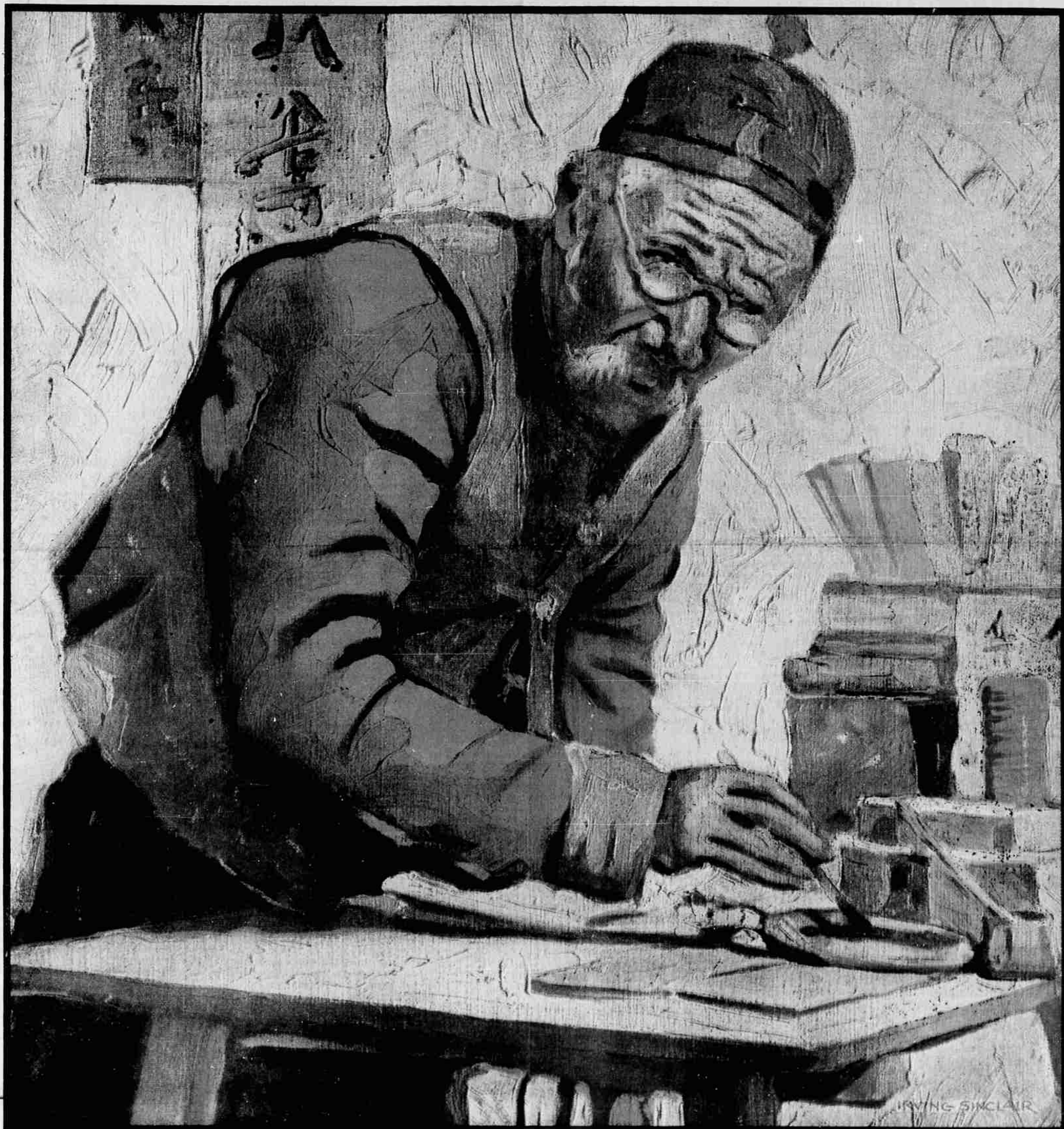


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THE LETTER-WRITER

"EMANATE the teachings of Confucius and the wisdom of the ages shall be yours." In San Francisco's picturesque Chinatown, Ling, the letter-writer, is not only a great student of Confucius, but a philosopher, poet, and scholar of eminence in his own right to whom his countrymen turn for wise counsel as well as for his services in setting down the concise, artistic brush marks that spell out messages to those in the homeland. On his table, amid stacks of rice paper and pots of thick, sticky ink, are old Chinese classics that Ling can repeat word for word. A Chinese scholar must know 10,000 characters. Ling knows many more. He also knows life, and at rare moments of leisure in his shop discusses its intricacies and complexities in poetical but amazingly sound words.

LIFE'S dramas unfolded in the thousands of letters he writes each year for his countrymen are legion. Many years are on his shoulders, his hair and beard are white, but profound wisdom dwells in his eyes — eyes which still hold a strangely youthful sparkle. His hands are like old ivory. Slender, practiced fingers hold the bamboo brush that records alike joy and sorrow, business and pleasure, love, hate, friendship, deceit, greed, sacrifice, and all the human emotions of men and women who are proud to have his beautiful characters grace the pages of their letters. In his quaint shop in Chinatown, Ling has found peace and contentment, for faithfully he has emanated the teachings of Confucius and to him has rightfully come the wisdom of the ages.