS.

Funeral and mourning customs vary very much in different parts of China, making it difficult to speak for all China. The position and wealth or poverty of the family concerned are also factors in the performance of the rites. While the wealthy and those of high position spend much time and money in the proper carrying out of all ceremonies, the less wealthy and poor do what they can for their dead, very often as much in self-protection as in honour of the dead; self-protection, because it is believed that the spirit can return to do harm to those who do not observe the proper rites. The spirits of those who die without anyone to care for them are believed to become wandering spirits who go about doing mischief, especially after sundown.

On the death of an infant, the burial takes place at once and with no ceremony. In some places, for three days after the burial, a cupful of mother's milk is taken out and put on the little grave. This is not done in Peking.

Up to the age of fifteen years, no special rites are observed on the death of a child, but after that age it is thought necessary to engage Taoist priests after the body is coffined, to chant prayers for the departed, and to open up a road for the soul to traverse to the other world. At the funeral, the coffin is carried by eight bearers. Over the coffin is thrown, crosswise, a long piece of red embroidered satin, and surrounding the bottom of the coffin is blue, red, or flowered white cloth. Over the coffin, small boys carry an embroidered canopy mounted on four poles, and in front small boys walk beating drums and wearing fancy head-dresses and clothing. This is done to give the spirit of the dead youth pleasure.

A tablet is prepared and set up in the living room of the home at the side of the household idols. For one year after the death of the youth or girl, every morning and evening, before it is dark, a bowl of rice and different vegetables and meats, very often something that the deceased specially liked, are set before the tablet with a pair of chopsticks on the top of the bowl. If there is a nephew of the deceased in the house, it is his duty to see to the offering of the food at the family meal times, and to invite the spirit to partake of it.



PART OF A LARGE FUNERAL PROCESSION, SHEWING EMBROIDERED

(See p. 110)

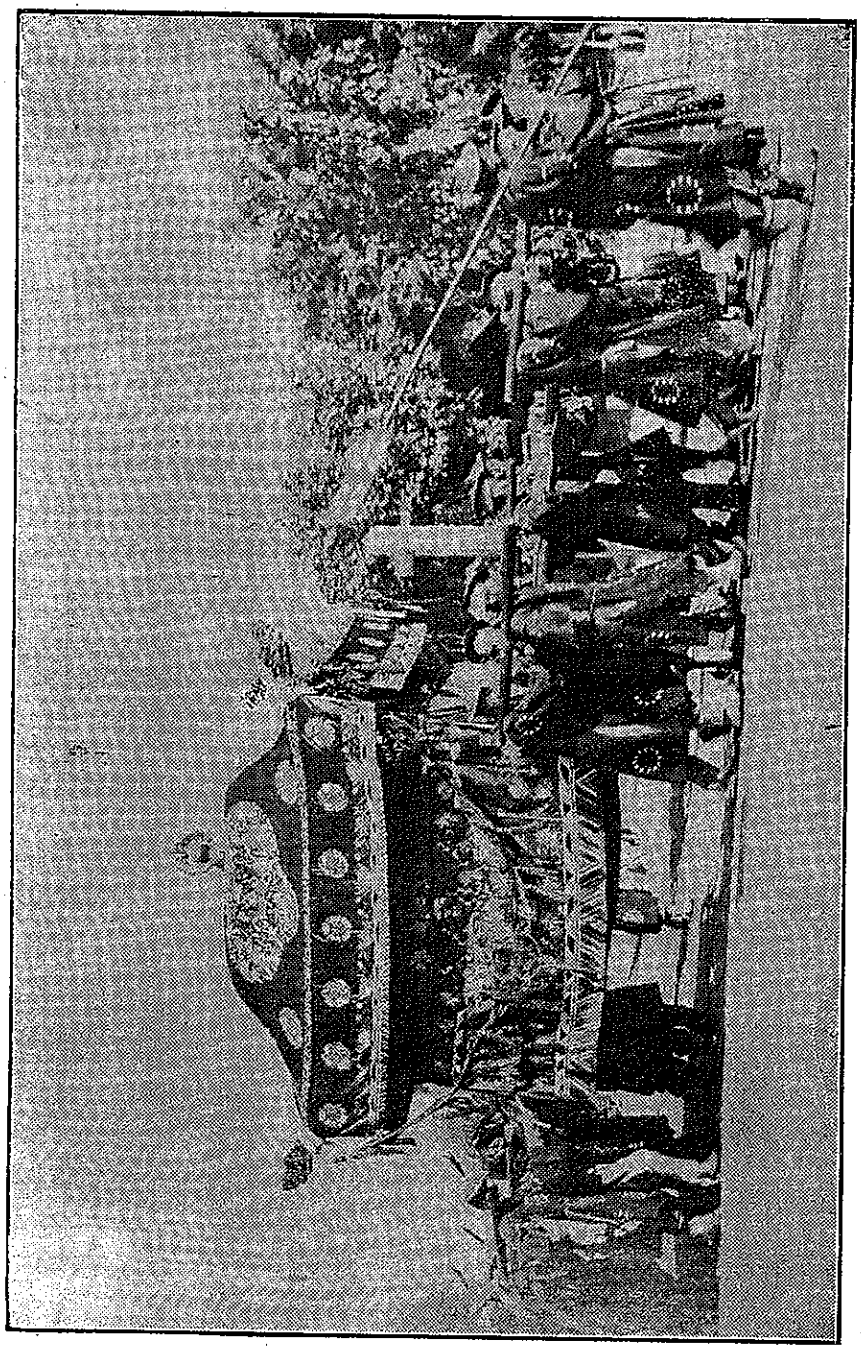


Photo by Hartung.

CATAFALQUE WITH BEARERS.

(See p. 79)

Failing a nephew, any member of the family may do it. It is most important that the evening meal should be offered before it is dark, as it means that the spirit must be called, and should it be called in the darkness it might stray and cause them trouble.

The funeral of an ordinary person is very like that of a young person, only that the canopy is carried in front instead of over the coffin, and the coffin is not surrounded by cloth. The catafalque, which will be mentioned later on, is only used by wealthy and official families. It is composed of a heavy bamboo framework which is entirely covered over with richly embroidered red or white satin, red being most commonly used, and the thick poles on which it rests and the smaller poles used by the carriers are lacquered bright red. In the case of the funeral of an Emperor or a member of the Imperial family, the covering and poles are of the Imperial yellow.

The ceremonies and customs which are to be mentioned now mostly refer to those observed on the death of a father or mother, or paternal uncle or aunt.

As soon as death takes place, a diviner is called in, and he, with the help of his books and the diviner's abacus, reckons out the day

and hour at which the spirit will leave the body as a visible vapour. He tells the family what form it will take, how high it will be and of what colour, black, yellow, or white, and in what direction it will take its departure. At the hour specified, everyone leaves the room of the dead and goes into another room, taking care that their hiding-place is not in the line of the departure of the vapour. It is considered to be an evil omen to anyone who may chance to see the departing spirit, foreshadowing his or her own death at an early date. The day specified may be soon or late after the death, it may even be after burial; but whenever it is, the room in which death took place is carefully avoided during the hour fixed by the diviner.

The diviner then tells the family the day and hour which will be propititious for the funeral ceremonies and many other pieces of occult information in connection with the obsequies.

After death, the body is bathed. In Peking, any fresh water may be used, but in some places it is not considered correct to use water that is in the house, it must be brought from outside. A servant goes to an idol near which there is a river or pool. He burns incense

before the idol, and burns paper money and sets off crackers, thus buying the water that is near, from the God of Water. This water is taken home and heated and is used to wash the body.

In Peking, there is no special custom observed in washing the body, but in some places the custom is that the front of the body must be washed seven times and the back eight times, fifteen times in all, making an odd number. After the body is bathed, the limbs, body, and head are all tightly swathed in silk wadding before the clothes are put on. In wealthy families the clothing is of silk but in poorer families, cotton clothing is used. There are no buttons nor button-holes on any of the clothing; in their place ties are used, made from pieces of the material of which the garment is made. In the case of clothing provided on marriage, two or multiples of two of each garment must be provided, but for the dead, only odd numbers must be used, usually three or five. The custom was, and still is in many places, to clothe the body in old-fashioned Chinese clothing, somewhat like that worn by Buddhist priests. The cap, for a man, is also like that worn by Buddhist priests, but the head-dress used for a woman is called the

"Lotus Flower Hat." It is seven-cornered, like what may be seen on female idols in a temple. A woman's hair is dressed on the top of the head. Officials are clothed in their robes of office and full regalia. The ornaments used in dressing a woman's hair are of gold or jade, and in a man's coffin is often placed a snuff bottle of jade or crystal. In some parts of China, gold leaf or pearls are put in the month; and between the lips, a ball of red paper containing incense ash. In Peking incense is not used, but a pearl may be wrapped in the red paper, or a little tea. When the body is put in the coffin, this paper ball is taken out of the mouth, and if it contained a pearl, the pearl is put in the mouth.

After the body is clothed and the socks and shoes put on, the feet are bound together with a hempen cord. If the death has taken place at an unlucky hour for the dead, it is said that the body gets up and jumps about, supposedly being chastised by the evil spirits. The tying together of the feet is to prevent this.

After this has been done, the bedding which has been prepared for the coffin, of the best materials possible, is put on the bed and the body laid thereon, so that the relations and

friends may see the body before it is put in the coffin. The face and body are covered with a piece of silk or cotton five or six feet long. This is turned down from the face when the body is put into the coffin so that the face is left uncovered. In some parts of China a sheet of paper is used to cover the face; or, if the deceased has died from some infectious disease, a book is used, so that the germs may not escape from the mouth and do harm to other people.

The body is left on the bed while the coffin is prepared. In the ordinary course of things, the coffin is bought when the relatives realise that death is approaching; but very often a filial son will buy the coffins for his parents while they are still in good health, or for a surviving parent, if one is already dead.

He does this to please and comfort them, and to set their hearts at rest with regard to the proper observance of the rites and ceremonies when their time comes to depart. These coffins are either left in the coffin shop, or placed in a temple to await the day of need, sometimes eight, ten or even twenty years distant.

The coffin is large and very heavy; a very superior one sometimes weighing as much as

two hundred catties (250 lbs.). It is made of very thick, solid pieces of hard wood, usually white pine, all of which fit very closely together. Each piece, except the one which forms the floor of the coffin, has a convex surface, and the coffin is higher and wider at the head than at the foot. In Peking the surface is left plain, but in some cases it is lacquered a shining black or black and red, and on the panel at the head is a carved and gilded "Long Life" character.

The coffins of the poor and of babies are usually made of plain, thin white boards roughly put together.

A lining of silk or calico is put in the coffin and bedquilts are used as padding. The body is then laid in, the head resting on a pillow stuffed with straw or cotton wool and shaped like an ingot of silver, and around it is packed clothing of all kinds except furs. The reason that furs are not used is because it is believed that when born into the world again, the soul would enter the body of the species of animal whose fur had been placed in the coffin. Therefore, no matter how rich the family may be, furs are never put into the coffin. If a woman has preserved her bridal garments, they may be put into the coffin with her, and

often a favourite garment is also added. The body is packed firmly into the coffin so that it will not shake about when the coffin is moved.

In some parts of China, after the silk or calico lining has been put into the coffin, parcels of lime wrapped in paper are put in. According to the number of years that the deceased had lived, a like number of packets of lime is used. In the case of poorer families, lime is sprinkled in the coffin. In Peking lime is not used.

While the body is being arranged in the coffin, the relatives surround it and weep and wail. The lid of the coffin is not put on closely at first, but is left slightly open.

The courtyard is covered over with matting, and just inside the front courtyard door are placed the drums, one of them very large, which are beaten on the arrival of guests. There, also, are the musicians who play on the arrival of guests and when food is presented to the dead. On the outside of the front door a red pole is put up to indicate the sex of the dead, on the left side for a man and on the right side for a woman. These poles are only used by official families. The usual strips of red paper with characters, which are pasted on

the outside doors, are taken down and white ones put up in their stead.

After these preparations are completed the Taoist priests go to the house and chant prayers and open up the way to heaven for the soul. They bring pictures of gods and hang them up near the coffin, and in the presence of these, extol the dead and pray for his entrance into the Western Heaven; or if, while alive, the deceased had not been all that he should have been, the priests crave that the bad spirits release him and not cause his soul to perish, and that he may be allowed an entrance.

At the same time, in a different part of the house or in a temple, the Buddhist priests chant prayers for the deceased, and on certain days Lama priests also do their part. Thus the soul is safely escorted across the ferry. This chanting may go on for three, five, or seven days. Some have the Buddhist priests go on chanting for seven days, then each recurring seventh day until seven times seven; after that, again on the hundredth day and again on the anniversary of the death, then not again until the third anniversary of the death.

Every day during the first year after the death, the family places food before the tablet of the deceased, this tablet having been put up

in the middle room of the house by the side of the household gods. In some places this offering of food goes on for the first three years after death.

After the first or third anniversary, as the case may be, the food is not presented daily, but at the different feasts of the year. At the feast of Ching Ming in the spring, the family, after having presented food before the tablet in the home and burned paper money, go out to the grave and burn gold, silver, and white paper money. Another feast for the dead is on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. This is called the Ghosts' Feast. Then also food is presented, and incense and paper money are burned. A paper boat is also burned to take the soul across the river.

On the first day of the seventh month, it is believed that the door of the unseen regions is opened, and that the spirits of the dead are liberated to walk about at will throughout the month. From the first to the last day of the month there is fear in the hearts of the people, and children are counselled to return home early and not to be out after dark for fear that they may be harmed by the wandering spirits. The spirits which are supposed to be abroad are those who have no sons or nephews

or adopted sons or nephews to provide for them after death. It is most important that there should be someone to minister to the spirit after death.

Every year, on the first day of the tenth month, when it is thought that those who have gone before will be in need of winter clothing, a number of rolls of paper, in imitation of rolls of cloth, are wrapped up in a paper wrapper prepared for the purpose. In this parcel are also put different kinds of paper money, and on the outside of the wrapper is written the name of the one for whom it is intended. This parcel is placed on the k'ang in the house, and a table also is placed there with food and wine on it, and the spirit is invited to come and partake. At sundown, the bundle containing rolls of paper and paper money is taken out to the outside of the front door and burned, but before it is set alight, three sheets of paper money are lit at the side of it; these are to attract the attention of the wandering spirits lest they come and steal the clothing and money from the one to whom they are offered.

MOURNING RITES AND CUSTOMS.

Tsao Wo asked about the three years' mourning for parents, saying that one year was long enough.

'If the superior man,' said he, 'abstains for three years from the observances of propriety, those observances will be quite lost. If for three years he abstains from music, music will be ruined.

'Within a year the old grain is exhausted, and the new grain has sprung up, and, in procuring fire by friction, we go through all the changes of wood for that purpose. After a complete year, the mourning may stop.'

The Master said, 'If you were, after a year, to eat good rice, and wear embroidered clothes, would you feel at ease?' 'I should,' replied Wo.

The Master said, 'If you can feel at ease, do it. But a superior man, during the whole period of mourning, does not enjoy pleasant food which he may eat, nor derive pleasure from music which he may hear. He also does not feel at ease, if he is comfortably lodged. Therefore he does not do what you propose. But now you feel at ease and may do it.'

Tsai Wo then went out, and the Master said, 'This shows Yu's want of virtue. It is not till a child is three years old that it is allowed to leave the arms of its parents. And the three years' mourning is universally observed throughout the Empire. Did Yu enjoy the three years' love of his parents?'

Confucian Analects. (Legge)

CHAPTER VII.

MOURNING RITES AND CUSTOMS.

Now to come back to the mourning rites. After the body has been put in the coffin and the lid put over without being tightly closed, the coffin is placed on two stools, the head pointing towards the door.

Against the head of the coffin is placed a table on which are arranged in their proper positions, two vases containing flowers made of white or blue paper, two candlesticks with candles which are lighted at night, an incense burner with sticks of incense in it, and a lamp-stand resembling a pagoda in shape, in which is a little bowl of sesame oil with a wick of twisted cotton wool or rush pith. This little lamp is kept continually lighted while the body lies in the house, and is fed through a small door in the lamp-stand which faces the spirit tablet. This tablet is the most important article on the table, and is placed in the centre of the side of the table next to the coffin. On it is written the name of the deceased, and it is the outward and visible symbol of the

presence of the spirit of the departed. This tablet is the one which is kept in the home and reverenced by the family. It is on this table that food is offered at each meal of which the family partakes; and on the days when guests are invited during the obsequies, a banquet is offered to the dead. When food is offered, the candles and incense on the table are lit. Sometimes guests present a banquet; in such a case, that presented by the family is removed from the table, and that presented by the guest is laid there.

The candlesticks, lamp-stand, incense-burner, and vases are usually made of pewter, but in some cases, in wealthy families, cloisonne ones are used. These articles are all rented for the purpose.

When an emperor dies, a lamp is lit and placed in the tomb along with the body. This is of a larger size than the one above mentioned, and is never renewed, as the tomb of an emperor is never opened after being closed on the day of his burial.

If the deceased is father or mother of a family, the sons and daughters, paternal nephews and nieces, and grandchildren stay in the room with the body during the day, and in some places even through the night. Firm,

flat cushions are laid on the floor on which the members of the family sit and kneel, the males of the family on one side and the females on the other. Married daughters and their husband do not take part in the ceremonies at this time; they are treated as honoured guests.

Intimations of the death and of the ceremonies to be observed are printed on large sheets of yellow paper and put in large yellow envelopes, on the front of each of which is pasted a strip of blue paper with a strip of red on top. The age and appointments and other particulars about the deceased are also set forth. The days arranged for the chanting of prayers are clearly stated and also the days that are set apart for the reception of guests. These are sent out to friends.

When a guest arrives, a drum is beaten in the courtyard to warn the family of the arrival. The members of the family then kneel each side of the coffin in order of precedence. In the place of honour, at the left shoulder of the deceased, the eldest son kneels and his wife kneels opposite him on the right. Then follow the other sons, if any, and their wives. Next come the paternal nephews and their wives, then the grandsons and their wives, then the unmarried daughters of the

house. The guest kneels at the head of the coffin. A waiting woman brings a brass tray with a brass wine cup on it and gives it to the guest. She then pours into the wine cup a little wine from a large brass pot. The guest pours out a little wine from the cup into a brass basin set on the floor for the purpose. He or she then kotows. This is done three times, the family kneeling all the time and kotowing when the guest does. After this the guest weeps and the members of the family join in.

On the days which are set apart for the reception of guests, tables are spread in the matting-covered courtyard, and all the guests are invited to eat either the forenoon or afternoon meal. The food provided then is of the best. At each table six people must sit, men and women at different tables. When they are seated, one of the sons, or failing sons, a nephew, goes to each table where men are seated and kotows, and at the women's tables, the son's or nephew's wife does the same.

When guests go to pay honour to the dead, they take gifts. Some give money in the form of dollar or copper notes. These notes are put in a yellow envelope which has a strip of blue

paper pasted in front, and this is sometimes put in a long blackwood box prepared for the purpose. When this is done, it is usually taken to the house of mourning by a servant of the guest. Many other kinds of gifts are presented to the deceased, such as banners and scrolls of grey, blue, black or white silk or satin bearing mottoes and the name of the giver. A favourite motto is "Ling Kwei Hsi T'ien," meaning "The soul returns to the Western Heaven." These are carried in the funeral procession, and afterwards burned at the grave. Other gifts are gold and silver paper money, paper carts, horses and other articles for burning; cakes and sweetmeats, and often a table of fine food which is placed at the head of the coffin.

The great thing on the part of the family is to shew a great humility and carelessness of self and of personal comfort in the presence of the dead. They evidence no desire for food and have to be persuaded to eat.

Customs regarding mourning are strict. The outer garment for men and women is of coarse, unhemmed white calico, the men wearing a cap of the same. The head-dresses of Chinese and Manchu women differ considerably. The Chinese women who are near

relatives of the deceased, dress the hair as usual, but bind folded coarse white calico round the head with a coil round the knot of hair at the back of the head. This must not be washed during the first sixty days, and is worn for the first year. The sons' wives cover the head entirely with the coarse calico. This is worn until after the funeral.

Manchu women who are near relatives of the deceased, for twenty-one days, or three sevens, do not wear the large Manchu head dress, but wear the hair in two plaits. The hair is bound together on the top of the head with white cotton cord and divided into two parts and plaited. One plait is knotted on top of the head with a silver bar hairpin stuck through it; the other plait is left hanging down with the end bound round with white cotton cord. If the deceased, for whom mourning is being worn, was father-in-law or paternal uncle, or paternal grandfather, the plait hangs down on the left side of the head; if a mother-in-law or paternal aunt or paternal grandmother, it hangs down on the right side. After the first twenty-one days are over, the hair is dressed as usual, and the large head dress is worn with white calico bound round the head-piece.

In some parts of China, Chinese men wear a girdle of hempen rope on top of the white gown, and straw sandals on their feet; but in Peking, Chinese and Manchu men wear a girdle and cap of coarse white calico and white shoes—the cap being only worn until just after the funeral. The women also wear white shoes. This mourning is worn without change in the daytime for the first sixty, ninety or hundred days. The period of deepest mourning varies in different parts of the country, but for Peking Chinese, it is sixty days. After the funeral, if the man has to go to business, he wears a black gown with a white calico girdle, white shoes and a white knot on his cap, but he changes into the full mourning when he returns to his home. During the sixty days he may not shave his head nor cut his hair nor shave his beard.

After the sixty days, the Chinese wear a white girdle, white shoes and a white knot on the cap with a white or light grey gown, until the end of the first year, then a darker grey gown with black shoes and blue or black knot on the cap, for the second and third years.

Manchu men have slightly different customs as to clothing. They wear the coarse white calico for the first hundred days; after that,

until the end of the twenty-seventh month after the death, they wear black.

The women of both Chinese and Manchu families follow the same customs as the men in regard to colours. Silk or satin must not be worn during the period of mourning. Chinese women do not wear bracelets or other ornaments during the first hundred days, but wear white thread in their ears instead of earrings, and a white bone hair bar in their hair. After the hundred days, they may wear silver ornaments, but not gold or jewels during the period of mourning. The Manchu women, from the first, wear small silver earrings and a small silver bar in their hair.

Married daughters of the deceased do not wear the same kind of mourning as those who are not married, or the wives of the sons of the house. In Chinese families, married daughters (subject to the permission of their mothers-in-law) wear the same mourning as the sons' wives, with the exception of the head covering, coarse white calico with unhemmed edges, until after the funeral; then until after the first sixty days are over, they may wear quiet colours with white shoes and hair strings. Their husbands also wear full mourning until

after the funeral, but after that they may wear ordinary clothing.

Married daughters in a Manchu family, until after the funeral, wear fine white calico gowns, hemmed, and trimmed with a band of blue silk on the cuff, and a stiff collar of blue silk. After the funeral, for the first hundred days, they may wear quiet colours and black shoes and hair string. Their husbands also wear the fine white gown with blue silk trimmings, and they wear high black boots. After the funeral the husband may please himself as to what he wears, colours and all.

Full mourning is worn by the younger generation for their elders, but no mourning is worn by seniors for juniors, or by parents for their children. A husband wears the coarse white calico mourning for his wife until the funeral is over.

One often sees on the street, young people and children wearing mourning and with little pieces of red cloth stuck on the shoulder. If this piece of red cloth is on the left shoulder, the wearer has lost a father, grandfather or paternal uncle; if it is on the right shoulder, then he has lost a mother, grandmother or paternal aunt. Little pieces of blue cloth worn in the same way denote the loss of maternal

relatives. Sometimes one meets a young person with pieces of cash sewn on the front of the white calico cap; one cash thus worn denotes that the wearer is a son of the deceased, three denote a nephew or grandson, and seven, a great grandson.

During the period of mourning, the mourners are not supposed to travel unless it is absolutely necessary, and the women folk must not go to temple fairs or do any gadding about. During the first sixty days they may not go visiting or even go out more than is necessary. Where people are very strict in their observance of mourning customs, twenty seven months is the limit of time in which they may return to the ordinary mode of life.

To go back to the rites observed before the body is removed from the house—incense is constantly burned on a table at the head of the coffin, and when the family eats food, food is also offered to the dead. This food is placed on a table at the head of the coffin and paper money is burned.

When the days set apart for the chanting of prayers for the release of the soul from Hades has come to an end, the family prepares, and relations and friends present, paper houses, boxes filled with gold and silver paper money,

paper servants (each with a name attached), paper carts, horses, motor cars, jinrickshas; in fact anything and everything that the deceased used on earth, is prepared for his use in the other world, only made of paper so that they may be burned and thus sent to him in the spirit world. If a man has been an official, the articles pertaining to his office are prepared for him. The boxes are locked, and marked with the name of him for whom they are prepared. Before sundown, on the evening before the day fixed for the funeral, these articles are taken out by members of the family, accompanied by Buddhist and Taoist priests who chant prayers, to an open place on the street, or if in the country, to a field, and there burned. While the things are burning, a man keeps beating them with a long pole. He does this to beat off the wandering spirits who might appropriate the things for their own use. Also, some boiled rice is mixed with water and scattered among the burning things, so that the poor wandering spirits may be attracted by this food and so leave the other things to go to their proper owner.

The burning of paper articles for the use of the dead is said to have begun in the T'ang dynasty, about A.D. 739, and it was at that

period also, that mock money made of paper to represent silver and gold ingots was first burned at the Imperial sacrifices. In ancient times real money was put into the coffin with the dead, but that practice gradually died out, as graves were often rifled by bad characters in order to obtain the money in the coffins. In the time of the Three Kingdoms, A.D. 221-420 some cut up paper and used it instead of money.

One of the duties of the diviner, who is called in when death takes place, is to write on a paper the cause of death and present it to the police. If the deceased has died a natural death, then the police give a passport so that the body may be taken out of the city. The passport is presented to the guard at the city gate as the funeral procession passes out. Chinese cemeteries are always outside of cities, never inside.

If it is found that the deceased has died as a result of violence, the passport is not granted, but enquiries are made as to the cause of the violence. Should a lawsuit ensue, only after it is settled is the body allowed to leave the city.

If death has been the result of suicide, enquiries are made as to the reason, and

whether the deceased had enemies who caused him to kill himself. Sometimes a daughter-in-law poisons herself because she has been treated badly by her mother-in-law. Her own parents, finding this out, may make trouble and begin a lawsuit, thus preventing the burial of the body until things are settled.

THE FUNERAL AND AFTER.

The philosopher Tsang said, 'Let there be a careful attention to perform the funeral rites to parents, and let them be followed when long gone with the ceremonies of sacrifice; then the virtue of the people will resume its proper excellence.

Confucian Analects. (Legge)

CHAPTER VIII.

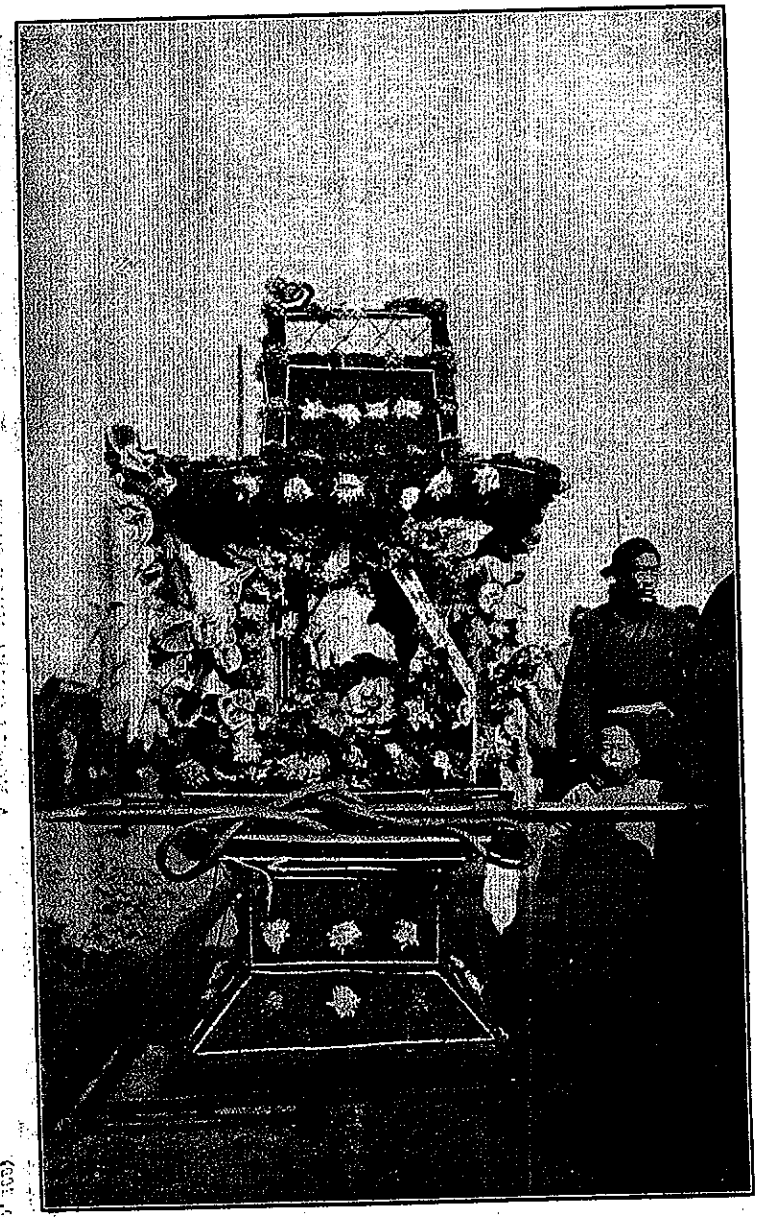
THE FUNERAL AND AFTER.

In Peking, the catafalque is prepared the night before the day fixed for the funeral, and placed by the side of one of the wide streets near by, mounted on heavy stools and supports which are made of carved and gilded wood. After the ceremony of burning paper articles is over, the embroidered draperies are taken off the framework and are left off throughout the night. Along with it may be a smaller one, or sometimes two smaller ones. The smallest is used to carry the coffin from the room where it has lain, to the door of the courtyard; the next size is used to carry it from the door of the courtyard to the street, where the coffin is transferred to the largest catafalque of all, in which it is carried to the place of burial. If the dwelling is on a large street, the smaller catafalques are not necessary.

On the morning of the funeral, the priests chant prayers and the relatives of the dead kotow to the dead and weep. After that the

coffin is carried out, always head first, and placed in the catafalque. When the coffin reaches the street door, the eldest son breaks an earthen saucer (made for the purpose, and which has a hole in it) at the head of the coffin. This is done so that the dead person may have a dish out of which to drink water in the other world. The Chinese have a belief that after death they are made to drink the water they used on earth for washing dishes, clothes, and such like, and threw away. On account of this belief, the earthen saucer provided for their use, has a hole in it so that a large amount of the water may leak through the hole, thus leaving less to be drunk by them.

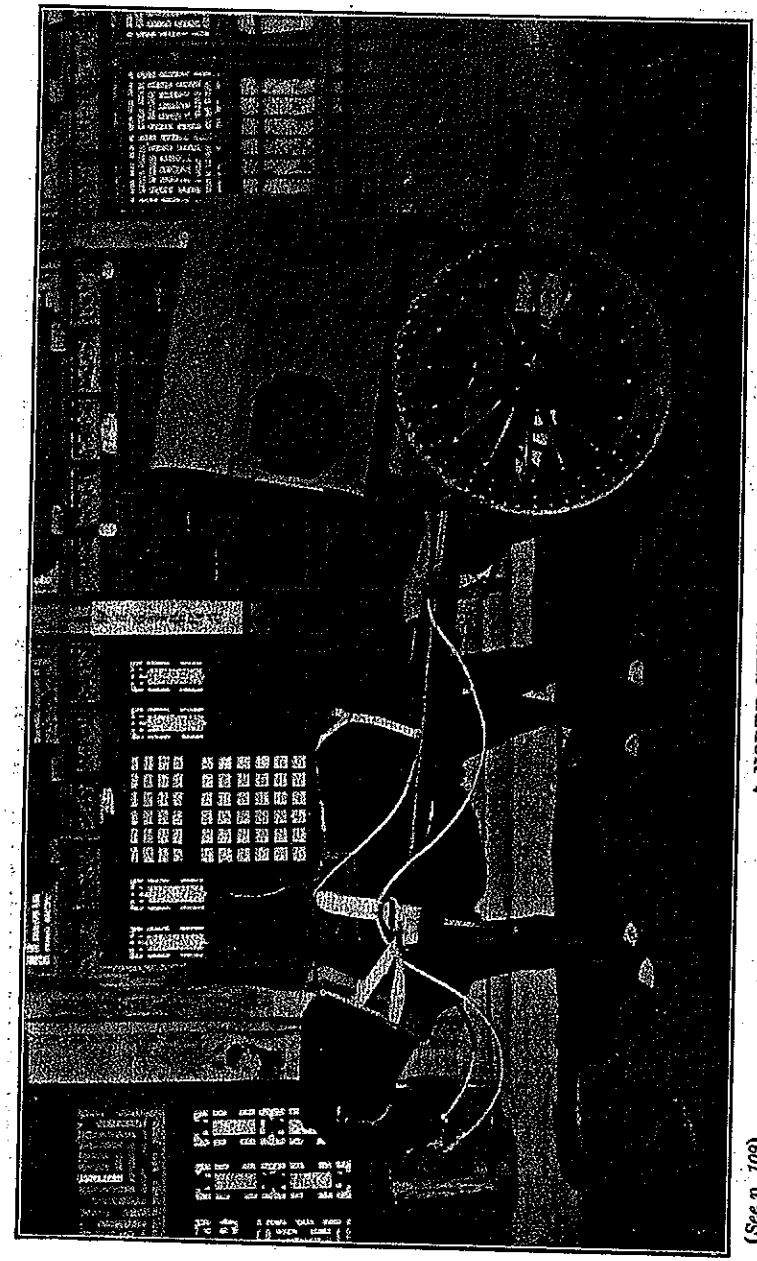
The bearers of the catafalque are in numbers which are the multiple of eight, the smallest number used being thirty-two, and the largest, eighty. The most common number used is sixty-four. Beside the bearers a man walks, beating two pieces of wood together. This beating is to keep the bearers moving in order. The sedan chair of the deceased is carried in front of the catafalque, and in it or in a special carrier for the purpose, is a portrait of the deceased. His cart, carriage, or motor car is also in front. The soul is supposed to be in one of these, leading the



(*See p. 108*)

FRAMEWORK OF CYPRESS TWIGS AND FLOWERS IN WHICH PHOTOGRAPH OF DECEASED IS BORNE IN FUNERAL PROCESSION.

Photo by Hartung.



A NORTH CHINA MULE CART.

Photo by E. H. Parker.

(See p. 109)

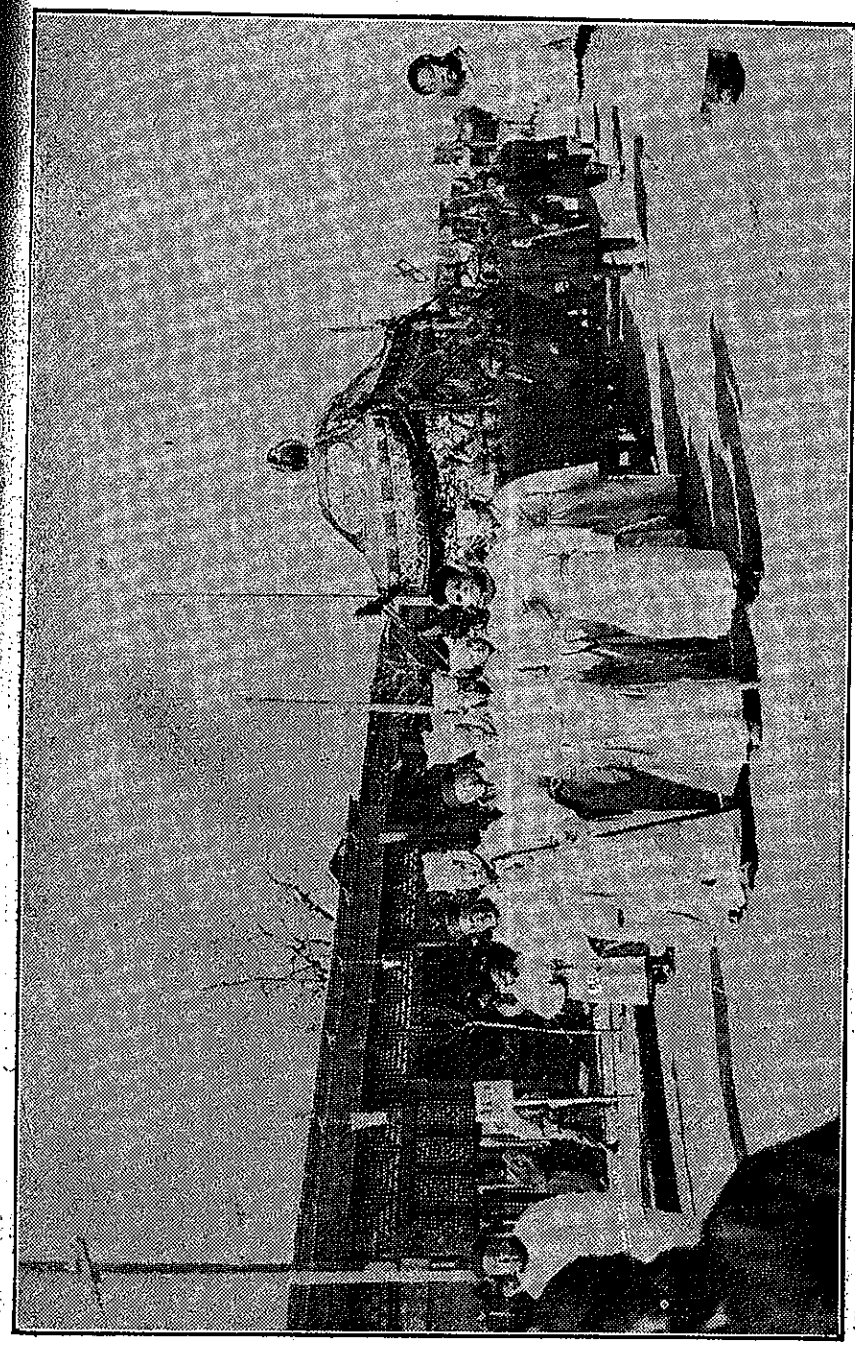
body. The men mourners walk immediately in front of the catafalque; the eldest son carries in his hand a three-tailed banner made of paper on which is written the name of the deceased; while the second son, if there is one, carries a small paper shrine containing a paper tablet, also bearing the name of the deceased. These are burned along with the other paper articles at the grave.

The women mourners follow in carts, in strict order of precedence, behind the catafalque. That of the wife of the deceased follows first, then that of the eldest son's wife, then those of other daughters-in-law in their order, then those of the wives of paternal nephews in their order. These carts are all covered with coarse white calico, and the trappings of the mules are also white. After these come the carts bearing the wives of grandsons, also covered with white calico. These have a red pomegranate flower pinned on the outside; on the left side for a grandfather, and on the right side for a grandmother.

Married daughters' carts are blue-covered, but with a band of white calico around them. The carts following those already mentioned are those of friends, and are the ordinary carts in general use. These also must

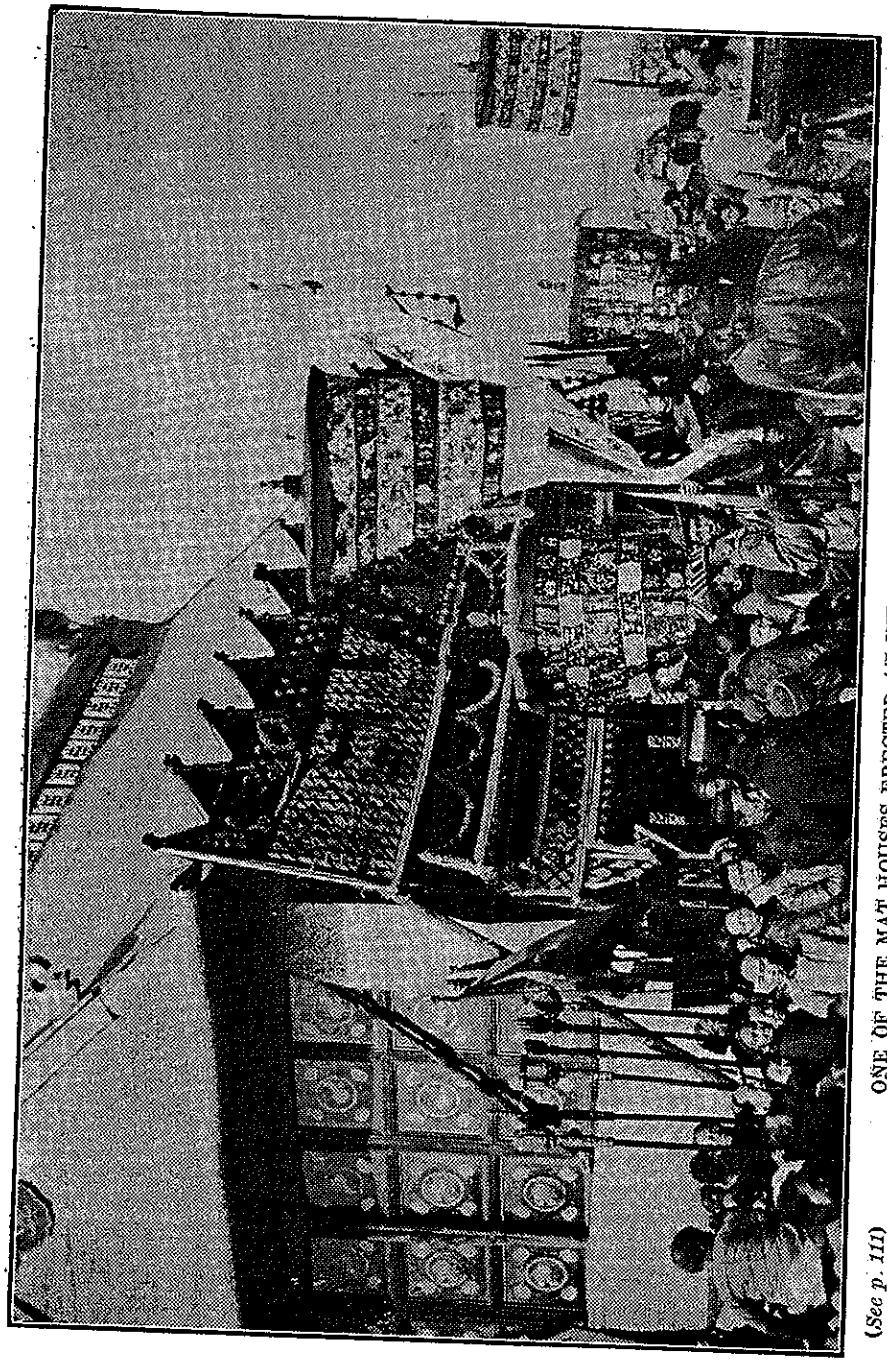
be in order of precedence, otherwise there is apt to be trouble. In the funeral procession are men and boys carrying large umbrellas of red or white embroidered satin, banners, lanterns, paper flowers and plants in pots, servants, and other paper articles; sometimes, also, there are animals made of cypress twigs. These and the paper things are burned at the grave. In the funeral procession, as in the wedding procession, there are drums and instruments of music and horns, all of which are played on as the procession moves along. The sound of wailing made by those in the procession is to augment the wailing done by the relatives.

Recent innovations of western origin may often be found in funeral processions nowadays. One of these is the floral wreath, which is made of imitation flowers of all colours and sizes and is usually very large. Wreaths are burned along with the other things at the grave. Another innovation is the brass band, the bandsmen being in gay uniforms and playing a variety of tunes, appropriate or otherwise. One band was once heard playing the "Dead March in Saul" to the time of a quick march.



MALE MOURNERS WALKING IN FRONT OF THE CATAFALQUE. *Photo by Hartung.*

(*See p. 109*).



ONE OF THE MAT HOUSES ERECTED AT INTERVALS ALONG THE ROUTE OF A FUNERAL PROCESSION.

Photo by Camera Craft.

(See p. 111)

At intervals all along the route of the procession, numbers of paper cash are thrown up into the air. These are thrown to the wandering spirits who are supposed to be hovering near. This attracts their attention and keeps them busy, lest they do harm.

In the case of a large funeral of a noted man, large mat houses are erected by friends who wish to do him honour, by the roadside along the route of the procession. When the catafalque comes opposite these houses it is stopped, and servants spread a white mat on the ground in the middle of the road. The men mourners who walk in front of the catafalque kneel down on this mat, and in the name of the dead, thank those who have honoured him by erecting these houses. Usually, in each of the houses there is a tablet or scroll on which is written the name of the dead. Those who have had the houses erected bow before this tablet or scroll and do reverence to it and burn incense. Tea is prepared in these houses for those who take part in the procession. The bearers change places during these halts, and call out how much money they are to receive for their work.

In funeral and in wedding processions the bearers wear green gowns with designs in red

printed on them. The character in the centre of these red designs is "Joy" in the wedding procession, and "Long Life" in the funeral procession.

It is usual for wealthy families to have their own burying ground, but it is necessary to call in the Ying Yang Sien Seng, or diviner, to look at the ground and find out just the right spot in which to bury the body. He also tells the family in which position the body must lie, and he is present at the burial to see that his instructions are carried out. Should there not be a family burying ground, this man is employed to select a place.

There is a rigid order of precedence in burial. The ancestor for whom the ground was purchased is buried in the middle. His wife is laid by his right side; and following these, each son and grandson in order of precedence until the circle is completed on the right side. Should any of the men have more than one wife, the principal wife only is buried by her husband; the others are buried outside the circle reserved for the family.

When the funeral procession reaches the grave, if the propitious day for burial has arrived, then the coffin is put in the grave which has been dug in the position arranged

by the sorcerer. He then invites the mourners to see that all is right, and the time-keeper of the procession beats his two pieces of wood together to indicate to the relatives and friends that the time has come to surround the grave. This they do and kotow, the drums being beaten and music made by the musicians at the same time. Each member of the family takes up a handful of earth and throws it on the coffin, and relatives and friends do likewise; after this, all weep and wail, and the paper articles brought to the grave are burned. When this is done, the mourners leave the grave and return home.

When they have returned to the house, one of the near relatives takes a brass tray and covers it thickly with incense ash and places it in the bedroom of the deceased. This is left without being looked at until the third day after the funeral. If on looking at it on the third day, the relatives find on the ash the impress of an animal's foot, then they believe that the deceased has been re-incarnated as an animal; if the impress is that of a bird, then he lives again as a bird; if the impress should be that of a human foot, then he lives again in human form. If, however, no impress is found, then there is fear and consternation in

the hearts of those connected with the deceased, as it is believed that the soul is still lurking about the house seeking their hurt. The spirit of a man after death is no longer considered to be beneficent, no matter how good he was while in life.

On the third day after the funeral, the mourners go again to the grave or temple, wherever the body has been left, and present food and burn paper money to the deceased. Then also, two cakes made of white flour are taken to the grave. These are split open and in each is rolled a piece of lichen, called by the Chinese "mu-er". The word for wood is also "mu". One of these cakes is placed on each side of the head of the coffin. This is done so that the wood at the head of the coffin may invisibly open like two halves of a door, opening outward, allowing the soul freedom to come and go. The Chinese believe that man has three souls, one of which goes to the future world to receive the rewards and punishments due for the deeds done in life, one remains at the grave, and one goes into the ancestral tablet; hence all the precautions taken to release the souls.

On the twenty-first day after death, (three sevens), food is offered before the tablet

which is placed either on the tablet altar or on a little table on the "k'ang." This is done at about ten o'clock in the morning and left until about four in the afternoon. At that hour, three bundles of sheet-paper money are taken outside the street door and burned.

On the thirty-fifth day after death, (five sevens), an umbrella made of flowered red paper, with a stem and framework of "kao-liang" stalks and carried by a youth fashioned in paper, is burned at four o'clock in the afternoon, outside the street door. If the deceased was a mother who is survived by a daughter, it is the duty of the daughter to present the umbrella. Along with it are burned paper imitations of gold and silver ingots and sheet-paper money. The sheet-paper money is divided into five lots, and each lot is wrapped separately in white paper which is fastened together by the thin wire stem of a red paper pomegranate flower, and on the top of each packet is put a small bundle of gold and silver paper ingots. Food is presented from ten to four o'clock on that day, just as it was on the 21st day.

On the 49th day (seven sevens), the same custom is observed, as on the 21st day. On the 60th day, a boat made of paper on a light

framework and measuring from seven to nine feet in length is burned, and also two bridges of the same materials, measuring from five to seven feet in length. Up to this time, the soul is supposed to have been going through the different judgment halls, being judged for the deeds done in the body, but, after this, it is to travel by a way in the course of which three rivers must be crossed, two small ones, the Gold River and the Silver River, for the crossing of which the bridges are supplied; and the Ying Yang or Life and Death River, which is much larger and for which the boat is provided. On the 60th day, as on previous occasions, food is offered, but on this day, a tablet having the name of the deceased written on it, is put up on the table on which the food is, and worshipped. This tablet, and the three kinds of paper money, are all put in the boat and burned together with the bridges outside the street door at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Paper money is always burned on these special occasions so that the soul may be able to meet all its liabilities in the other world. Everything possible is done to propitiate the dead, as, in China, it may be said that the dead rule the living in thought and custom, and by

the fear and dread of calamity, if anything which should be done is omitted.

If, after all the mourning ceremonies in the home are over, the proper day for burial has not arrived, the coffin containing the body may be taken to a temple and set up on two stools, there to await the propitious moment.

In the country, one often sees coffins lying out in the open just covered with earth or a straw mat. These are the dead of poor people awaiting the lucky day for burial.

When a man dies away from home and his body is taken back to his native place to be buried, a white cock chicken is carried on the coffin. This fowl is called the "Ling Hun Chi," or the "Soul Chicken." When he crows, he calls the soul, and the soul goes along with the body.

CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL.

The cricket is in the hall,
And the year is drawing to a close.
If we do not enjoy ourselves now,
The days and months will be leaving us.
But let us not go to great excess;
Let us first think of the duties of our position;
Let us not be wild in our love of enjoyment.
The good man is anxiously thoughtful.

The cricket is in the hall,
And the year is passing away.
If we do not enjoy ourselves now,
The days and months will have gone.
But let us not go to great excess;
Let us first send our thoughts beyond the present;
Let us not be wild in our love of enjoyment.
The good man is ever diligent.

The cricket is in the hall,
And our carts stand unemployed.
If we do not enjoy ourselves now,
The days and months will have gone by,
But let us not go to an excess;
Let us first think of the griefs that may arise;
Let us not be wild in our love of enjoyment.
The good man is quiet and serene.

An Ode of T'ang. (*Legge*)

CHAPTER IX.

CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL.

Preparations for Chinese New Year begin on the 23rd of the twelfth moon. The Kitchen God is to be found in every home, presiding over the life and activities of the kitchen. He takes the form of a highly coloured picture in a little shrine made of bamboo, wood, or paper. On the day mentioned, the 23rd of the twelfth moon, incense is burned to this god, and his picture is taken down and burned before midnight, either in the courtyard of the house, or if the house has no courtyard, then out in the street. This god is represented as sitting, with a horse tied beside him. He is also represented with his wife sitting beside him, and with a horse in the foreground. A little straw or "kao liang" (sorghum) is burned with the picture, and a bowlful of water is thrown down beside the fire; the former is to feed the horse, and the latter to quench its thirst. Thus the Kitchen God is sent to heaven, where he reports to the higher powers the life and actions of the family from which

he has been sent. Those performing the rites beseech him to say much that is good and little that is bad about their doings. A special sweetmeat called "t'ang kwa" is made and sold on that day; it is made of sticky rice. When the picture of the god is being burned at night, a piece of this sweetmeat is broken off and thrown into the fire with it. This is done that the god may say sweet words. Stories are told of other places in China where sometimes a little opium is smeared over the mouth of the god, so that he may be so drowsy when he gets to the upper regions that he will not be able to speak clearly; or sometimes the picture is dipped in wine, so that when the god arrives, he will be so drunk that he will be turned out and not allowed to speak. The god takes seven days to get to heaven and return, so there are seven days without a Kitchen God, leaving the people a little time of freedom from his surveillance.

After the old year has gone, in the first hours of the New Year, the god is received back again. A new picture and shrine having been bought, they are put up, to the accompaniment of lots of fire crackers, and incense is burned before them.

During the last seven days of the old year, house cleaning goes on vigorously, this being, in many cases, the one occasion in the year when the dust is removed from behind large pieces of furniture. In the wealthier homes, the walls are repapered and white-washed, and the window papers renewed.

On the last day of the year, much bathing and washing and shaving and general cleaning up go on. On this day also, food is prepared for the first day of the New Year, as it is not considered correct to use a knife, scissors, or chopper on that day. Also, as there are so many guests to provide for during the first five days, food is prepared beforehand for their delectation. In North China, the chief article of food prepared on that day is "chu po-po" or meat dumplings. These toothsome morsels are prepared in large quantities. If in any home the sound of the meat chopper, preparing the filling for these dumplings, is not heard, then that home is considered to be a very poor one indeed.

On the last day of the year also, all the papers bearing characters, which are pasted at the sides of the doors, are taken down and new ones put up. Over the middle of divided doors are pasted mottoes expressing a wish

for happiness or riches. "K'ai men chien hsi" is quite a common one, meaning "Open the door and see joy." These papers are usually red; should blue papers adorn the door sides, it shews that the family is in mourning, and should the death have taken place less than one hundred days before New Year, they are not changed at New Year time. Sometimes white papers are put up when death takes place; if within the hundred days, these are not changed at New Year. Yellow papers at the door-sides indicate a temple. Over shop signs are often hung the various kinds of paper money which are used in worship. This shews a wish for good trade and wealth throughout the year. A favourite shop door motto is "Wan shih heng tong" meaning "Successful in all affairs." Donkey and camel saddles, cart shafts, and wheel barrows all have a lucky wish pasted on them.

After the reception of the Kitchen God, the noise of the crackling and booming and sputtering of fire crackers is almost continuous until morning, partly in honour and worship of the Kitchen God, and partly to frighten off evil spirits. There is no sleep for the majority of folks all that night, even the stranger within the gates, who does not take any part

in the festivities, is condemned to a disturbed or sleepless night. About two or three in the morning, a meal of "chu po-po" is eaten.

At New Year time, a sweetmeat made of sticky-rice flour, dates, and bean flour, and eaten with sugar, is in every home except the very poorest. This is called "nien kao," "nien" being the word for "sticky" as well as for "year," and "kao being the word for "cake" and "high." When eating this "nien kao," the hope is present that each year will be higher than its predecessor, or, that the condition of the eater will be more prosperous,

For the first five days of the New Year, women are not supposed to leave their homes or to enter the house of another, but the men folks go out early on the first day and on the succeeding days of holiday to call on their friends and acquaintances, and give them New Year greetings. In Peking, and possibly in other places, the custom regarding women staying in their homes during the first five days of the year is relaxing considerably, and numbers of them go out to see what is to be seen.

Passing along the streets during the first days of the year, one may often hear the noise of drums and cymbals proceeding from the

closed shops. One's first thought is that some sort of worship is going on, or that the shop people are seeking for luck in the new year, but this is not so. It is just a little jollification being carried on by the apprentices who have nothing else to do, as they are not allowed to go out unless sent on an errand.

On the evening of the first day, at sundown, poor children may be seen going from door to door selling pictures of the "God of Wealth." One of these stands outside a door and calls, "I have brought you the God of Wealth," and the inmates dare not send him away empty handed, so a copper or more is given to him to purchase from him the God of Wealth. As only one of these is required by each family, when the purchase is made, later vendors are allowed to go away without selling their wares.

On the morning of the second day of the year, the old paper god, which has done duty for a year, is taken down and burued in the courtyard or on the street, and the new one is put up in its place, crackers being set off at the same time and incense burned. Sacrifice is also offered before the god, the value of the sacrifice varying according to the poverty or wealth of the family. The wealthy offer a

pig, a sheep, a fish, and a fowl; or a pig, a fish, and a fowl; the less wealthy offer a pig; poorer people offer a pig's head, or a fish, or a fowl; while those who cannot afford even one of these, offer a little bread or some vegetables. When the offering is placed before the God of Wealth, a cup of wine is set alight, and the worshipper kotows three times before the god. This worship is performed by the head of the house, or, failing him, by one of the male members of the family. Should none of the men folks be at home, then a woman may perform it. When the incense has burned itself out, then the offering is taken away and prepared as food for the family and those connected with the home or business.

Very early on the morning of the sixth day, merchants and shopkeepers get up to worship all the gods. These are represented as gilt figures on a sheet of yellow paper. This is bought on the last day of the old year, and worshipped during the first five days of the new year. On the morning of the sixth, this picture of all the gods is taken out to the street or courtyard and burned, incense being burned and fire crackers set off at the same time. When the crackers are all burned out, then the doors of the shop are opened for business. In

years gone by, the five days closing was strictly adhered to, but in these days the rule is not so strict, though old established and prosperous business houses still reckon that business does not begin until the sixth day.

On the night of the eighth day, the stars are worshipped, the worship being performed any time between eight and twelve o'clock. A table is placed in the courtyard, and on it are put two frames, one containing a picture of the God of the Stars, and the other, a sheet of paper on which are printed the signs of the zodiac and other mystical information connected with the constellations. These face towards the north. Before them are placed three or five bowls containing balls made of flour, sticky rice, and sugar, which have been boiled in sweetened water. Incense is lighted, and the worshipper, preferably the head of the house, kotows three times before them; afterwards the "t'ang yuan" or sweet balls are eaten by the family. Earlier in the evening, before the worship of the stars takes place, another little ceremony is performed called "San tsai," or "To disperse calamity." As the name indicates, this ceremony is performed in the hope that the gods will be favourable and

keep calamity away from the doors of the faithful.

Very soft green, red, or white paper is twisted into lengths of two or three inches, and of about the thickness of a lead pencil. One end is torn into strips, and these are spread out to form a base. The twists are dipped in oil, and beginning from the k'ang, or couch, in the middle room of the house where three are set slight and left on the ground, a line of these little torches, a foot or two apart, goes right out to the outside door of the house, each one being lit from its predecessor. When this is done, the age of the head of the house is counted out in the little torches; these are lit and put together in a dish on a table in the courtyard. Some people also perform this ceremony on the evening of the fifteenth day of the first month.

On the evening of the thirteenth day of the first month, many of the shops hang up coloured lanterns, many and various. In days gone by, most of the shops followed this custom, but now it is chiefly observed by the cake shops and shops where tea is sold. This is done with a very definite purpose. From the thirteenth to the seventeenth of the month there are many people on the streets, more

especially on the fifteenth, and the shopkeepers hope to draw attention to their shops by hanging up these lanterns, and so sell their goods to those who pass, many of whom buy gifts for their friends.

During the New Year holidays and throughout the first month of the year, many people visit different temples to burn incense and register vows.

Every day until the sixteenth, the tablets of the ancestors are worshipped and incense burned before them. Before them also, are spread five kinds of eatables—fruit, sweets, meat, and other good things. On the sixteenth day, these tablets, which had been brought out for the occasion, are again put away in a clean box or cupboard.

New Year, the 5th moon feast, and the 8th moon feast, are the three great festivals of the Chinese year. These are the chief times for collecting accounts, and paying debts. If liabilities cannot be met, it may mean that the business of such an one will have to be closed and his goods sold to pay the creditors.

New Year is accounted everyone's legal birthday, that is to say, no matter when birth

actually takes place, each individual is reckoned to be a year older at New Year. Therefore if a child is born a day or two before the New Year, he is said to be two years old, being reckoned one year old as soon as he is born, and two years old on New Year's day.

THE FIFTH MOON FESTIVAL.

The Master said, "In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the centre of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of his failure in himself."

Doctrine of the Mĕan. (*Legge*)

"The superior man in everything considers righteousness to be essential. He performs it according to propriety. He brings it forth in humility. He completes it with sincerity. This is indeed a superior man."

Confucian Analects. (*Legge*)

CHAPTER X.

THE FIFTH MOON FESTIVAL— ITS LEGENDS AND LORE.

The festival of the fifth moon is known by several names, viz, "Twan Yang Chieh," "Chung Yang Chieh," and "Dragon Boat Festival." There are various legends connected with this festival, and because of the happenings described in these legends, it has become a day of remembrance, as well as being one of the three chief festivals of the Chinese year. The following is one of the legends:—

Over two thousand years ago, there was a rebellion going on south of the Great River, and the King of Lieh appointed a high official named Ch'u Yuan to go and quell it. After trying his best to restore peace and order and to quell the insurgents, he found himself powerless to do so. He was very grieved because of his failure, and besought the king to relieve him of his post and to send another leader in his place. This the king was unwilling to do, but Ch'u Yuan felt his lack of success so keenly, that he took his own life by

throwing himself into the river. The officials and people of the surrounding districts knew what his difficulties had been, and instead of blaming him for taking his own life, they revered him for his heroic acts. To shew their appreciation of him, they determined to provide food for him, so that he should have no lack in the other world. In the surrounding districts, one of the kinds of rice grown was that known as sticky rice. This rice, they scattered in the river, but it was feared that by scattering it thus, it would probably be eaten by the fishes and never reach him for whom it was intended. So they thought of a better plan, and this was to wrap up a small quantity of rice, sugar, and fruit in leaves of reeds, and throw the parcels thus wrapped into the river. These little leaf-wrapped parcels of sticky rice are to be found on sale in all parts of China at this festival, and it is the correct thing to buy and eat them, in memory of Ch'u Yuan, whose death took place early in the fifth moon.

The Dragon Boat Festival is in commemoration of the same man. This festival is more generally observed in Central and South China than in North China, though it has been known to be observed on the river near the Summer

Palace; but some quite elderly inhabitants of Peking, on being questioned, knew nothing about it. Where it is observed, crowds turn out to see the gay boats pass along. On board there are musicians and drums and gongs.

The people on board cast sticky-rice cakes into the water as the boats move along, but their idea seems to be a different one from that previously mentioned. They cast the cakes into the water so that the fishes may eat them, and thus leave the body of Ch'u Yuan intact. Such is one explanation given.

Another account of the Dragon Boat Festival is that given by Dr. Wells Williams in "The Middle Kingdom." "This festival was instituted in memory of the statesman Kuh Yuan (Ch'u Yuan), about 459 B.C., who drowned himself in the River Mih Lo, an affluent of the Tung Ting Lake, after having been falsely accused by one of the petty princes of the state. The people, who loved the unfortunate courtier for his fidelity and virtues, sent out boats in search of the body, but to no purpose. They then made a peculiar sort of rice-cake called "tsung," and setting out across the river in boats with flags and gongs, each strove to be first on the spot of

the tragedy and sacrifice to the spirit of Kuh Yuan. This mode of commemorating the event has been since continued as an annual holiday. The bow of the boat is ornamented or carved into the head of a dragon, and men beating gongs and drums, and waving flags, inspirit the rowers to renewed exertions. The exhilarating exercise of racing leads the people to prolong the festival two or three days, and generally with commendable good humour, but their eagerness to beat often breaks the boats, or leads them into so much danger, that the magistrate sometimes forbids the races in order to save the people from drowning."

Yet another version of this story is given in Dr. Hirth's Ancient History of China. It is as follows:—"King Hwai of Ch'u then had in his service a distant relative named Ch'u Yuan, a man of character, who in spite of his youth had gained, by the wisdom of his advice, the king's entire confidence. Ch'u Yuan had in vain protested against the artful schemes of Chang I, as he had warned the king against that war which brought so much trouble on his country; and the persistency of his warnings paved the way for the intrigues of a set of jealous courtiers, who managed to

bring about his absolute disgrace with the king. His melancholy outbursts of feeling over the unjustness of his fate formed the subject of a celebrated poem entitled Li-san, "Incurring Misfortune," or "Under a Cloud." Finally, the poet put an end to the persecutions of his enemies by drowning himself in a river. This sad event is commemorated throughout China on the anniversary of its occurrence, the fifth of the fifth moon, by a kind of regatta, when well-to-do young men man boats and beat gongs and drums as though they were searching for the body of the lamented poet who sacrificed life and happiness in doing his best to serve his king and country."

At this festival, many people hang outside their doors bunches of sweet-flag and mugwort, and many little girls wear a sprig of mugwort in their hair. The origin of this custom is related in the following story:—"In the time of the Ming dynasty, there lived a very good and holy woman, named Mu, and her son. This woman never had eaten meat, nor did she use wine or tobacco. All her substance that was not required for the maintenance of herself and her family, she gave to Buddhist and Taoist priests and their temples. When her son, who was clever and good, was

in his teens, she sent him to study for the Buddhist priesthood. By the time he was over twenty, he was well up in all the Buddhist lore and chanted to perfection, spending his time wholly in this way.

One day he went for a walk up a mountain which was near the monastery, and there he met a hermit who was fast becoming an immortal. This old hermit got hold of him and would not let him return to the monastery, as he wanted to keep him as a disciple. His mother, not having seen him for several days, grew anxious and went to the temple to inquire about him. When she found that no one knew what had become of him, she was grieved and said that seeing she had lived such a good life and done so much for the Buddha, he might have protected her son and not let him come to harm. She straightway broke her vow of vegetarianism and ate meat. After this she became very ill and died. As her neighhours did not know where to find her son, they performed the necessary burial rites.

While with the hermit on the mountains, the son gained much from the old man, who learned to love him and did not want to part with him. When he left to return to the monastery, the hermit gave him Buddhist

books and other gifts, among them a "chiu lien huan." This is an ornament made of gold or silver which is worn by old women in their hair, and when a woman of any age dies, one of these is put into her hand in the coffin. This is done so that she may gain entrance into Hades, as the door is opened to anyone tapping on it with this ornament. The old hermit probably knew of the death of the young priest's mother, and gave him the ornament so that he might be able to use it and have speech with his mother.

When the young priest got home and found that his mother had died in his absence, he decided to go to the city of Fengtu in the province of Szechuan, which is said to be the entrance to Hades. When he got there, he could not gain an entrance at first, but on tapping on the door with the ornament given him by the hermit, the door was opened to him and his mother came out, and along with her, numerous tormented spirits also made their escape. The official-in-charge and his second in command, seeing these escape from their care, could do nothing but follow, and they as well as the others again became men. The head man became a great and wealthy official, and the other became a Buddhist priest. The

official went by the name of Hwang-Ch'ao, and the priest was named Pien Lu. Hwang Ch'ao was a good man and he liked the Buddhists and frequented their temples. Near to his home there was a temple to which he often went, and it was in this temple that Pien Lu was head priest. They did not at first recognise each other, but they were great friends and often played chess together. In course of time, Hwang Ch'ao intimated to his friend the priest that he was going to lead a rebellion and that he wanted to have the temple as his headquarters. He told him on what day operations were to begin, and urged him to go away to a quiet place out of range of the fighting, as his soldiers would kill all whom they met. At the beginning of the rebellion it was necessary that a living thing should be killed by the leader as a sacrifice to the flag, either a human being or an animal, whichever came first to hand. So, because Hwang Ch'ao wished to retain the priest as his friend, he exhorted him to get away out of sight. The priest did not know where to go, and while he was considering the matter, his eyes fell on a large willow tree just outside the door, the thick trunk of which had a hole in it. He quickly concealed himself in the

hole, and thought he was safe. When Hwang Ch'ao and his soldiers went to the temple, they first burned incense before the idols and then sought for an animal to sacrifice, but they could not find a cat or dog or any living thing. On seeing the willow tree they said, "Here is a living tree, let us cut it down and it will serve as a sacrifice to the flag." When they had felled it, the head of a priest rolled out of the hole in the trunk. Hwang Ch'ao saw this and recognised it as being the head of his friend the priest, whereon he was greatly grieved. This was the beginning of the fighting, and Hwang Ch'ao went forward, killing as he went. One day, while going along the road, he met a woman who was carrying one child of about six on her back, and leading another of about three by the hand. He asked her where she lived and where she was going, and she replied that she was leaving her home because she and the children were afraid as there were so many soldiers on all sides, and she did not know where to go for safety. Hwang Ch'ao wondered at her stupidity, as he thought, in coming to him the leader of the army, instead of trying to find a quiet place outside the range of the fighting. He asked her why she carried the bigger child and

allowed the smaller one to walk. The woman replied that the smaller child was her own, but the bigger one was one whom she had picked up and whom she wished to take special care of. When Hwang Ch'ao heard this, he realised that she was a good and worthy woman, and his heart was moved. He asked her where she lived, and on being told, he knew that that district was still undisturbed, though the next day might see his soldiers there. He told the woman to go back to her home, and on no account to leave the house for a day or two. He also told her to put up a sign over her door so that the soldiers might know that she was under his protection and was not to be disturbed. On looking round him, he saw that there was much sweet-flag and mugwort growing near by. He told the woman to gather a bunch of these grasses and hang them over her door. He also told his soldiers that the inmates of the house over which this sign hung were to be unmolested. Some say that the woman was Mu's mother and that she became an immortal along with her son.

Hwang Ch'ao died after killing eight million people, and thus he took back to Hades the full number of those who escaped when

the door was opened for the release of the priest's mother.

Such is the legend relating the origin of the custom of hanging bunches of sweet-flag and mugwort outside the doors on the 5th of the 5th moon. It has been dramatised and is still acted in Chinese theatres under the title, "Hsiang Mei Sz," this being the name of the temple in which the rebels had their head-quarters.

Still another legend is related with reference to the 5th of the 5th moon, which gives another name to the festival, the "Wu Tu Chieh," or "Festival of the Five Poisonous Reptiles." These are the viper, scorpion, centipede, toad, and spider. On that day a kind of sweet cake—made of flour and sugar and having on the top the likeness of these five reptiles—is made and sold; these cakes are bought by many and given as festival gifts to friends; others buy them for private consumption. Many mothers also on that day, use a special kind of ointment—one of the constituents of which is brimstone—with which they anoint the nostrils and ear-holes of their children, to preserve them from the danger of the poisonous bite of these reptiles.

The legend runs thus :—Nearly two thousand years ago, there lived on the Dragon-Tiger Mountain in the province of Kiangsi, a Taoist priest who was held in great honour. He was appointed by the Emperor to be the head of the Taoist sect. He was looked upon as being almost superhuman, and as having power to cast out devils and do many other wonderful works. He was a crystal-gazer and was able to predict future events. A descendant of this man still holds the office held by his ancient ancestor and goes by the name of the Great Wizard. The following is a quotation from "China," by Captain F. Brinkley, relating to Chang Yao Ling also called Chang Tien Shih, the hero of the legend. "Chang Tao Ling flourished in the first century of the Christian era, and ascended to heaven at the age of 123 from the Dragon-Tiger Mountain in Kiangsi, having compounded and swallowed the elixir of immortality. He had acquired power to walk among the stars, to divide mountains and seas, to command the wind and the thunder, and to quell demons. His descendants have continued ever since to reside on the Dragon-Tiger Mountain. The present holder of the office (the Pope of Taoism) has a picturesque palace, one part of the grounds being embellished with rows of jars in which demons are sealed up. Among his most profitable functions is the explusion of evil spirits from the houses of the great and the opulent. All new gods are appointed by the Emperor through him, and on the first day of every month he gives audience to an invisible host of gods and demigods who come to present their compliments."

A time came when there was great trouble in the Emperor's palace caused by a heretical sect called the "Pai Ling Chiao" or "White Sarcenet Sect." They were called by this name because they wore a piece of that material somewhere on their clothing. The members of this sect gathered together and chanted prayers and burned incense and concocted plans for the overthrow of the Emperor. They were credited with having elusive qualities, so that they could not be overcome by ordinary means, and those in power could do nothing to overthrow them. At last, when things seemed hopeless, the Emperor sent for Chang Tien Shih. The dangers of the road were so many that, unless in a case of urgent need, the Emperor would not have commanded his presence. When he did set out, he encountered the five poisonous reptiles, who

fought against him by bringing upon him many calamities. By land and by water dangers beset him; mighty winds, swollen rivers, torrents of rain, drought, and all the forces of nature joined to hinder him on his journey, but he overcame them all. He had the power of thunder and lightning in his hand, and from the palm of his hand, a sword sprang out to smite his enemies. On his arrival in Peking, he overcame the Pai Ling sect by causing a torrential rain to fall and consume them. The enemies of the Emperor were thus overcome on the 5th day of the 5th moon, and ever since, this day has been kept as a day of remembrance. This legend has also been dramatised and is still played in Chinese theatres, especially at this season. The name of the play is "Hun Yuan Ho."

The prediction in the Almanac regarding the weather at this festival is "Twan Yang yu yu shih feng nien," which means that if there is rain at Twan Yang, the year will be one of plenty.

THE EIGHTH MOON FESTIVAL.

A strong-willed earnest king was Wen,
And still his fame rolls widening on.
The gifts that God bestowed on Chou
Belong to Wen's descendants now.
Heaven blesses still with gifts divine
The hundred scions of his line;
And all the officers of Chou
From age to age more lustrous grow.

This king Wen
Watchfully and reverently,
With entire intelligence served God,
And so secured the great blessing.
His virtue was without deflection;
And in consequence he received the allegiance of the States from all quarters.

She King. (Legge)

CHAPTER XI.

THE EIGHTH MOON FESTIVAL AND ITS LEGENDS.

In the time of the Yuan dynasty, the Mongols rebelled against China. The rebellion was led by one Hu Pi Lieh. Hu and his army advanced on Peking, seeking to annex the Southern Empire. At that time he was victorious and took the Emperor, Ching Wu Chu, captive to Mongolia. As he had no suitable prison in which to keep his captive, he put him down a dry well. His family and courtiers were very anxious about him, and they sent ambassadors with gifts to Hu, praying for his release; but Hu, fearing that if released he might seek revenge by bringing his armies to Mongolia, was unwilling to set him free. The Chinese Empire thus became subject to the Mongols. In the fighting, a large number of Chinese officials and statesmen had been killed, but some had escaped, taking with them the young heir to the throne. Diligent search was made for these fugitives,

but they changed their names and were able, successfully, to evade those who sought them.

In the meantime, Hu, fearing that in time the Chinese might be strong enough to retaliate, took all power out of their hands, and filled all offices with Mongols. Not only did he do this, but to make assurance doubly sure, he commanded that each household, not only in Peking but in other cities and villages in North China, should have a Mongol as one of the inmates of the house, to be treated as if belonging to the family. These men acted as spies, and prohibited intercourse between one household and another. They were exceedingly overbearing, taking to themselves the power of rulers in the homes, and causing all to bow to their wills. The women, especially, had a hard time, and were as slaves under their yoke. The men also suffered at their hands in different ways. Up to this time, Chinese men had worn their hair long and coiled on top of the head. These, their conquerors, caused them to shave part of the head and to braid the hair that remained into a queue. Many naturally resented this indignity and were unwilling to comply, but there was no escape for them. All things considered,

it is not to be wondered at that the Mongols were heartily hated.

The Mongols had been in possession for over twenty years when a movement was made against them. By this time, the heir to the Chinese throne had grown to manhood. He gathered together those who remained of the fugitives who had escaped at the time of the capture of Peking, and along with them, men of the younger generation. They formed a Council of War, and formulated plans to besiege Peking and drive out the oppressors. On the 15th day of the 8th moon, the people in each home in the capital were moved by a Heaven-sent impulse to get rid of their household tyrants, and with one accord, without communication with one another, slew the Mongols in the homes, thus paving the way for the heir and his followers. When those in power heard of the massacre, they fled to Mongolia. The Chinese pursued them, rescued the Emperor and brought him back to Peking. Mongolia then came under Chinese rule again.

The 15th day of the 8th moon is kept as a festival by the Chinese women in remembrance of the deliverance from their oppressors which that day brought them. One of the names of this festival is "T'wan Yuan Chieh," or the

"Festival of Re-union," in memory of the day when it was made possible for the people to become closely united after the years of isolation.

In the time of the Chou dynasty, there was an Emperor named Chou. At first he was a good king, but degenerated in later life. One day he went to a temple to burn incense, and while there, he saw the image of a beautiful goddess. He was so impressed by her beauty, that he wrote some characters on the wall of the temple in praise of it. Along with this praise, he expressed a wish that he might be able to find a woman as beautiful as this image to become his wife. When he returned to his palace, he gave orders to his statesmen that search be made throughout the empire to see if one of such beauty could be found.

While he was in the temple, the immortal whose image he had seen, was absent; and when, on her return, she saw the characters which Chou had written on the wall, she was very angry, and said that such thoughts and acts were discreditable to an Emperor. Afterwards, she devised a plan by which to grant the Emperor's wish and at the same time, to humiliate him. She called the fox with nine tails, which also was an immortal of inferior

grade, and told it to change its form and become a babe in an official family. In course of time a baby girl was born to an official, who, when she became of a marriageable age, was found to be so like the goddess whose beauty Chou coveted, that her father was approached, and a proposal was made that he should give his daughter to the Emperor as a wife. This her father was very willing to do.

When Chou was told about this girl, whose name was Ta Chi, he commanded that she should be brought before him, and when he saw her, he was so pleased with her beauty, that he wished to make her his Empress. His three wives, on hearing about the matter, were very much displeased; but he heeded not their displeasure, and married the girl and gave her a separate palace to dwell in. He was completely under her sway, and was constantly with her; even the government of the empire was in her hands. If any of the officials did not please her, she thought out ways and means for their dismissal.

One of those who did not enjoy her favour was a trusted general, who, before the marriage of the Emperor to this girl, was his chief adviser in matters of state. Him, she sought to have dismissed. To compass this

end, she feigned sickness, and although she was treated by many doctors, did not recover. At last, the Emperor asked her if she could suggest any special medicine which she thought might work a cure. She replied saying that, as her sickness proceeded from a weakness of the heart, the only thing that could possibly make her strong was a piece of a human heart. The Emperor was very much disturbed when he heard her ask for this, and said that such a thing could not be purchased. His wife advised him to send for his favourite general and tell him to procure it. Accordingly, he sent the general a letter commanding his presence. On receipt of the letter, the general thought that the matter must be urgent, and being a faithful servant of the Emperor, he went at once. While on his way to the palace, he met an old woman who was selling medicine for heart trouble. She gave him three packets of the medicine, telling him that it was very good medicine, and that it had the power to keep one alive even if the heart were removed. When he arrived in the palace, the Emperor told him all about the illness of his favourite wife, and of her wish to have a piece of a human heart to make her well. He also said that he had sent for the general so that he

might obtain the help of such an old and faithful servant in his difficulty. On hearing what was required of him, the general considered for a time, thinking that it was an impossible thing to kill any one, be he good or bad, rich or poor, for such a purpose. Finally, he offered his own heart, and asked the Emperor for a sword. While waiting, he remembered the medicine given to him by the old woman whom he had met on the way to the palace, and knew that he would not die if his heart were taken out. So, with the sword handed to him by the Emperor, he took out his own heart, and then swallowed the three packets of medicine. This kept him alive temporarily, and the Emperor told his servants to take him home, but he died within a hundred days.

Another of Chou's favourite statesmen was an official named Wen Wang, a famous man whose name has been handed down to posterity as being a literary man, and as the inventor of an abacus used in divining. He, himself, had the power of divination. He was reputed as having been the father of a hundred sons; but these included nephews and adopted sons, as well as those born to him. His eldest son was a fine, handsome young man and was skilful

in playing the lute. Ta Chi, the favourite wife of the Emperor Chou, saw this youth and wished to have him in the palace, so she engaged him to teach her to play the lute. The poor youth was not happy there, as he was uneasy and afraid. Because he would not do her bidding in all things, Ta Chi sought to injure him; also, because she was jealous of Wen Wang's power and ability, she sought to injure him through his son. After a time, she killed the son, and with some of his flesh, caused meat dumplings (chu po-po) to be made. When these were ready, she asked Chou to invite Wen Wang to go to the palace and eat "chu po-po," and Wen Wang did not dare to refuse. Ta Chi thought that by divination he would find out that he was invited to eat his son's flesh, and that he might refuse to eat the dumplings. Had he refused, she had planned to tell Chou to kill him. But Wen Wang had found out that Ta Chi was not a human being and that she sought to do him an injury; so when the dumplings were put before him, he ate them. Shortly after eating them, he felt ill, and vomited on the ground what he had eaten. Chou said to him, "You have vomited your son." Then they saw that the substance vomited was a little

white form, and when Chou took it up he saw that it was a rabbit, and he called it "T'u Er," "T'u" being the sound of the words for "vomit" and "rabbit." The rabbit escaped and ascended to heaven and entered into the moon, where it sat under the sala tree (some say the pine tree). This happened on the 15th day of the 8th moon, and since then, the rabbit has been a feature in the eighth moon festival. In Peking, at the time of this festival, numerous clay images of the rabbit are on sale, and are readily bought by all and sundry.

The eighth moon festival is the women's festival, as a Chinese saying puts it, "Nan pu pai yueh, Nu pu chi tsao."—"Men do not worship the moon, women do not sacrifice to the Kitchen God." Some give the reason for this as being because the rabbit in the moon, while in human form, suffered injury and death at the hands of a woman.

The worship of the moon by the women is performed on the evening of the festival day when the moon is high in the heavens, at from nine to eleven o'clock. A table is set out in the courtyard of the house on which is a picture of the moon, a rabbit, and a pine tree. In front of the picture are placed "moon

cakes," (a sweet cake made especially for this festival), several plates of fruit, sometimes some grain, and two bean stalks bearing leaves, this last, for the rabbit. All the married women in the home, whose husbands are alive, burn incense and kotow before the picture on the table. After the worship is over, wine is drunk and fruit is eaten, then the moon cakes are eaten by all the members of the household.

VARIOUS FESTIVALS.

Large are the fields, and various is the work to be done.
Having selected the seed and looked after the implements,
So that all preparations have been made for our labour,
We take our sharp ploughshares,
And commence on the south-lying acres.
We sow all the kinds of grain,
Which grow up straight and large,
So that the wish of the distant descendant is satisfied.

The clouds form in dense masses,
And the rain comes down slowly.
May it rain first on our public fields,
And then come to our private!
There shall be young grain unreaped,
And here some sheaves ungathered;
There shall be handfuls left on the ground,
And here ears untouched:—
For the benefit of the widow.

Extracts from Ancient Ode. (Legge)

CHAPTER XII.

VARIOUS FESTIVALS.

Li Ch'un.

On the day which is recorded in the Almanac as being the beginning of spring (Li Ch'un), a very interesting ceremony is performed.

Formerly, it was the duty of the Emperor or his representative to perform on that day the ceremony of "opening the ground" at the Temple of Earth, which is outside the north wall of Peking; now, it is performed by the President of China or his representative, no longer at the Temple of Earth, but in the Shun T'ien Fu yamen, in front of which there is a large piece of open ground. This "fu," or prefecture, is the largest and most important in the land, having twenty-four districts or counties; each of these counties sends two representatives to be present at the ceremony of opening the ground, the population being to a large extent agricultural.

The President is advised of the day and hour when the ceremony is to take place,

and asked to appoint a representative; the official in charge of the Shun T'ien Fu yamen may himself be appointed as representative. The day before the ceremony everything is made ready, and the plough and oxen prepared. On the morning of the day when spring begins, offerings of sweetmeats and fruits are presented to the God of Spring and the God of Husbandry, and incense burned before their shrines in the yamen.

Though the ceremony is still conducted in the same manner as of yore, it has lost much of its fascination as a spectacle, as the beautiful and resplendent robes of the officials have now given place to the stiff and sombre garments of the West. The description which follows, is of the ceremony as it used to be, the only variation now being in the garments of the officials.

In Peking, the ceremony took place about seven or eight in the morning. Officials gathered from the different yamens in the city dressed in their ceremonial robes and wearing bright red hats, and there was an interested group of onlookers. The one who was officiating, also dressed in ceremonial robes and wearing a red hat, went to the place where the plough and oxen were waiting. He took off his robe and

hat, and taking hold of the handles of the plough, went forward a few steps, guiding the plough; at the same time, five kinds of seed grain were scattered in front of the plough. He then had fulfilled his duty, and again put on his robe and hat and departed, all the other officials leaving at the same time.

On the morning of Li Ch'un, an ox and its keeper, made of cardboard, are bought and brought to the yamen, and placed in the open space in front. When the hour fixed by the astrologers as the beginning of spring arrives, the bystanders take sticks and branches of trees and belabour the ox until it is smashed to pieces, and then they burn it. Near by, is a large piece of hollow bamboo in which are placed chicken feathers. While the beating goes on, the feathers are seen floating upwards. This is said to shew that the breath of spring has come.

The beating of the ox (called "ta ch'un"), also has a meaning. In spring, epidemics of various kinds are rife, and the idea is that in beating the cardboard ox, which typifies spring, they beat the "wen ch'i," or pestilential vapours; and by burning the ox, they destroy them, the hope in the hearts of the people being that no pestilence will overtake them.

The "ploughing" ceremony is performed, with probably slight variations, in every city in China, the highest official in the city being the one whose duty it is to perform it, as a representive of the ruler of the land.

In carrying out this time-honoured ceremony, the Emperor shewed his interest in the agricultural pursuits of his people. The Empress shewed her interest in silk industry later in the year when the leaves were on the mulberry trees. There was a special garden in the palace grounds where mulberry trees were grown, and where there were houses in which silkworms were reared. These houses were also the dwellings of those who carried on this industry, under the supervision of a married couple appointed by the Throne to this duty. The latter were called Ts'an Kung and Ts'an Mu, the husband and wife who tend the silkworms.

A lucky day was fixed by the astrologers, and at the appointed hour on that day, the Empress with her attendants went to the mulberry garden. She first went to the altar of the God of Insects and burned incense and offered offerings, after which, accompanied by servants carrying baskets of silkworms and

long poles with which to pull down the branches of the tress, she picked some leaves from the trees and fed the silkworms. The silk produced by these silkworms was for the use of the Imperial household.

Since the passing of the monarchy, this ceremony has been discontinued.

Ching Ming.

The chief spring festival in China, and one which is widely observed, is "Ching Ming" (Bright and Clear). The celebrations of the day last from before daybreak until after sundown.

It is also called "Chih Shu Chieh" or "Tree Planting Festival" otherwise Arbour Day. In years gone by, the Emperor or his representative planted trees in the palace grounds at this festival, and now the ceremony is performed by the President of the Republic or his representative, and the planting is done in some public place and not in the palace grounds.

Another name for this festival is "Han Shih Chieh" or "Cold Food Festival," the reason for this name being that the people are supposed to eat no hot food on this day, except before sunrise or after sunset. The

strict rule is, that only food which has been prepared the previous day should be eaten, but the rule is not now strictly adhered to in Peking, though in other parts of China it is still observed.

The principal ceremony of the day is the visit to the family graves. One reason for such regular visits is to secure permanent possession. Should the graves be neglected for a number of years, the keeper of the ground may appropriate to himself the little patch of ground, and, levelling it and planting trees on it, may make it his own.

When the visiting relatives arrive at the ancestral graves, they make an offering of food for the gratification of the departed, and burn gold and silver paper ingots and sheet-paper money for their use in the spirit world.

Those for whom it would be inconvenient to make personal visits to the family graves, or whose ancestral tombs are at a great distance from their place of residence, perform the rites at home. A special paper bag, prepared for the purpose, is bought. On the outside of this bag, at the top and bottom, flowers are printed, and on each side is the figure of a man. Between these figures is a blank space in which the purchaser writes the

name of the ancestor for whom it is prepared, and this name, when written, is supposed to be watched over by the two men between whom it is written. The bag itself is filled with gold and silver paper ingots and placed on a table, and is supposed, by means of the name, to represent the deceased ancestor. Fruit, sweetmeats, food, and tea are placed on the table before the bag early in the morning, and left there until four or five in the afternoon, the tea being renewed several times throughout the day. While the sun is still shining, about four or five in the afternoon, the bag is taken outside the street door and burned by one of the heads of the household, who, whilst the bag is burning, kotows in the direction in which the family graves lie.

Many women will not do any needlework on this day, as for some reason or other they believe that, if they do, their eyes are likely to give them trouble in days to come.

Kwei Chieh.

One of the autumn festivals falls on the 15th day of the seventh moon, and it is called the "Kwei Chieh," which means "The Festival of Departed Spirits". The following story gives what is said to be the origin of this festival.

In the time of the Han dynasty, King Liu had a statesman and friend named K'ung Ming. This K'ung Ming was a Taoist priest with much learning, and his advice was sought in all matters of state. During his term of office, he had found it necessary to advise the king to go to war, and in this war, many were killed. The death of those who had thus died for their country was so much on his conscience, that he sought means whereby he could gain peace, and at the same time recompense the dead warriors. To attain this end, he sought to propitiate their spirits by sending to them money, bread, and other things, and on the 15th of the seventh moon, he burned paper boats in which were put some bread and paper money for their use in the spirit world. In the evening, he prepared numerous candles, each of which he lighted and stuck in a lotus leaf, and floated on the bosom of the river. These were carried down by the stream, and were meant to bring comfort to the departed spirits and to light them on their way.

This festival is annually observed, not only for the benefit of the souls of the ancient warriors, but also for the souls of all the dead, and it might well be called "All Souls Day."

In some parts of China candles are not used, but little rush lights are placed in the shells of water melons and floated on the rivers and canals. This is done to help the souls of drowned persons to find the way to rebirth.

In Peking at this season, numerous beautiful lanterns like lotus flowers are on sale, and are bought by many and hung up in their houses, alight, as a remembrance. In the temples also, these lanterns are lit and hung up, and prayers are chanted for the souls of the dead.

The Meeting at the Yu Lan River.

Another name given to the festival observed on the fifteenth day of the seventh moon is "Yu Lan Hwei," this name having been given because of a legend connected with a bridge of that name somewhere in South China.

The story runs, that more than two thousand years ago, a girl and a youth who had known eaeh other from childhood, were fast friends and were devoted to one another. When the girl grew to be over twenty years of age, her parents forbade her to go on meeting the young man. She had to tell him that their happy friendship must cease, and that she must do as her parents wished. She also told him that she had something very important to

say to him, and that she must meet him just once more. So she set a day for this meeting, and the day fixed was the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, and the place the Yu Lan bridge.

When the day came, the girl was at the place before the hour appointed, and she waited for a long time but the young man did not appear. She was afraid that if she stayed too long she would incur her parents' anger; and yet she wanted to meet her friend. She waited on until evening, but still he did not appear. She said to herself, "I cannot go to his home, and he cannot meet me at my home; I have this important message to give him, and I do not know what to do." To add to her troubles, rain began to fall. She dared not return home after having been away all the day, so she resolved to put an end to her life. She took off one of her garments and hung it on a pillar of the bridge, and then jumped into the river which flowed beneath.

Not long after, the youth arrived at the trysting-place and thought it strange that the girl should not be there waiting for him. Having waited for a short time in the hope that she would come, he was turning to leave, when he caught sight of the garment hanging

on the pillar of the bridge. He went forward to look at it and found these words written on it, "I waited long for you and you did not come. I dared not go home, and it is easier to die than to live, so I am going to drown myself in the river".

The youth was very sorrowful because he had been hindered from keeping the appointment at the proper time, and had thus been the cause of his friend's death; so he also threw himself into the river and was drowned. When both the young people were found to be missing, their parents concluded that they had run off together.

A few days later, some lotus leaves appeared just under the bridge, and among them was a single stalk bearing twin flowers. As such a flower had not been seen before, it caused much surprise and comment. One of those who went to see the strange phenomenon wished to pluck the flower, but one of the bystanders said to him, "Do not pluck it, for if you do so it will fade and be no more. Let us dig up the root and plant it and thus preserve it". This being recognised as a good plan, they went down to take up the plant by the root. While they were groping about in

the mud of the river bed for the root, they came upon the two bodies and found that the unusual lotus flower marked the place where the youth and girl lay dead. As their disappearance had been a nine days wonder, the men recognised the bodies as being those of the missing couple.

The day of the death of the two young people was in after years kept as a day of remembrance by their families. On each anniversary of that day their relatives and friends went to the riverside, taking with them food which they threw into the river; paper boats and paper money which they burned; and lotus flower lanterns which they lit and floated on the surface of the river—all to comfort the spirits of the dead youth and girl.

La Pa Chieh.

The eighth day of the twelfth moon, or "La Pa," is called a festival, though it differs from the other festivals in that there is no special feasting on that day. It is a day of remembrance, commemorating the day when "Kwan Yin" the Goddess of Mercy left her home for the Buddhist convent where she went to become a nun.

Before leaving the house, she gathered together several different kinds of grain which

were in the house, and boiling them together, made congee, of which she ate some. Her family were very dubious about the goodness of the congee because of the mixture of the grains, but on tasting of it they found it to be very good and agreeable to the palate. Indeed so good was it, that they planned to make it a regular article of food, but on tryiug to make it they could not make a success of it, as the different kinds of grain would not boil together into a proper congee. It was only because Kwan Yin, who was so good, had made it that it had come to such perfection.

The next year, on the eighth of the twelfth moon, the family remembered that it was the anniversary of the day on which Kwan Yin had left for the convent, and again they bethought themselves of the special congee that she had made, and resolved to try again to make it. They again used the different kinds of grain and the congee turned out to be excellent, just the same as it had been when Kwan Yin made it the year before. So it became the custom to make it annually on that day, in remembrance of Kwan Yin. She never returned to her home, but after a time became a goddess. The principal temple dedicated to

this goddess is in Pu T'o near Shanghai, and Buddhist priests from all over the country make pilgrimages to it, and many who are not priests also make pilgrimages there to fulfil and to register vows. In every city there is a temple dedicated to her, and in the larger cities there are several. In other temples where many gods are represented, there is always an image of the Goddess of Mercy.

This festival is observed in the majority of homes, and the chief feature of it is the making of the congee, which is called "La pa chou," or "eighth-of-twelfth congee." It is now made of many and varied ingredients, these sometimes numbering thirty or forty different varieties. No flour or meal of any kind is used, only whole grain. In it are all kinds of dried fruits, several kinds of grain, several kinds of beans and peas, nuts of various kinds, and three or four varieties of sugar. Some families make just enough to serve for that day, others make enough to last for several days, while others make a large quantity to serve themselves and their guests over the New Year festival. When it is ready, some is offered to the Goddess of Mercy and at the same time incense is burned before her image

or picture. In all the Buddhist and Taoist temples large quantities are prepared by the priests, and jars of it are sent as gifts to officials, princes, and others.

There is a legend about Kwan Yin copied from "The Chinese At Home," by J. Dyer Ball, which may be found of interest in this connection:—"The women venerate especially the virgin Goddess of Mercy, the daughter, centuries ago, of an Indian king, who withstood all attempts to force her into marriage. Biting her finger, she extinguished, with the blood which spurted out, the flames in the palace which were lit to coerce her into yielding or being destroyed. The personification of tender mercy, on her visit to Hades she pitied the poor wretches being punished, and poured some of the precious dew or holy water from her vase, and thus eased a poor soul being brayed in a mortar. This and kindred actions called out a vigorous protest on the part of the officials of the Lower Regions in favour of justice being done and punishment allowed to continue, as the recompense of evil deeds. Like the Buddhas—for she is a Buddha also—she sits on a lotus as a throne; an infant is often in her arm or sitting on her lap. Her

sublime grace has charmed the demon who stands on her right, and made him a slave of compassionate love. Her pity and loving-kindness are vouchsafed to all; for she hears the prayers of those who are in distress".

THE TWENTY-FOUR SOLAR TERMS.

In the seventh month, the Fire Star passes the meridian;
In the ninth month clothes are given out.
In the days of our first month, the wind blows cold;
In the days of our second, the air is cold;
Without the clothes and garments of hair,
How could we get to the end of the year?
In the days of our third month, they take their ploughs in hand;
In the days of our fourth month, they take their way to the fields.

In the fifth month, the locust moves its legs;
In the sixth month, the spinner sounds its wings.
In the seventh month, in the fields;
In the eighth month, under the eaves;
In the ninth month, about the doors;
In the tenth month, the cricket
Enters under our beds.
Chinks are filled up, and rats are smoked out;
The windows that face the north are stopped up;
And the doors are plastered.

In the sixth month, they eat the sparrow-plums and grapes;
In the seventh, they cook the k'wei and pulse;
In the eighth, they knock down the dates;
In the tenth, they reap the rice,
And make the spirits for the spring,
For the benefit of the bushy eyebrows.
In the seventh month, they eat the melons;
In the eighth, they cut down the bottle-gourds;
In the ninth, they gather the hemp-seed;
They gather the sow-thistle and make firewood of the Fetid tree;
To feed our husbandmen.

Extracts from Ancient Ode. (Legge)

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TWENTY-FOUR SOLAR TERMS.

In the Chinese calendar there are twenty-four solar terms which are semi-monthly periods. These correspond to the day on which the sun enters the first and fifteenth zodiacal signs. As the dates of these terms must be fixed annually, it is only possible to give approximate dates, knowing that each term falls within a day or two of the date given. The astrologers reckon out the day, hour, and minute when each term begins.

The first of these terms is "Li Ch'un," "The Beginning of Spring," about February 5th. The prediction regarding this term as given in the Almanac is this, "It is an extremely good omen if Li Ch'un is clear all day, as then the farmer need not put forth much strength in the ploughing of his fields."

The second term is "Yu Shui," which means "Rain Water," about February 19th. After this term there should be no more snow, but rain may be expected any day.

The third term is "Ching Che," or "To Excite the Torpid," about March 5th. This is the term in which movement of life in insects begins, and before long they may be expected to appear. The Almanac's prediction for this day is, "If at Ching Che thunder is heard, then the rice will be like mud,"—meaning that there will be much rain.

The fourth term is "Ch'un Fen," or "The Division of Spring," about March 29th. This is the vernal equinox, when the day and night are of equal length. The forecast regarding this day is, "If there is rain at Ch'un Fen, then sick people will be scarce."

The fifth term is "Ch'ing Ming," which means "Bright and Clear," about April 5th. This is one of the spring festivals. A south wind is wished for that day, according to the prediction which runs, "If on Ch'ing Ming the wind is from the south, then there will assuredly be a good harvest."

The sixth term is "Ku Yu," or "Grain Rains," about April 20th. This is called the "Birthday of Spinach," because this vegetable is in its most perfect state at this season; after this it, as well as other spring vegetables, goes to seed. This is the time when millet is sown.

The seventh term is "Li Hsia," "The Beginning of Summer," about May 5th. This is the end of spring, and from this time onward there should be little or no wind. The proverb concerning the weather on this day runs, "If there is an east wind on Li Hsia, then there is a prospect of a healthy season."

The eighth term is "Hsiao Man," or "Slightly Filling Grain," about May 21st. This indicates that the grain known as winter wheat, which was sown in the autumn of the previous year, and which should be harvested within the next few weeks, is showing a slight filling of the ears.

The ninth term is "Mang Chung," the meaning of which is, "Make haste to sow seeds," and it falls about June 6th. This term is the limit to the grain-sowing season, and such grain as has not yet been sown should be put in at once, especially that which takes a long time to come to fruition. Rain is earnestly desired at this time, as, if the ground is dry, it is impossible to sow the seed; or if sown, it may become quickly parched. The Almanac says, "Thunder on Mang Chung is a good omen."

The tenth term is "Hsia Chih," or "Summer Arrives," about June 21st. This is the sum-

mer solstice and is the longest day of the year. According to Chinese garden lore, this is the season in which garlic arrives at perfection and should be taken out of the ground. The Chinese have a saying, "Hsia Chih ch'i swan," which means, "At Hsia Chih take up the garlic;" and in country places this is considered a good time to buy the year's stock of garlic, as it is especially cheap. The weather prophet says regarding this term, "Should the wind come from the west at Hsia Chih, then the melons in the fields and gardens will boil and fry," meaning that the west wind at that time is an omen of terrific heat.

The eleventh term is "Hsiao Shu," or "Slight Heat," about July 7th. Although there have been some quite hot days before this date, this indicates the beginning of the hot weather.

The twelfth term is "Ta Shu," or "Great Heat," about July 23rd. This is the beginning of the real 'dog days,' and the weather is at its very hottest. The three "fu," in the midst of which this term falls, are three decades in the summer lasting for about a month, and during this time the air is hot and sultry. This is as it should be according to the weather prophet who says, "If it is not

exceedingly hot during the three "fu," then the five kinds of grain will not be of good quality."

The thirteenth term is "Li Ch'iu," or "Autumn Begins," about August 7th. As the name indicates, this is the beginning of autumn, though there are a number of hot days yet to come after this date. During this period the wind changes and should blow cool in the mornings and evenings; the dampness in the atmosphere also decreases. The Chinese have a saying:—"No rain at Li Ch'iu will cause great anxiety; it will be useless to plant anything, as only half a crop would be gathered."

The fourteenth term is "Ch'u Shu," or "The limit of heat," about August 23rd. According to the Almanac, the heat of summer is over, and though there may still be a few hot days, the continued, oppressive heat is past. The harvesting of millet goes on briskly from this date; it is the first grain to be garnered in North China. A proverb relating to this term runs, "Should rain happen to fall at Ch'u Shu, then it will be a difficult matter to retain the fruits of the earth."

The fifteenth term is "Pai Lu," or "White Dew," about September 8th. After this period

no dew falls and the air is dry. It is about this time that winter wheat is sown. This wheat is harvested in the fourth and fifth moons.

The sixteenth term is "Ch'iu Fen," or "Division of Autumn," about September 23rd. This is the autumnal equinox, when the day and night are of equal length. According to the weather prophet, "If at Ch'u Fen white clouds are abundant, then everywhere the voice of rejoicing will be heard because of the prospect of a good harvest of the late crops. If, however there should be thunder and lightning, then it is feared that in the coming winter rice will rise in price."

The seventeenth term is "Han Lu," or "Cold Dew," about October 6th. During this period the weather is distinctly colder, and there is apt to be hoar frost at night. From this time, the leaves begin to fall from the trees.

The eighteenth term is "Shwang Chiang," or "Hoar Frost Descends," about October 23rd. The weather still gets colder and there is more hoar frost. At times there may also be ice.

The nineteenth term is "Li Tung," or the "Beginning of Winter," about November 7th.

The forecast in the Almanac is as follows:— "It is feared that if Li Tung falls on "Jen" (the ninth of the ten stems in the cycle,) all the labour lavished on the fields next year will be in vain. If it should occur on this day, the people will suffer much from calamity and sickness."

The twentieth term is "Hsiao Hsueh," or "Little Snow," about November 22nd.

The Twenty-first term is "Ta Hsueh," or "Heavy Snow," about December 7th.

The twenty-second term is "Tung Chih," or "Winter Arrives," about December 22nd. This is the winter solstice and the shortest day. It was on this day that the Emperor of China in days gone by, went to worship and offer sacrifices to Heaven at the Temple of Heaven in Peking. This worship has been performed once by a President of the Republic (Yuan Shih Kai) since the revolution in 1911.

The twenty-third term is "Hsiao Han," or "Little Cold," about January 6th. The English proverb, "As the day lengthens the frost strengthens," holds good in North China.

The twenty-fourth term is "Ta Han," or "Severe Cold," about January 21st. After this, the weather gradually gets less cold until the beginning of spring, which is the first term of the year.

SPECIAL DAYS.

The Master said, "How abundantly do spiritual beings display the powers that belong to them.

We look for them, but do not see them: we listen to, but do not hear them; yet they enter into all things, and there is nothing without them.

They cause all the people in the kingdom to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend at their sacrifices. Then, like overflowing water, they seem to be over the head, and on the right and left of their worshippers.

It is said in the Book of Poetry, "The approaches of the spirits, you cannot surmise;—and can you treat them with indifference?"

Doctrine Of The Mean. (*Legge*)

CHAPTER XIV.

SPECIAL DAYS.

The Rats' Flitting.

About five hundred years ago, in a cave of the mountains north of Peking, there lived a large and well-favoured rat. This rat had gone to the cave in the mountains to escape the great heat of summer, and had lived there a very long time, far away from the haunts of men. In fact, it had lived in these ideal surroundings so long, that its form gradually changed from that of a rat to that of a woman.

One day, some charcoal burners put up their hut on the hillside near by. In the evening, one man was left to prepare the evening meal while the others went out. While he was busily preparing meat dumplings (chu po-po), he heard a knock at the door of the hut. On opening the door, he saw a woman standing outside. He wondered to see her there, but presently she offered to go in and help him prepare the supper. While she was making the dumplings, a claw mark appeared in the dough. On seeing this, the

man looked at her hand and saw that the remains of the claws of a rat were still visible. Thinking that he was in the presence of an evil spirit from the nether regions, he took up the meat chopper to defend himself. Making a lunge with the chopper, he struck off one of the woman's hands, and then saw her vanish in the form of a flame of fire. When his companions returned, he told them what had happened, and they set out in search of the visitor. The drops of blood on the ground guided them to the narrow entrance leading into the cave of the rat; but on going inside they found that the rat had vanished. They then knew that the rat had taken the form of a woman, and that she in turn had become an immortal.

This happened on the eighteenth day of the first moon, and the legend has been handed down from generation to generation. Because of this strange happening, many of the women of these parts remember the rats on that day, and it is still thought of as the rats' "flitting" day. They prepare some nice food for the rats and place it where these "exalted visitors" can find it. In doing this they hope that the destructive rats will remove from their home

to somewhere else, and that the incoming rats will be of a more mild and benevolent type.

The Birthday of the Sun.

The first day of the second lunar month is the birthday of the sun, according to Chinese mythical lore. On this day worship is rendered to the king of day, mostly by the women folk.

A special cake called "t'ai yang kao" or "sun cake" is made on this day and is used in the worship. It is made of flour or rice-flour and sugar, and is steamed in layers of about half an inch thick and varying in size. When these layers are steamed they are put together, the largest at the bottom and the smaller ones on top. Through the centre of these a hole is made, and into this hole is stuck a piece of stick which has on top of it a cock chicken made of dough and coloured red.

Some time during the day, while the sun is still shining, a table is put out in the courtyard, and on it are placed two red candles, silver, gold, and cash paper money, and a plate on which are three or five "sun cakes." When the worship begins, the candles and a bunch of incense sticks are lit and the worshipper kotows to the sun. The paper money is burned in an iron basin in front of the table.

When the candles and incense have burned themselves out, then the worship is finished, and the cakes are eaten.

It is believed that after death people have to drink the water they wasted while on earth. Therefore, as the sun sees all the water that is thrown out, he knows what is due to each one, and worship is rendered to him on his birthday in the hope that he will be lenient when the time comes for the worshippers to suffer for their sins.

The Dragon Raises His Head.

After his long winter sleep, the dragon raises his head on the second day of the second lunar month. On this day, the majority of the women folk do not do any needlework lest they should inadvertently prick the dragon. Should a woman do some needlework on this day and afterwards develop a boil or sore on some part of her body, then she is assured that in doing her needlework on the second day of the second moon, she must have pricked the corresponding part of the dragon's body.

The noon meal on this day is usually a specially good one, and may consist of "chu po-po" (meat dumplings) or "mien" (dough strips) with meat. If people eat chu po-po they are said to be eating the dragon's ears,

(these dumplings being shaped something like ears), while, if they eat mien, they are said to be eating his whiskers.

This is considered to be a lucky day on which to wash out the water jars.

The One Sword Society.

In the time of the Three Kingdoms, there were many rulers who had risen to high rank from humble stations. They were men of wisdom and integrity and were raised to the exalted position of leaders by the voice of the people in their districts. One of these, Liu Pei Wang, was originally a seller of straw sandals. He had two close friends, one named Kwan Sheng Jen, who was his military chief-of-staff, and one, Chang Fei, who was his Prime Minister. These swore blood-brotherhood with one another, and became more to one another than brothers of one family. To seal the compact, each one bit into his own finger until the blood came, then they each allowed three drops of their blood to drip into a cup of wine, and afterwards each drank some of the wine.

At one time, Liu Pei Wang was invited to a banquet by some of his enemies. He was unable to refuse this invitation, so he sent Kwan as his representative. Fearing treach-

ery, Kwan took with him his famous sword which he himself had fashioned, and which was the only one of its kind. On looking at the blade, he saw that it was too blunt to be of any use in case of need. Looking around for water to use in the whetting of it, he could find none; but Heaven came to his aid in his necessity and sent rain. Because this happened on the thirteenth day of the fifth moon, this day is one on which the people annually look for rain.

The Kwan mentioned in this tale, and a Yueh of the Sung dynasty, are renowned and revered to the present day because of their faithfulness and integrity in the service of their country. Temples have been built in their honour, and in every temple where all the gods are represented, their images appear. The majority of the people, on the first and fifteenth of each moon, burn incense to these deities, either in the temples or in their own homes; in the latter case, Kwan and Yueh are represented on sheets of paper. On the twenty-fourth day of the sixth moon, which is the birthday of Kwan, many presents are offered to this deity. Garments of fine yellow satin, silk, or brocade, are presented to him; meat

offerings are also presented—a sheep, a pig, or a fowl, or portions of these animals.

In the time of the Empire, the Emperor went once in each of the four seasons, to burn incense in a temple devoted to the worship of Kwan and Yueh; now, the President of the Republic goes twice a year, once in the spring and once in the autumn.

People who, in the present time, wish to swear blood-brotherhood still follow the example of Kwan and his friends, the only difference being that they do not bite the finger to draw blood. They go to one of the temples dedicated to Kwan and Yueh, which are called "Lao Ye Miao," and there burn incense and offer gifts. Afterwards they go to a restaurant where they drink a cup of wine—all drinking from the one cup—sign a covenant, and partake of a meal which is paid for by him who is voted to be the eldest brother. Each signatory to the convenant retains a copy signed by all. This rite is known as "Pai Hsiung Ti," or "Brothers by Covenant."

Airing the Classics.

The sixth day of the sixth moon is considered to be a lucky day on which to put out clothing to be aired and sunned; because, if aired and sunned on that day, moths and

other insects have no power to destroy them. Also on that day, all the books and religious manuals in Buddhist temples are put out to sun; the origin of this custom is given in the following legend.

In the time of the T'ang dynasty, one of the emperors of that line was sick, and very much desired to procure a copy of the Buddhist manual. He put out a proclamation to this effect, promising official advancement and wealth to anyone who would take the long and tedious journey to the Western Heaven to procure the book. No one volunteered to go, until a Buddhist priest, on reading the proclamation, decided to do so. He tore down the proclamation and started on his journey. By the time he had gone about half of the way, he had gathered four disciples. One was an immortal who had been a monkey; one, an immortal who had been a pig; one, a youth who became an acolyte; and one a horse which had been a dragon. This horse he rode on his journey, and found it to be wonderfully clever and quick.

The way was long and full of dangers, and as they went along, they endured many hardships and encountered many weird and strange experiences. One day they came to a wide

and turbid river across which there was no bridge, and which they had no means of crossing. The monkey and pig, being immortals, could cross on the wings of the wind; but the priest, his acolyte, and the horse had no such power. They were very unwilling to turn round and go by another way, as that would have involved a journey of hundreds of miles. While they stood on the bank of the river, wondering perplexedly what they should do, a large turtle appeared on the surface of the water and drew near to the bank. On seeing the turtle, the priest spoke to it and asked its help, saying that he was on the Emperor's business, and promising it immortality if it would take them across the river. The turtle was very willing to render aid, and drawing nearer, allowed the priest, the acolyte, and the horse to get on its back. When nearing the opposite bank, the turtle said, "I have brought you over safely, and I want to ask you to do something for me. When you get to the Western Heaven, will you ask the Buddha when I am to become an immortal?" The priest replied, "I shall certainly ask; and when I return, you must be ready to take us across the river, and I shall then be able to tell you his answer."

In due time, the travellers reached the Western Heaven and secured a copy of the "Ching" or religious manual, after which the priest and his disciples set out on their return journey. When they came to the river, they were very glad to find the turtle awaiting them, and the priest, the acolyte, and the horse again got on its back. As they had nearly reached the opposite bank of the river and nothing had been said by the priest relative to the Buddha's answer to the turtle's question, the turtle said to him, "Priest, did you remember to ask the Buddha the question which you promised me you would ask?" The priest replied, "Alas, I forgot!" The turtle then upbraided him and said, "How unjust of you to forget, when you were dependent on me for a passage across this river." Having said this, he straightway dived below the water, taking his passengers with him. They were not drowned, as the horse could swim, and the monkey and pig helped the priest and the acolyte by keeping their heads above water.

The book, which was strapped on the horse's back, was safe but thoroughly soaked, and because of this the priest was very downcast. He was afraid to open it, thinking it would do no good, so he and his disciples

continued their journey. By and by they met an old woman who stopped them and asked the priest why all their things were so wet, and he told her that they had all been thrown into the river. The old woman advised him to open the book and lay it out to dry. He opened it and spread the leaves out on the ground to dry. After a time a breeze sprang up and very soon after the book was dry, but alas, the breeze had also carried away some of the leaves. Some say that Buddha himself spirited them back to the Western Heaven, while others say that the turtle caused the breeze to spring up to punish the priest. Be that as it may, the priest sought diligently for the missing leaves, but could not find them; so he gathered up those that were left and went on his way. This happened on the sixth day of the sixth moon, and that is why this day is kept as a day of remembrance.

In course of time, the priest arrived at his journey's end and delivered what was left of the book to the Emperor, who, realizing that the accident which had happened to the book was not the fault of the priest, gave to him the promised honours and rewards. The book was given to the priests in a Buddhist temple who translated it and made copies of it. This

"Ching" has been handed down from generation to generation and is said to be the same that is in use at the present day.

The Couple by the River of Heaven.

The following legend relates to the seventh day of the seventh moon, and the reputed location of it was somewhere not very far from Peking.

Over two thousand years ago, in a family of the name of Niu, there were two brothers. The elder brother was a good and kind man, but he had an unpleasant wife. The younger brother, who lived with them, was not very bright intellectually, but was upright and a very hard worker. His brother loved him and was kind to him, but the wife did not like him for several reasons, one being that he ate too much.

The brothers were farmers, and the younger did a large share of the hard work. For his fellow-labourer he had an ox, which was really a spirit disguised as an ox. Mrs. Niu also grudged the ox its food. She was very anxious to get rid of her brother-in-law and one day put poison in his food. The ox, knowing what she had done, spoke to its master and told him that his sister-in-law had prepared some specially good food for him,

but that he had better not eat it. It advised him to eat anything else except this specially prepared food, as if he were to eat it he would surely die.

When the man went home in the evening, his sister-in-law said to him, "You have been working hard all day, and because I thought you would be tired, I made some specially nice "chu po-po" (meat dumplings) for you; come along and eat them." But the man, remembering what the ox had said to him, would not eat any, persistently refusing to do so though Mrs. Niu repeatedly urged him to partake of them.

After a little while, the man, thinking that the ox might have spoken as it did out of spite towards Mrs. Niu, resolved to test the dumplings, and threw two of them to the dog. The dog ate them and died. When Mrs. Niu saw that her plan had failed, she accused him falsely to her husband, saying that he was lazy and did not do his work properly, and that he ate a large quantity of food. She urged her husband to send him away, and rather give him anything he should ask for than keep him any longer.

The ox knew what she was planning and said to its master, "When you go home to-

night, you will find that you are not wanted. When you are asked what you want to take away with you, say that you want nothing but the ox. Do not fear for the future, I will plan for you." When they went home, the man found that it was as the ox had said. His brother told him to ask for anything he wanted which might help him to set up in business or to find work. He replied, "I want nothing but the ox, and if I take it away, you will not have to feed it any more." His brother was willing that he should have the ox, so he led it away.

When they had gone a short distance, he said to the ox, "We have no food and no home, what shall we do?" The ox replied, "This is the time of year for the ploughing of the fields; why should we not hire ourselves out to plough for farmers?" The man agreed that this was a good plan, and went to seek for work. He was employed by a wealthy farmer who was glad to engage a man who could supply his own ox. This farmer already had five oxen of his own at work, but the hired ox did as much work as the other five put together, and the man made five times as much money as any one of the other labourers.

Thus he quickly became quite well off and was able to rent a house to live in.

One day the ox said to his master, "We are not going out to plough to-day, but we are going to find a wife for you. She has come, and I am going to help you to find her. To-day we shall go to Chih Nu Ch'iao (Bridge of Pretty Maidens). In the river there, many girls bathe to-day; their outer garments will be left on the bank of the river, and you must pick up the best set you can find and run off with it. I shall be waiting, and you must jump on my back and I shall take you quickly home." The man did as the ox told him, and when he jumped on the ox's back, they made for home. The girl to whom the clothes belonged, on seeing what had happened, pursued the thief and begged that her clothing be returned. The man paid no heed to her entreaties, but allowed her to follow him until he reached his home. Finding that they were destined for one another, they became husband and wife.

They lived together very happily for three years, and a son and a daughter were born to them. At the end of three years the wife said to her husband, "It was my destiny to give you three years of happiness and the time has

now come when I must leave you. You are comfortably off and you have the two children, so you should not be unhappy." Having said this, she left the house. Thinking that he had not heard clearly, her husband followed her until he came to the river; but by the time he got there, she was already across at the other side, and as he was unable to swim, he could not follow her further. He called across the river to her and asked her if she were coming back, and she replied, "A year from to-day, on the seventh of the seventh moon, you will see me again by the river."

Perceiving that she had really left him, he returned to his home and spent his time in caring for the children; the ox as his willing helper, planning for and assisting him according to its promise.

The following year, on the seventh of the seventh moon, he was at the riverside in good time, taking with him the two children. These he carried in baskets on the two ends of a carrying pole which he carried over his shoulder. The husband and wife talked to each other across the river, but as she was an immortal, she could not stay. Every year for some years, they thus saw and talked to each other with the river rolling between. In

course of time the man died and also became an immortal.

Even up to the present time this legend is repeated, with the addition that Niu Lang and Chih Nu, the husband and wife, are two stars which may be seen any clear night, one on each side of the River of Heaven (the Milky Way), Niu Lang having two smaller stars beside it which represent the two children. It is said that annually, on the seventh of the seventh moon, all the birds congregate there and form a bridge on which Niu Lang crosses to speak with Chih Nu. This making of the bridge by the birds is called "Po Niao Ta Ch'iao," "All the birds make a bridge." The birds wait until the husband and wife have talked together, and until the former has crossed again to his own side of the river. After this the birds disperse and return to their accustomed places, leaving behind them those amongst their number whose time has come to die. It is commonly said that if anyone goes out very early on the morning of that day and looks around to see if there are any birds to be seen, they find none, as the birds have not returned from their night's work by the River of Heaven. Folks also say, that if rain falls on that day, the drops

are the tears of the couple, weeping because they must be separated for another year. The old wives say, that if anyone goes out and sits under a grape vine any time between midnight and dawn of that day, they can hear the sound of weeping, presumably the weeping of Chih Nu and Niu Lang.

This legend has been dramatised under the name of T'ien Ho P'ei, and is played in many theatres about the beginning of the seventh moon.

Dating back as do many of these legends and folk-lore tales of China to long before the Christian era, it is not surprising that there are often several different versions of a legend. This does not lessen, indeed it rather enhances the interest of the story. The legends here recorded are said to have a foundation of truth, having been written by the ancients and handed down from generation to generation. The Chinese people have a wealth of such legendary lore, and some of the older people with their wonderful memories, are able to relate tales from their store which are full of intense interest.

Only such legends as are connected with festivals and special days are given here. If they suffice to arouse the interest of the reader

in things Chinese and to interpret for him something of the old-world charm which clings to so much of this country's life, they will have amply repaid the time and effort entailed in their compilation.