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*Chinese New Year*

Close in their cosy home-nooks Lincoln's tawny element will feast and drink in the coming ten days and dream of their native land.

It is Chinese New Year—a season of it, two weeks in length, but alas for Lincoln, it is a cheap town. Too few Mongolians! If there were only more the city would see a spread that would out-fair all the street carnivals conceived by the most vividly imaginative of Lincoln's promoters.

There are not more than sixteen Chinamen in town. It is too few a number and so they will observe the time as said, in the quietness of their own snug retreats. A few, three or four perhaps, will journey down to Omaha and participate with the ecclesiastics there. They will meet with a welcome and the most admirable of hospitality. It is the season of hospitality and no one is better qualified for its exhibition than the Chinaman. Suppose he is clannish? No race exists that is more genuinely or generously hospitable when occasion calls and no hostility exists. And then the joss houses! There is none in Lincoln and that as much as anything else will draw those to Omaha who are able to leave. Never a New Year ses-

son for a Chinaman that does not see him do proper joss obeisance when such a being is anywhere near to be worshipped.

Who ever observed an intoxicated Chinaman?

No answer? Good reason! The Chinaman does not indulge in spees in his New Year season nor in any other season that anybody knows of. Perhaps some obscure person has seen a drunken Chinaman at some period in his life but be sure the drunk is reviled by his race for his weakness. Drunkenness is not what they call a good time and there will be seen no tanglehoofed Chinaman on the streets of Lincoln during the New Year season. That is not to say that they will not imbibe some, but what they drink will be a Chinese preparation which makes a man feel frisky temporarily without intoxicating him. It is named Chinese whisky and no doubt many draughts will be taken during the two weeks ensuing from Feb. 7th, the evening of New Year's. Speaking of drinking, however, there is a game of intoxication which the Chinamen play, deeply to the humiliation of the loser. It is the only game that some Americans would be proud to lose. 'Tis thus. The players are paired off. Operations begin without the aid of cards or shells or any other little device. The players present their hands, fists doubled. At a signal they extend their fingers or whatever number their whim dictates. Without stopping to figure one of the players scans the fingers and guesses at the number. If his guess is wrong he takes a drink of grog. By turns they keep this up until one or the other is drunk and this man, being the loser, of course, is made the derision of the assembled heathen.

But that is only one of the games affected by the celestial. It is not by any means predominant in the New Year's festival. Peep into the Chinatown of a big city, such as Denver or San Francisco, during the New Year's festival and you rest your eyes on a fairland of Chinese decoration, ban-

ners, emblems, pennants, lanterns and the innumerable figures of the ingenuity of the Flowery Kingdom. Yes, and you will hear something, too. Crackling of firecrackers of all dimensions and capacities assails the ears and you see just how the inventors of these fashionable weapons explode them. It is a Fourth of July lesson to say the least. And then to travel among them and see just how they enjoy themselves! That is when you get a stunning revelation of the real inherent exuberance of spirits that slumbers under the tawny skin of the Chinaman during all the rest of the year. As for elaborate and costly wearing apparel discontinue your search right here for it is useless to seek farther.

Excepting in Lincoln. There are no rich Chinamen here and there will be no amazing sights. "Not enough people," said Wah Lee to a Courier representative when asked why the Lincoln Chinese would not celebrate in a body. "Cost too much," he added. "Do it in California, not here." He said they would eat and drink at home and a few might go to Omaha for two or three days. So while the others are having a huge time, burning incense and smoking their queer little pipes and calling on each other and are embosomed in the brightest gayety, with business absolutely suspended, the Lincoln contingent of sixteen will keep right on with its work. Certainly in a way it is fortunate for Lincoln people who wear clothes that become dirty. For the city to go two weeks without the Chinese laundries might wreak no little uncleanness on the community. There will be no cause to worry on this score in Lincoln. Over their tubs and flats the Chinese here will toil as usual and only enjoy themselves a little more in the evenings, sparing many thoughts for the houses and tables of their more loyal tribesmen in the larger places who are luxuriating in the glitziest fashion—and they will have more money to show for it at the end of the allotted time.

All the world over the good time will rule for two weeks, to mark the passage of the 4,755th year of their present cycle. It is not a season regular in its coming. Its time is variable. It dates from the apparent passage of the sun through the sign of Aquarius and commenced last year on Feb. 8th. But irregular as it is it is a yearly example of wholesome fellowship that has no parallel in Anglo-Saxon customs. Tables are spread with the daintiest viands, even if the menu itself is a nightmare. And to show their absolute distrust of one another they keep a custom of the ancient times and take food with their fingers from the various tempting bowls spread about the board. It is a happy mingling of philosophy and sentiment that they did not discard when they left their kingdom across the sea.

\* \* \*

**Has a Strong Head**

We were at the late Vice President Hobart's home, and a goodly number of us made up our minds to drink the Chinese minister's health quite frequently. We had insidious designs. Wu discovered it, and time after time he stood firm, serene, undisturbed.

Later when the men who had tried to get the better of Minister Wu were groping blindly toward the balustrades and shakily trying to preserve their equilibrium, Wu, smiling, sedate, calm, philosophical, and in that keen appreciation of our English language of which he is so pat, said, nodding his head to the unspending parting guests: "They—they tried to saturate me, didn't they?"—Charles Emory Smith in Philadelphia Press.

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