

NEW YEAR FESTIVITIES IN SALT LAKE'S CHINATOWN.



OWHERE in the wide world is their greater rejoicing at present than among the disciples of Confucius. Wherever the slant-eyed sons and daughters of the Flowery Kingdom are at this time of the year there will be found a peace, resignation and good fellowship such as John Chinaman experiences only once in twelve months.

During that period few Chinamen will permit themselves to get angry, no matter how great the provocation. The man who does so is considered a "weak sister" and is regarded as a sinner of no small degree. During this period he freely forgives and is as freely forgiven of his shortcomings as was the offender in the jubilee years of the ancients. It is during this season that he is seen at his best. It is then that he shines the brightest, although "John" is never a stingy or un hospitable person. On the contrary where his friendships are firmly established his deeds are of the most open hearted character.

AN UNFIXED HOLIDAY.
The Chinese New Year's day may be said to be a portable one. That is, its date varies each twelve months. It

Four Hundred Slant-Eyed Sons of the Flowery Kingdom Engage in the Celebration of the Greatest Holiday Known to the Mongolian Race--Like the Christian's Christmas it is a Period of "Peace on Earth, Good Will Towards Men"--It is the 4,755th Year of this Cycle and so far as Salt Lake is Concerned is an Eveless Occasion, There Being Practically No Women Here to Participate in It.

by a big dinner on Thursday from four to eight p. m., after which time the "joss house" was repaired to and prayers offered to the god of war and his good offices invoked upon the heads of all the worshippers for the next twelve months. Simultaneous with the offer-

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(English Translation)

"Peace on Earth-Good Will Towards Men."

very but unnameable viands. They occupy the center of the table and when the truly Chinese custom is followed, as it usually is, each guest helps himself, using his fingers or chop sticks, according to his own fancy. Salt Lake's Caucasian Four Hundred might not view this proceeding as being "polite." But there is another side to the question--one that expresses confidence. When a Chinese host invites you to take a seat at his table, you in a sense become a member of the family, and to show that broad democratic equality that he desires you should enjoy he feels that he can exemplify it in no better way than to have you eat from the same dish. A fee is not prohibited from entering a Chinaman's house or sitting at his table during New Years, but he is not supposed to exercise the privilege of eating from the family dish. On these tables the best edibles known to China land are spread; for nearly all of it comes from China. There are sweet meats and fruits that the American knows little and cares less about, which, nevertheless are regarded as toothsome and delicious. The American articles are principally roast pork and chicken. Prominent among the Chinese are the well known bowls of "chopped soy," while "noddies" are relegated to an obscure corner, though on other occasions it is considered a substantial dish. Among some of the more elaborate spreads are deep sea fish from China which retails at \$10 a pound, imported oysters, snails and clams that no one not rich or economical can afford; birds' nests, roots, nuts and berries of flavors both good and bad, confections and candies, pastry and bread that would throw a French cook into convulsions; and relishes so numerous that even an attempt at enumeration must fail.

CHINESE TEMPERANCE.

Then there are rice and other wines which possess intoxicating qualities just as do the wines of other nations; but strange to say not many Chinamen ever let themselves become intoxicated. Occasionally one gets drunk but he is a rare exception indeed. It is said the Chinese are the most temperate people in the world. The statement is probably true. About the only time a Chinaman gets under the "influence" is during these New Year celebrations, but it is ninety-nine chances out of a hundred that no disturbance will be created by a Mongolian in Salt Lake during the next two weeks.

MANY VISITS MADE.

Many visits will be made, many calls exchanged during the holidays and thousands of calling cards in bright red colors resembling the wrapper of a package of fire crackers will be presented with their strange characters bearing the name and addresses of the person presenting the same. In every house as well as in the "joss" house prayers will be offered and holy paper burned upon the altars. Every caller will partake as freely of those things on his neighbor's table as he would of those upon his own board.

Of course all the time cannot be spent in eating and greeting. There must be some time for a change of the program. The monotony is varied by the liberal use of cigarettes and quaint tobacco pipes where the smoke passes through the water while on the tables, on which also will be the peanut lamp, the "yen hock" the "yen she gow," the opium pipe and the familiar card of "hop." Once this round of revelry and languor combined is on, it never ceases until the holiday season is over.

TONS OF FIRE WORKS.

Running coterminously with it the bombardment of firecrackers on the outside keeps up incessantly and whenever an explosion is heard it will be known that some devoted worshipper has just taken his fest after a prayer

offering to the gods and idols of the Chinese people. Usually he is clad in his best clothes. There are not many really wealthy Chinamen in Salt Lake. Some, however, are very well-to-do and have their robes of rich texture and high color as accompaniments to their long and brilliant peacock feathers which adorn private dwellings and "joss" house alike. Upon every door there is a legend of welcome to the stranger. Sandal wood is set on fire and its fragrant fumes fill the air. New decorations replace the old. Fresh garlands are wound round the likeness of Buddha and the miniature wax temple of the emperor is given much adoration. Old peacock plumes are torn down and those newly plucked from the great bird substituted instead. The Chinese flag and dragon are displayed upon the right and left. The Free Masons extend the hand of greeting in every direction. Every Chinaman who is in financial distress gets some help. Every one who is sick is made the recipient of some attention that is calculated to cheer him up and improve the health.

GOING TO EVANSTON.

When the celebration ends here several score of Chinamen will go to Evanston to celebrate there. That place has many Mongolian denizens who will spend ten days in observing in a new year holiday. During that time they will burn not less than 600,000 firecrackers and consume carloads of the viands described above.

CHINATOWN THROGGED.

Hundreds of prominent Salt Lake



CHIN CHIN, THE "MAYOR OF CHINATOWN."

This gentleman is known in Chinatown by the above title not by reason of any office that he holds but because he is the foremost Celestial in the colony, both as to influence and wealth.

citizens have already taken a peep in to Chinatown during the festivities. Hundreds more will throng the place tonight and tomorrow. Next week the celebration will be on in all its glory and then the visitor will be made most welcome. His presence will in no wise be regarded as an intrusion. He will be expected to deport himself as a gentleman. That is all. To obtain access to the interior of the Chinese dwellings

and "joss" house, parties should be supplied with a guide. These can easily be secured either from the police department or from residents of the district. Such a visit will give only a faint idea of Chinese life and customs. But it will probably be the most adequate one that can be obtained this side of San Francisco or China itself.

LARGEST ICE BOAT IN THE WEST.

The largest ice yacht ever built or owned west of the Hudson river is being constructed in Toledo. The order for the yacht was given to the Hepburn Boat and Oak Works some time ago by D. C. Olin, commodore of the Kalamazoo Ice Yacht club, but owing to the size of the boat and the fact that Mr. Olin wanted to spring a surprise at the annual meet on Gull lake, the matter has been kept a secret and has only just leaked out. The runner plank is 26 feet extreme width, with a 25-foot track. The backbone is 46 feet long. It will be sloop-rigged and will carry 600 square feet of canvas. When complete the boat will weigh 1,600 pounds, and will be capable of speed that will make that of the fastest express train appear like a snail's pace. The construction will be the simplest skeleton frame possible, with only a woven rope cockpit, capable of holding two men.

While in the East there are a few boats as large, there are none larger. This is the first attempt at one of its size in this part of the country--Toledo Blade.

AN HONEST LAD'S \$1,700 FIND.

Mrs. W. H. Yerkes, of Washington, D. C., who has been in this city on a shopping tour, left her home a few days ago, happy in the possession of a diamond chateleine, valued at \$1,700, which she lost on Friday, and which was restored to her by a small boy who had found it in a Broadway store.

In the fitting mood of a talking establishment Mrs. Yerkes removed her coat and the chateleine fell to the floor. It was not missed for two hours, when Mrs. Yerkes reported her loss to the clerk at the Hoffman house. The clerk was about to summon detectives from police headquarters, when Mrs. Yerkes recalled the incident in the Broadway store. Inquiries were made by telephone, and a 12-year-old boy called a few minutes later with the missing jewelry.

Mrs. Yerkes complimented the lad for his honesty, and rewarded him handsomely--New York Herald.

DAVE HING, "DEPUTY MAYOR OF CHINATOWN."

Mr. Hing is probably the best educated Chinaman in the state. He has been here for years and talks English like a native. He represents his countrymen in all diplomatic relations and acts as general interpreter for them.

POSING FOR THE "NEWS" PHOTOGRAPHER IN FRONT OF A CHINESE BUSINESS HOUSE.



Photo by Matson.



Photo by Matson.

There are but few persons in this city who are aware of the fact that in musty, murky Chinatown, on Plum Alley, there is a "God of War" but such is a fact nevertheless, and every day during the present celebration denizens of the alley visit the joss house and bow down in worship before the god, to supplicate him for good luck during the ensuing year.

Entrance to the joss house is gained by climbing two flights of narrow, dingy and dark stairs over Ah Woo's store. The above picture of this powerful god was taken especially for the "News" and by permission of the mayor and deputy mayor of Chinatown. It will be observed that on the right of the god, that personage being seated, is a young man holding a sack in his hands. This sack is the seal of the deity and is used for secret purposes during wartime. On the left is seen the servant of the god, who accompanies him on all his journeys. In his hand is a huge knife, which is supposed to weigh exactly one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and which he takes with him on all his travels. This terrible individual possesses the miraculous power to walk on water, a feat he finds necessary in the performance of his multifarious duties. Of the god himself much could be said, as the history of this wonderful being covers a period of eight thousand years.

According to the Chinese history concerning him, he was, at one time, a very powerful angel of the "God of Heaven," but sinned against that being and as a punishment he was sent upon this earth. His birth was not like that of other beings on this terrestrial sphere. After offending the god of heaven, a great giant was sent to kill him and a drop of his blood was dropped to this earth and fell upon a rock which was his birth here. From that time on he was known as the god of war.

He grew as other children did with the exception that he was always good and had wonderful power and was extremely "lucky." He was never known to be defeated in war and was invincible in all things. He is exceedingly kind to all the poor people and always fights for his country--China. In the Chinese tongue he is called: "Quon Kong" or "The God of War." According to the belief of the Chinamen this great god had the power to put the enemies of his country to sleep by a magic spell and when they awoke they either had to leave the country or be killed by a flood, which the god caused to come upon them. The history of his marvelous achievements from the time of his birth, 4,600 years ago, is contained in nearly twenty volumes in the Chinese language. Directly in front of the image are numerous articles of Chinese diet. They include all of the edibles noted in the article proper on this subject and some other that are not mentioned. They, like the candles on the table, are kept there until the festivities are terminated. Incense and pong wood are kept burning constantly. The walls on either side are illuminated with characters in gilded frames describing the virtues of the mighty god.

Chinamen are engaged in celebrating the greatest holiday known to the Mongolian race. It is their New Years, the 4,755th anniversary of the current cycle. How many cycles there were before this one no Utah Chinaman dares venture even to guess. They simply shake their heads and say that it is so far in the dim and distant past that ordinary men cannot comprehend the vastness of it.

It needs only a visit to the uncleanly and foul smelling precincts of Plum Alley to show how steadfast and loyal the Chinaman is to the customs, traditions and religion of his forefathers. Among the hundreds of Chinamen in Salt Lake, the Deseret News is assured that there is not a single "infidel" or "unbeliever." All hold tenaciously to the Moloch worship of their people. But mixed with it are elements that approach so closely in some instances, to the Christian idea of Deity that one stands appalled.

WILL LAST TWO WEEKS.

This year the great Chinese holiday was ushered in at midnight the 7th last, and will continue for two weeks.

TO KEEP AWAY THE DEVILS.

The festivities here were ushered in

THE BANQUETING BOARD.

But to get back to the banquet board: These abound in every house. They are covered with immense bowls of sa-