

but one left, the first corner was the lucky one. There were complications of the game by which a bet could be divided or doubled, but in his efforts to explain these the proprietor got hopelessly astray in his English, and finally wound up by saying "you no sabbe." After watching the game for a few minutes, inspecting the barred cage in which the cashier enshrined himself before a huge iron safe, and taking up a collection to hire the orchestra to stop playing, we said good-night and passed through the many guarded portals into the street.

We were much interested in a pawn shop, and stopped to observe the Chinese method of "soaking" valuables. Within a wooden stall, accessible only by a stairway in the rear, reached through a securely bolted door, stood the pawnbroker. The stall was so high that he could not see over it, and was surmounted by an iron railing extending to the roof, but pierced in the center by an aperture about two feet square. The needy Mongolian advanced with a pipe and holding it up, thrust it through the hole above his head, the broker taking it from his hand. In a minute a slip of paper was passed back on which was written the amount the broker would advance on the pipe. This was apparently not sufficient, for the paper was returned and the pipe handed back to the customer, who took his departure. Neither party to this transaction saw the other. By pursuing this course the broker never knows who are the owners of the articles in his possession. Across the hall from the pawnbroker's stand was a counter where lottery tickets were being sold. Chinese lottery is indulged in extensively, not only by the Mongols, but by many whites, some of the latter developing into regular "lottery fiends." For twenty-five cents one can purchase a ticket upon which are printed about forty characters. He marks a certain number of these with ink, taking one ticket himself and leaving a duplicate with the seller. Every night there is a drawing, and if he has marked a sufficient number of the winning characters he is paid a sum of money in proportion to his success in guessing. For a larger sum he can mark a greater number of characters with the possibility of his winnings being proportionately increased. It sometimes happens that a small investment brings large returns; but like every other lottery game, where one wins a multitude lose, and the persistent player is certain to drop a great many quarters into the money box.

In the basement below a popular beer hall we found a saloon devoted exclusively to the Chinese. It contained a bar, seats, and an old pool table, and it was comical to see the awkward handling of the cues by these imitators of the gilded youth of America. In their potations they by no means confined themselves to beer, but indulged in mixed drinks as well. The favorite seemed to be a cocktail, which the bibulous Chinaman considers the very acme of liquids. They rested their elbows against the bar, spat upon the floor, tilted their hats upon the backs of their heads, and in other ways conducted themselves in the most regulation

style. In this particular, at least, they are becoming Americanized, but the direction their education has taken is not encouraging.

Our last experience was in the theater, whose orchestra had been giving us a noisy invitation the entire evening. One needs never to inquire the location of a Chinese temple of Thespes, for the odoriferous air of Chinatown is continually affrighted by the din of the never-tiring orchestra. No sooner does one reach the confines of that delectable neighborhood than his ears are saluted by the agonizing wail of the one-stringed fiddle, the gong's incessant clang, the rattle of the drum and the twang of the three-stringed banjo, supplemented by other nameless and equally harrowing instruments. We paused before a doorway from which these dulcet tones were issuing, and entered. The first thing we observed was a hole in the wall about two inches wide and four high, through which a Chinaman passed a quarter and received a piece of cardboard in return. It requires a great deal of faith to put twenty-five cents into a little hole where one can neither see what becomes of it nor anyone from whom he may reasonably expect anything in return, but the man appeared satisfied with the result. As for us, being representatives of that great free for all institution known as "the press," it was unnecessary for us to try the experiment. On the contrary were met on the stairs by the smiling manager and escorted through the entire establishment.

At the head of the stairs we observed two door keepers, a white man and a Chinaman, a peculiarity our escort endeavored to explain by saying, "One man come, Chinaman sabbe; nodder man come, Chinaman no sabbe. Melican man heap sabbe. You sabbe me?" He was assured that his explanation was remarkably lucid and conveyed in the choicest English, whereat he smiled with pleasure. We found the interior to be somewhat similar to that of the ordinary small American theater, consisting of an auditorium surrounded by a gallery, the sides of which were divided into apartments open to the front and partially to the side, the seats being innocent of any upholstering whatever. We mounted to the gallery to obtain a better view, and gazed down upon the audience. They were packed in rows upon long wooden benches, each with his soft black hat resting squarely upon his head and his pigtail hanging straight down the middle of his back, the whole presenting the lifeless uniformity of a group of tin soldiers in a Christmas box. In several of the gallery stalls were seated a number of gaily-dressed and gaudily-painted ladies, evidently of the better class, dividing their attention between the performance and a package of confections. The stage consisted of a raised platform at one end of the room, devoid of curtain, flies, scenery or stage settings of any kind, even being used for seats by a portion of the audience. At the rear were two doors, the one used for an entrance and the other for an exit. Between these was stationed the orchestra, whose perpetual muscularity found vent in agonizing solos, discordant duets and the deafening din of a general engagement. The stage