



## Putting Life into an Idol

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custom of displaying a broom over the door of a man whose wife is absent for what seems to the neighbours to be an unreasonable time. It is said to be "an advertisement for a housekeeper." A broom decorated with ribbons was found thus suspended over a door in Watchet, one morning in the spring of 1907.

"Thicky Twelfth Night is not the hraight day for wassailing of the arpul-drees. Her should be doned on *Old* Twelfth Night, not on Old Christmas Day," said an ancient sage of Stockland in January 1908.

C. W. WHISTLER.

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(Communicated by Mr. G. H. Skipwith.)

"I WAS overcome with hunger when visiting a remote Buddhist temple [in China] . . . But an artist who was regilding the belly of the Buddha of the Future . . . shared his meal with me. . . . I learnt from my friend and benefactor many curious facts as to idol-making. . . .

"A conscientiously made idol is not complete when the outward form and features are finished. Bags of white and red silk representing the human intestines have to be put into the hollow of the body, and also packets of precious and mysterious substances. Then a living animal, such as a centipede or a mouse, is introduced and immured, so as to give life to the image. The eyes are left blank until the divinity has been placed in the position which he is going to occupy in the temple. Then the pupils are painted in, and the process of god-making, or deification, is complete." ("Letters from the Far East, No. II.," by Sir Charles Eliot, K.C.M.G.: *Westminster Gazette*, Nov. 27, 1906.)

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