

side of each of these altars were placed figures of frightful and hideous-looking monsters, with black faces, misshapen bodies and legs, and mouths from ear to ear, filled with enormous teeth. One hand was armed with a battle-axe, and the other pointed to the table. These our cicerone called "Fellow Seegurmain." There were several of the same kind of figures, though of much smaller size, hideous enough to put one out of all conceit even with what was well carved; for the Chinese excel in depicting dragons and reptiles, which are occasionally, if not well grouped, amusingly so, with both men and animals. I was surprised to observe how little respect was paid to the place, which was every where accessible; and with the laughing and talking of those present, and the noise of workmen, it had the air of any thing but a sacred enclosure. The part that was uncovered was ornamented with flowers in pots, consisting of camelias, tuberoses, &c. There were also several old stumps, of the purpose of which I could get no explanation, nor learn why they should be considered so sacred as to be admitted into the temple. Notwithstanding these incongruities, the whole had a striking and singular effect, and I may add, not an unpleasing one.

Before ceasing to speak of the Chinese, I shall give a brief description of their mode of celebrating the New Year, although it was difficult to follow it, and still more so to understand its full meaning. The ceremonies consisted chiefly of processions, both by night and day, in which the whole Chinese population seemed to be engaged. The grand one bore a sort of silken temple, which was carried on the shoulders of several men, with banners before and behind it, having Chinese characters on them, and of the most gaudy colours. These were preceded by music, if such it could be called, consisting of cymbals and gongs, on which every performer strove to strike with his utmost force, and, if possible, oftener than his neighbour. Noise they at least created in perfection. This procession was occasionally joined by smaller ones, and the whole seemed to afford both to the crowd and actors as much amusement as it did to us, to whom it was altogether new. During the night, and particularly on that of the 21st of February, the last day of their year, the illuminated processions were curious, as well as amusing, and were exceedingly numerous. Some of them were to be seen in every street at the same time, and no sooner had one passed than others were seen to follow, all hurrying along as if there were some goal to be reached. The illumination proceeded from lanterns of all colours, sizes, and shapes. We saw also the procession of juvenile horsemen, consisting altogether of children. Each of them bore the fore and hind parts of a horse in such a manner that the child repre-