



A CHINESE TOY MERCHANT.

TOYS AND TOY MAKERS.

TOYS and playthings are in continual demand wherever there are children to be amused, and the supply of them grows larger and more varied every year. Most of the toys which gladden little hearts in English nurseries come from Germany, and the quaint old town of Nuremburg is the centre of that kind of industry, which employs a great many hands,

and keeps the grim wolf of poverty from the door of many an industrious household. Thence come the wooden boxes containing villages, gardens, sheepfolds, and Noah's arks; the grocer's, baker's, and butcher's shops, which form such delightful Christmas and birthday presents; the cube puzzles, with pictures on each face of the blocks of wood which fit so neatly into their box; the jointed dolls, now almost out of date; the substantial-looking

horses and carts; and, last of all, the mechanical toys which are wound up by clock-work, and perform such extraordinary manœuvres that one could almost fancy them alive. The tiny lamps, bright reflectors, and shining balls, which render our Christmas-trees so brilliant, are also imported from Germany, as well as the ornamental and useful articles made of horn, bone, and lacquered ware, which make such capital presents for those young folks who have outgrown the delights of dolls and wooden animals.

The Swiss peasants who in summer time find plenty of employment in tending their cows and goats, gathering the baskets of Alpine strawberries that are piled up in great dishes on every hotel table, and all sorts of services for the great army of tourists who come annually to make a peaceful invasion of their lovely land, are frequently snowed up in the châteaux and mountain villages for weeks together in the winter, and employ the long hours in cutting out bears from pieces of beech-wood, often with no other tool than a strong knife, making wooden nutcrackers, match-boxes, and the curious little cottages which slide in and out of well-fitting boxes, and are universally bought by travellers as mementoes of happy holidays among the mountains.

A great many dolls are made in Paris of a wonderfully flesh-like composition, and with bodies and limbs of much more elegant shape and proportions than can be found in the mimic young ladies and gentlemen manufactured in other countries. Some of these model little people can even say "papa" and "mamma," but dolls with such wonderful accomplishments as these are of course very expensive, and only fit to be brought out on festive occasions, and handed down as heirlooms from one generation of a family to another.

The walking doll, a young person under whose ample drapery is found a key-hole, by means of which her locomotive powers must be wound up,

is an American invention. She has a pair of metal feet, which advance one before the other in the most orthodox manner, and by means of these she will walk up and down a long table, if turned when she reaches the edge, for several minutes at a time, making a curious humming sound as she proceeds. She belongs to the aristocracy of toys which may be found in well-furnished stores for the delight of the American children whose parents have unlimited dollars to spend on their pleasures. But besides these favoured little ones, who clamour for fresh novelties every day, there are thousands of humbler children, with only a few cents in their pockets, who buy ingenious constructions of wood and paste-board from itinerant dealers, and get quite as much amusement out of them as if they were the costliest products imaginable. You may see a gaunt old Irishwoman, with a gay handkerchief tied over her head, squatted on the side walk of the Broadway in New York with a basket full of "Neddys," whose riders perform all sorts of acrobatic movements in full view of the passers-by, as she pulls the string and sets their loosely jointed members in motion.

In India and China a great many toys are made of bamboo with a good deal of tinsel and coloured paper about them. A Chinese toyman carries his stock-in-trade with him, in the shape of a cane stand sheltered with a piece of cloth, and surmounting a basket of considerable size. He has lanterns of all shapes and sizes, tambourines, rattles made by enclosing dried peas between two bamboo circles covered with parchment, uncouth-looking dolls and whips, and on the very top a pair or two of small peaked shoes. Balls, too, are in great plenty, and quite as popular among the young Celestials as anywhere else, and the catalogue of his goods would be incomplete without a mention of the kites which are sure to be found among them.



A TOY-SELLER IN THE BROADWAY, NEW YORK.