

Dragon was a prominent figure. The representation was varied in an erratic sort of way by squibs, but, for me, it was wholly uninteresting. Not having expected an open-air feast in the depth of winter, I had left my fur coat behind, and sat shivering in my smoking-jacket, while the wearisome repast went on. Anxious not to offend the Chinese by any appearance of indifference, I had posted Raju behind the Chow-Kuan at the opposite side of



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the table, whence he could signal to me as occasion might require. The dishes, as they were served one after another, seemed interminable. There were more than thirty in all, some of them very good (for example, stewed duck and pastry), but others were bad and even repulsive. The viands had to be washed down with vile-smelling raw spirits of local manufacture, served in small cups almost saucer-shaped. Several times I tried to evade the refresh-