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Chinese Merry Tales

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY

Y. T. WOO, Mem. of Am. Inst. of M. E.

Author of "Practical Chemistry" and "Practical Photography."



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Preface.

THE object of translating the Chinese Merry Tales is to give the English-speaking public an insight to Chinese character, society, and humour. Of the last, the majority of Europeans think that the Chinese are lacking. I hope the Chinese students of the English language may derive some benefit from this book by comparing the translation with the original in Chinese.

The author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to Baron Guido Vitale, who collected and edited most of the tales in this book and brought them into Mandarin dialect.

Y. T. Woo.

TONG SHAN, January 15th, 1909.

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Chinese Merry Tales.

CHAPTER I.—Vine Bowers and Their Dangers.

(*Falling of a Vine Bower* 葡萄架.)

ONCE upon a time a District Magistrate was trying a case. His secretary was present in the Court. His face was marked with bruises, and the Magistrate asked him, "What is the matter with your face?" He replied: "While I was sitting under the grape vine bowers, cooling myself, a sudden gust of wind came and blew down the vine bower; hence I received these wounds." The Magistrate did not believe this and said: "It is evident that your wounds were caused by finger nails. You must have been fighting with your wife, who scratched your face. Am I not right?" The secretary's face turned red, and he said: "Your Honor's supposition is correct." The Magistrate said: "Your wife's temper is so violent and vehement, I will send for her and give her a good beating, in order to relieve your suppressed anger."

Just as he was saying this, the Magistrate saw his furious wife come up from the back of the Yamen, saying: "Whom do you wish to lick?" The Magistrate on seeing this, immediately addressed his underlings thus, "Let us adjourn the Court. You must all disperse at once. Your master's vine bower will also soon tumble down."

CHAPTER II.—A Self-Sacrificing Neighbor.

(*Borrowing An Ox* 借牛.)

A VILLAGER wrote a note to a wealthy man of the same village, asking for the loan of an ox. When the note arrived, the man of wealth had a friend dining with him. The

rich man, although he possessed a great deal of worldly goods, had no education and, unwilling to show his ignorance by requesting his friend to read for him, he took up the note and made a pretence of reading it. He said to the messenger: "This affair is very easy to manage; you may go home first, in a little while I will follow."

Note.—As the rich man's friend asked for the loan of an ox, the illiterate wealthy goes himself; he is therefore taken for an ox.

CHAPTER III.—The Easiest Way to Learn Chinese.

(Teaching a Son 訓子.)

THESE was a wealthy old man who could not read or write. His friends advised him to engage a teacher to instruct his son. This student, when he had learned one character, made a stroke with his pen; two characters, he made two strokes; and three characters, three strokes. Then he laid down his pen and told his father that he already knows all the characters and what is the use of engaging a teacher. When his father heard of this, he felt quite happy, and at once dismissed the teacher. On that day his father determined to invite a friend named Man (萬 means ten thousand) to dinner. He told his son early in the morning to write out an invitation. Up to midday his son did not finish writing it. His father went to his study and asked why these few words has given him so much trouble. His son, with his mouth tightly closed, replied to his father, "Why do you not invite some one else instead of inviting a friend whose name is Man. Since early morning I have been writing till now, and I have made only 500 strokes. Do you think it is so easy to complete the ten thousand strokes?"

CHAPTER IV.—How Useful the Biggest Volumes May Be.

(Simple Books 低書.)

THERE was a scholar who studied in a monastery. On the first day after rising, he went out for a little recreation. After midday he returned to his quarters and immediately called his servant to bring his books to him. The servant brought him a volume of literature of the Liang Dynasty. The scholar said: "It is too simple for me." The servant again brought a book of the Han Dynasty. The scholar again said: "Too simple." Again a book of history was brought. He again said: "Too simple."

As his room was next to that of a monk, the latter hearing what he said, was surprised, and came over to question the scholar saying: "These three books, if a person could commit one of them to memory, he may consider himself learned. Why do you say that it is simple. What is your reason for saying that?" He replied: "I wish to take a nap and intended to pile up the books to form a pillow."

CHAPTER V.—Where do you go? (何往.)

THERE was a man, naturally sluggish of understanding and illiterate, met a well-bred friend on the way, who said: "Where do you go?" (何往.) This idiot, when he heard this question, could not understand it at all, nor answer the question. He then kept the two words "Ho Wan" in his mind. He asked other people what these words meant. As every one knew that he was an idiot, they wished to make a fool of him, and told him these two words form an insolent term. When he heard of this, he became very angry. The man who told him the above ran away as soon as they parted company. The next day he again met the friend, who again

asked him the same question: "Brother, where do you go?" The idiot angrily replied: "I am not Ho Wan; you still want Ho Wan."

CHAPTER VI.—Imperial Grief. (啟奏.)

A GENTLEMAN who had his hat torn to pieces by his wife, became very angry, and went to the palace to memorialize to the Throne. "Your minister's wife's temper is quite furious. Because I had a quarrel with her, she tore my silk hat to pieces. Pray, Your Majesty, have her punished." The Emperor immediately gave him a verbal reply: "My subject, you should hold your temper a little. You do not know that the Empress also has a little temper. Yesterday, because there was one word in which she disagreed with me, she tore my crown to pieces, and I did not dare to be angry. While yours, only a silk hat, of what value is it?"

CHAPTER VII.—The Grateful Debtor. (扛欠戶.)

THERE was a debtor whose creditor frequently asked him to pay his debts, but he would not pay what was due. The creditor became enraged and told his servants: "You go to the debtor's door and await there secretly. When he leaves his home, you seize and carry him to me. If he does not pay his debts, I will not let him go." When the servants received their master's order, they went every day and hid themselves near the entrance of the debtor's house. One day the debtor happened to go out, and the servants seized and carried him away. After travelling half a day, they were all exhausted, and proposed to find a place to rest themselves. The debtor said to the carriers: "Better run quick, do not stop; if you delay, another creditor may come and carry me away, then it would not be my fault."

CHAPTER VIII.—Tea or Bath. (留茶.)

WHEN a visitor calls, the host should of course prepare tea to entertain the guest. One day a visitor came. The host did not have any tea leaves. He told a young servant to borrow some from a neighbor. Having gone for half a day, he did not return. As the pot was boiling, water was added from time to time, until the pot was full of water. The tea was, after all, not ready. His wife called him aside and said: "The visitor is not likely to get any tea to-day; you had better ask him to stay and take a bath."

CHAPTER IX.—The Tamed Magistrate. (知縣怕婆)

THERE was a district magistrate who was in terror of his wife. One day he was sitting at court, when he heard quarrelling in one of the writer's quarters; he told a servant to see what was the matter. The servant returned and said: "It is in the house of a writer in the barracks. A secretary and his wife are fighting." When the magistrate heard of this, he grit his teeth with rage, and said: "If it is, I- I- I-" Who knows but the magistrate's wife heard this. She came out, shouting very loud: "If it is you, what will you do?"

The magistrate laughingly said: "It is I," and immediately knelt down to his wife, saying: "If I were in his place, how dare I beat her."

CHAPTER X.—Scepticism and Cruelty of Cats. (猫逐鼠.)

THERE was a cat who was very clever at catching rats. One day the cat chased a rat into a vase. The cat was reluctant to leave and stayed by the side of the vase, patiently waiting for the rat to come out. The rat was in terrible fear,

and did not venture to show his head. The cat happened to sneeze. The rat in the vase said something about good wishes—such words as “Happiness and prosperity.” The cat said: “No matter how you compliment me, I am determined to eat you.”

CHAPTER XI.—Easy Removing. (求人搬家)

THERE was a man who was very fond of tranquillity. His place of abode was between a blacksmith's shop and a coppersmith's shop. Every day when these two men were working, the noise they made caused him a great deal of annoyance. Then he went up to them and said: “If you have any intention of moving your shops, let me know in advance, so that I may prepare a feast and invite you both.” One day both smiths came over and said: “We both wish to move, so we are giving you due notice. Did you not promise to invite us to a feast? We came here purposely to remind you of your obligation.” When the man heard these words, he was very happy. Without delay he ordered a feast to be prepared to which to invite the two smiths. After they had feasted, he asked them: “Where do you wish to move?” The two men at once replied: “He wishes to move into my house, and I wish to move into his house.”

CHAPTER XII.—The Man Who Had More Right. (有理)

THERE was a mandarin who was exceedingly greedy. Whenever there is a trial, he sends for the plaintiff and defendant a few days ahead to talk with them. One day there were two parties who had a law suit. The accuser first sent in a present of fifty taels of silver. When the

accused heard of this, he doubled the amount and presented 100 taels of silver. When the date of trial arrived, the magistrate did not ask which was right or wrong, but ordered the plaintiff to be beaten. The plaintiff made a sign with his fingers, the sign of five, and said: "I have more right." The magistrate said: "You slave, why do you say you have more right?"

He made signs with his fingers, turning the palm of his hand up and down, representing the amount 100. Permitting the plaintiff to see this, the magistrate said: "The defendant has more right."

CHAPTER XIII.—"I Burnt Him Yesterday."

(*Enquiring after his Father* 問令尊.)

THERE was a man who was about to leave home. He directed his son thus: "When I am away, if anyone enquire after your respected elder (father) you may reply thus: "My father has gone out; please come in and have some tea." As the son was rather stupid, the father, fearing he might forget, wrote down these few sentences on a piece of paper and handed it to his son. His son put the paper in his sleeve. When he has occasion to use it, he would secretly take out the paper and have a peep at it. For three days no one came to enquire after his father. The son said: "The writing is no earthly use." That night he burnt the paper before the lamp. When the fourth day came, a visitor happened to call and asked: "Where is your respected elder?" The son searched his sleeve for half a day and could not find the paper. He told the visitor: "It is lost." (Mu liao also means dead). When the visitor heard these words, he was much surprised and replied: "When did he die?" "I burned him (it) last night," the son replied.

CHAPTER XIV.—Asking the Road. (問路.)

THERE was a near-sighted man who lost his way. He saw a stone post on the side of the road with a black crow perched on the top of it. When he saw these he thought it was a man standing there. Thrice he asked his way of this (supposed) man. Suddenly the crow flew away. The near-sighted man became angry. He then said to the stone post: "I questioned you for half a day and you have not answered me. Your hat has just been blown away by the wind, and I will not inform you of that."

CHAPTER XV.—The Happiness of Blind Men. (被打.)

THERE were two blind men walking together and conversing. "Among the people of the whole world we blind people are the best. Those who have eyes are always busy, especially the farmers. Who has so much leisure and such an easy time as we have." When the farmers heard of their boast, they were exceedingly enraged. They secretly called together a few men, and impersonating the magistrate en route, shouted out to the two blind men: "Do you not know manners? Why do you not keep out of the road?" They immediately used their pick handles and gave them a beating. After the beating they ordered them to be gone. Then the blind men got up and went their way. One of the farmers followed the blind men and quietly listened to what the two had to say. One of the blind men said to the other: "After all we blind men are the best people. If it was a man not blind who obstructed the underlings of the magistrate, he would not only receive a beating but might be further punished."

CHAPTER XVI.—The Thirsty Dog. (犬症.)

THESE was a deaf man who went to see a friend. When he reached the residence, he knocked at the door. The dog barked continuously outside for a long time. It happened to rain. His friend opened the door fronting the street and shouted toward the house. He said to his friend: "Your respected dog must be affected with thirst. He must be very thirsty. If you do not believe it, you just look. His mouth is wide open, waiting to catch rain water."

CHAPTER XVII.—The Hen-pecked Husbands' Club. (正夫綱.)

THESE are many men who are afraid of their wives. Most of them are ill-treated by their wives at their homes. One day they happened to meet together. Everyone had an opinion. They found a temple. They said: "We ten people will burn incense to-day before the Fuh-yeh (Joss) and declare ourselves to be sworn brothers." They determined to have a day of merry feasting. Everyone returned to his home and again suffered ill-treatment. After having made all arrangements, they bought wine and meat. Just when they were enjoying the feast at its height, unthought of the ten wives, though not by appointment, found their way to the temple. Nine of the brothers all tried to find a place of concealment, from whence they could peep. Only one man was left sitting there, who made no movement, and allowed all the women to create a tumult, but did not interfere with them. The women harangued for a half day, then dispersed. Several of the men said: "We are not so courageous as he is; let us appoint him as our chief." They ventured to have a look at him, then said: "Behold, our chief has been frightened to death and has become a saint while sitting there."

CHAPTER XVIII.—Disputing about Etiquette. (爭坐位.)

ONE day a blindman, a dwarf, and a humpback, three of them, while they were about to sit down to a feast, clamoured for a seat of honour. They said: "We will agree to this: the one who could tell the biggest lie, will be allowed to occupy the highest seat. Is that not a good plan?" The blindman said: "I will have the first say; the pupil of my eyes has no reflection (人 man)." (Also means, there is no one equal to himself.) The dwarf said: "I cannot be compared with an ordinary man, therefore you two have to make room for me." The humpback said: "You two need not dispute; you both are straight backed (Chi bai 姪輩 also means nephew, a lower generation); naturally I should have the seat of honor."

CHAPTER XIX.—Unlucky Words for a Student. (及第.)

A BACHELOR of arts went to Peking to attend an examination. His servant shouldered his baggage, and followed behind. When they reached a lonely spot, a sudden gust of strong wind blew to the ground the hat lying on top of the baggage. The servant shouted out: "The hat has fallen to the ground." His master hearing these words, was not at all pleased, and regarded them as unlucky words. He immediately instructed his servant thus: "Hereafter do not say 'fallen to the ground'; always say Chi Dee (及第)." (Means obtaining one of the degrees.) The servant said: "Sir, I will obey your orders." He then took the hat and tied it very tightly on the baggage, and said to his master: "We will now go. Now if you should ascend to heaven, your hat will not again fall to the ground" (不能及第.) (Literally translated means "you will not obtain the degree".)

CHAPTER XX.—The Grievs of a Literary Husband.

(腹內無文.)

ANOTHER bachelor of arts, on account of the day of examination drawing near, was day and night afflicted with grief and felt down-hearted. His wife seeing him in such a bad plight, laughingly said to him: "When I see you writing literary essays, why is it so difficult? I suppose it is as hard as we women giving birth to a child." The bachelor of arts then replied: "It is still easier for you women to bear a child." His wife said: "Why do you think so?" B. A. replied: "Your abdomen contains an already formed child; my literary knowledge is not in my abdomen; why is it not then more difficult for me (to write an essay)?"

CHAPTER XXI.—Explaining the Classics. (中酒.)

THERE was a teacher who taught in a school. One day the scholars questioned the teacher: "What is meant by the principles of the Great Learning (大學之道)?" As the teacher could not explain, he immediately pretended to be drunk. "You always ask me questions when I have had too much to drink. How can I explain clearly when I am in that condition?" He dismissed the students and went home. He then repeated to his wife the scholars' questions. His wife replied: "Great Learning is the name of a book. Tze Tao (之道) are the principles or discussions given in the book. What is the difficulty in that?" The next day, when the teacher returned to the school, he said to the scholars: "You all are ignorant. Yesterday when I was drunk, you persisted in questioning me. To-day I have come to my senses again, and you do not question me. What is the reason? What you asked about 'Ta Hsio Tze Tao'

yesterday you listen and I will explain to you. 'Ta Hsio' is the name of a book. 'Tze Tao' are the principles or discussions in the book. Do you all understand it clearly?" The students said: "We all understand." They put another question, the next sentence: "Tsai Min Min Teh (在明明德). What does it mean?" When the teacher heard this, his eyes looked askance, and he said: "Stop, don't be in a hurry; the wine has gone up to my head again."

CHAPTER XXII.—The Dog is a Teacher. (狗坐館).

THERE was a man who was an adept in telling lies. One day he said to his relative: "We have an ox 30 feet long in our home; it can go 1,000 *li* a day. There is also a cock that can announce the watch of the night. Whatever the watch of the night, he is able to crow the number of the watch. There is still a dog who can read and write." His relative was quite anxious to see these, and said: "There is such valuable livestock in your home; some day I must go to your home to satisfy my curiosity." The owner of the animals went home and said to his wife: "What shall I do? Without intention I have told a lie. Our relative will be here to-morrow. Tell me how you would answer him." His wife said: "Never mind, to-morrow you go your way; surely I will know how to answer him." The next day the relative actually came and asked: "Is our cousin at home?" His wife replied: "Your relative has ridden to Yunnan on the ox early this morning. He will return in a few days." The visitor again asked: "There is in your residence a cock that can announce the watch of the night; where is it?" It was just midday when this question was asked, and the cock crowed. The mistress pointed to the cock and said: "There it is; it not only can

announce the time, but if a stranger comes, it will also announce his arrival." The relative again said: "The reading dog; fetch him that I may see him." The wife replied: "I do not wish to fool you. As we are poor, I have ordered him to teach in a school."

CHAPTER XXIII.—"Where have I gone?" (我何往.)

THERE was a jail official who escorted a monk to the capital for trial, charged with a weighty criminal offence. On the way the prison official became dead-drunk and senseless. The monk stealthily broke his shackles and put them around his keeper's neck and shaved his head till not a hair was left. Then he ran away. The next morning, when the officer awoke from his revelry, the monk was missing. He touched his smooth shaven head and felt the chain around his own neck. He felt very depressed and said: "Ah, although here is a monk, as to myself, where have I gone to?"

CHAPTER XXIV.—Military Examinations. (武弁夜巡.)

THERE was a military officer on duty at night who arrested a prisoner prowling about in the dark. The thief called himself a student, and said: "I was in a friend's house doing some literary work. It was far in the night when we parted; hence we were late in coming home." The officer said: "Since you are scholar, allow me to examine you." The scholar replied: "All right, will you kindly issue a subject that I may show my ignorance." The military officer cogitated for a long time, and could not think of anything, so he said: "Begone; it is your good luck to-day that I have no subject to give."

CHAPTER XXV.—The Golden Ox. (金牛.)

THESE was a magistrate whose birthday was celebrated on a certain day. All the writers, runners, etc., of the yamên made enquiries of their master's previous life as to what animal he was transformed from. They discovered that their master was transformed from a rat. A few days before the birthday they all raised a subscription and ordered a statuette of a rat made of pure gold, and used it as a birthday present. The magistrate was very joyful when he saw it, and said: "All your thoughts have been most artful and skillful, but do you know the mistress' birthday? Well, the date is not distant. There are only a few days left." The writers and others said they were not aware. "Will our master inform us in what year was our mistress born and from what animal was she transformed from her former life?" The master replied: "The mistress is one year younger than myself, so she must have been transformed from an ox."

CHAPTER XXVI.—Gratefulness of a Target God.

(塚子神助陣.)

THESE was a military officer in charge of some soldiers. One day he was in a battle and fought in the front ranks. Just at the moment of defeat some one unexpectedly came to his assistance and converted his defeat into victory. The officer kowtowed and thanked him. He asked: "What superior god are you that has come to save us?" The god replied: "I am the target god, come specially to save you." The officer said: "What good act has your servant done to you to deserve saving?" The target god immediately replied: "I appreciate your former skill in regard to your use of the bow and arrow. You have never injured me with a single arrow."

CHAPTER XXVII.—Harmless Vengeance. (老父.)

THERE was a merchant who, on account of his son having become a mandarin, also received a title, and one day he called on the local magistrate. Owing to the old age of the merchant, the magistrate addressed him as Loh Sen (老先) leaving out the word Sun (生) (the equivalent of Sen Sun in English is Mister). When the merchant heard this, he was very angry, and immediately went home. On his return, his son asked him the reason of his coming home in such a rage. He replied that the magistrate has been most insolent to him. "He should have called me Loh Sen Sun (老先生) and purposely left out the last word and called me Loh Sen. It shows plainly that he intends to insult me. I will ask him to call and shall take my revenge." His son asked him: "How will you address him?" His father replied: "I ought to address him as father and mother, but I will also leave out the last character and call him Loh Fu (老父)."

CHAPTER XXVIII.—His Wife's True Age. (瞞歲數.)

THERE was a man who married a woman of advanced age. On seeing her for the first time, he noticed her face was much wrinkled. He asked her: "What is your age?" She replied: "I am young yet, only 45." He again asked her: "Why does your horoscope state that you are 35? My opinion is that you are more than 45; you tell me the truth." She replied: "I am really 54." The husband still did not believe what she said, and questioned her many times, but could not get any reply. When night came, the husband thought of a good plan. He told his wife: "You go to sleep first, I have to look into my salt jar (缸). The rats stole a great deal of it yesterday." When his wife heard of

this, she could not help laughing heartily and said: "Your old lady has lived 68 years and has never heard that rats would steal salt to eat."

CHAPTER XXIX.—Hiding the Spade. (藏鋤.)

THERE was a farmer who worked in the field. His wife called him to return home to take his meal. He cried out: "Let me hide the spade before going." When he reached home, she said to him: "Hiding a spade should be kept secret; why do you shout thus? Would not others hear it and steal the spade? You had better go back quick and see." He returned to the spot, had a look, and lo the spade was gone. He hastened home, and at once went to his wife's side and whispered to her: "The spade has been stolen by some one."

CHAPTER XXX.—Your Head is Too Soft. (頭嫩.)

ONE day there was a barber shaving a young man's head. At the first stroke of the razor, it caused a wound. Before he finished shaving, he had made several cuts. The barber stopped shaving, resigned his work and said: "I will not shave you any more." The customer replied: "What is your reason?" The barber answered: "The skin of your head is too soft, and it is too difficult to shave; you wait till you are a little older. When you are more advanced in age, the skin of your head will become tough, then I will shave you again."

CHAPTER XXXI.—The Portrait Painter. (寫真.)

THERE was a painter who, being at leisure at his home, waited patiently for customers. On account of no one coming to his house on business, his friends suggested an idea

to him and said: "Paint the likenesses of yourself and wife and hang them outside of the front door; then people will give you orders." The painter did as they advised. His father-in-law happened to call on them on that day. He questioned his son-in-law thus: "What girl's portrait have you at the door?" The son-in-law answered: "It is your daughter's. Do you not recognize her?" The father-in-law said: "If it is my daughter, why does she sit face to face with a strange young man? What has the world come to?"

CHAPTER XXXII.—The Hardships of a Tailor. (不下剪)

THERE was a tailor who was cutting clothing for some one, and wished to save a few feet of cloth. He took the piece of cloth and turned it over and over. He lowered his brows, his eyes blinked, and he was much puzzled. Those undecided moments were long before he would start cutting. The apprentice, standing at his side, grew impatient, and asked the tailor: "Master, what is there so difficult to solve?" The tailor replied: "When I have got my share, there is nothing for him. If there is sufficient for him, then there is none left for me."

CHAPTER XXXIII.—Reckoning the Age. (較歲數)

THERE was a man named Chang, who had a daughter just one year old. Another man named Lee had a son two years old. The latter requested a friend to speak to Chang to ask him to give his daughter to his son as a wife. When Chang heard of this, he grew wrathful and said: "Does he intend to insult me? Our daughter is just a year old and his son is two years old; if our daughter become 10 years old, then his son will be 20 years old. How can I give away my daughter to such an old son-in-law?" His wife then said to her husband: "You

have calculated wrong; although our daughter is one year old, the next year she will be at the same age as his son. Why not give her away?"

CHAPTER XXXIV.—The Rope and The Ox. (盜牛.)

THERE was a man punished with the cangue. When a friend met him, he asked: "What is your crime and why have you come to such a state?" The other replied: "It happened that I was walking in the street and saw a piece of rope on the ground; I thought it was useless, and picked it up and went on my way with it; this was the cause of all the trouble." His friend said: "If for only picking up a piece of grass rope, why should you receive such severe punishment." The man with the cangue replied: "You do not know all; that piece of rope had something attached to it." The other asked: "What was that something?" He answered: "There was a very small farm ox."

CHAPTER XXXV.—Sorry Remembrance. (看盃.)

THERE was a man who was very fond of the cup. One day he went to a friend's house to dinner. The wine cups on the table appeared to him too small. He purposely pretended to be in grief. When his friend saw him, he was much frightened and asked what was the matter with him. He replied: "The present cause is in seeing an article in the room, it brings back sorry remembrances. To think of my father on the day he died; he had no sickness, but he was invited to dine at a friend's house; the cups used at that dinner were exactly the same as these used here to-day. My late father swallowed the wine and the cup also went down his throat, which caused his death. Today I see in your house the same cups; why should I not cry?"

CHAPTER XXXVI.—About Bridges in Soochow and Turnips
in Shantung. (兩羨慕.)

THERE was a Shantung man who heard about the height and length of Soochow bridges. He did not mind the distance, and made up his mind to take a trip there to see them. When he got half way, he happened to meet a Soochow man. That Soochow man had heard that Shantung turnips are exceptionally large, and wished to go to Shantung to see the turnips. Consequently the two met, each having a hobby. The Soochow man said first: "Brother, you need not go; as the distance is so great and the roads so dusty, it would be well if I give you a description of the bridges. On the 3rd day of the 6th Moon, a year ago, a man fell down from the bridge. Until the 3rd day of the 6th Moon this year, that man has not reached the surface of the water yet. Just think whether that bridge is high or not." The Shantung man said: "Thank you for your information; did you not say that you wish to see the turnips of our country. I advise you also not to go. If you wait till next year about this time, the turnip will naturally grow and reach your Soochow city."

CHAPTER XXXVII.—Ingenious Talking. (活動話.)

A FATHER taught his son thus in speaking, that when anyone speaks he should use evasive language and not speak hard truths. His son asked the father what is meant by ingenious talking. His father taught him thus: "Let me tell you. If a neighbor asks to borrow something, depending on what he asks for, never say that you have everything nor say you have some of the things. Say, 'there may be some at home and may not be any at home.' That is regarded as ingenious talking. Remember and do not forget that."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—Kick Please. (願脚踢)

A WOODGATHERER, while going his way, accidentally struck a doctor with his carrying pole, who at once used his fists, preparing to strike him. The woodgatherer knelt down on his knees and begged the doctor: "Do not by any means use your hands, but kick me a few times if you please." The sightseers standing by were quite surprised and said: "What is the reason of this?" The woodgatherer replied: "None of you know that he is a doctor; if he use his feet to kick me a few times, I may not die, but if he use his hands, then surely I will not survive."

CHAPTER XXXIX.—Jealousy in Dreams. (吃夢中醋)

THERE was a man who was in terror of his wife. One night, while in his dreams, he laughed heartily. His wife woke him up and asked him: "Of what happy affair have you been dreaming, being so joyous?" The husband, not daring tell a falsehood, said: "In my dreams I married a pretty concubine; that is why I am so very glad." When his wife heard this, she grew wrathful beyond measure and ordered him to kneel down beside the bed. She looked for a stick and wanted to punish him. The husband said: "Dreams of that kind are always considered delusions and unconscious thoughts. How can you regard them as realities?" His wife replied: "You are allowed to dream of anything but things of that kind; after this you are not permitted to dream." The husband said: "Hereafter I will not dream such dreams." His wife replied: "I do not believe what you say. When you dream in your sleep, it is known only to yourself, but how could I know it?" The husband said: "Commencing from to-day, there are 360 days in a year; every night I will be awake until daylight and will not again go to sleep; that is all."

CHAPTER XL.—The Shamed Thief. (羞見賊)

ONCE there was a thief who went to steal in a poor man's home. He went into the house and saw the owner of the house's face looking toward him while asleep. When he saw the thief, he suddenly turned his body and face toward the wall (inside). The thief became suspicious and said: "He might be an acquaintance of mine; when he sees me, he fears that I would be ashamed." He wanted to run away; at the same time the owner of the house called aloud to him: "Come, come, do not be afraid, do not be afraid; since my family is in poverty, I have nothing to present to you; therefore I have no 'face' to see you (meaning I am ashamed to see you)."

CHAPTER XLI.—The Deaf and Dumb. (聾聵啞)

THERE were a deaf and a dumb, two persons. Each attempted to hide his own defects. One day the deaf met the dumb. The former requested the latter to sing a song. The dumb, knowing well the other was deaf, moved his lips by opening and shutting them. Also clapped his hands and imitated singing. The deaf cocked his ears, pretended to be listening, and seeing the dumb man's lips moving constantly, he shouted aloud: "Excellent, excellent. I never heard you sing before, but to-day, after having heard your song, I think your singing has greatly improved."

CHAPTER XLII.—The Way of Paying Half Price. (取金)

AT one time a magistrate issued an order that two pieces of pure gold were required. When the shopkeeper saw the order, he hastened to deliver the gold, and at once

demanded its value. The magistrate asked its price. The shopkeeper replied: "The ordinary price should be so much; since it is for your honour's use, we charge only half its value." The magistrate, in presence of all standing on each side of him, said: "Since it is thus, return him one piece; it will be all right." After the gold had been returned, the shopkeeper still waited for payment. The magistrate said: "We have paid your price; what more do you want?" The shopkeeper replied: "Will your honor pay a little more." When the magistrate heard this, he grew wrathful and said: "You impudent slave; you said you would sell at half price, so I returned you one piece, which is worth exactly one-half of your price. I am not mean toward you; why are you so stupid?" He ordered his underlings to lead him away at once.

CHAPTER XLIII.—Take a Chair. (坐椅子.)

THERE was a family who had so many creditors that all chairs and benches in their house were occupied. One creditor sat on the doorstep. The owner of the house stealthily went up to him and said: "Will you please come earlier to-morrow." The creditor thought that early the next morning the debtor would pay him first. He felt very happy and shouted aloud: "The owner of the house really has no money; let us depart." At dawn this creditor was first to arrive, and said: "Will my debtor kindly come out to pay his debts?" When the debtor saw him, he said: "I did not intend to pay my debts; only on account of seeing you sitting on the steps last night I felt very uneasy, so I requested you to come earlier this morning in order that you may be able to occupy a seat first, and when all the others have come, you will not be left again without a seat."

CHAPTER XLIV.—The Likeness of a Portrait. (鬚鬚像)

THERE was a portrait painter, after finishing a painting, said to his customer: "I will take this picture and go with you and ask everyone we meet on the way to see if my painting is a good likeness or not." The customer replied: "Very well, do as you say." Just as they were outside of their door, they happened to meet a man. The customer said: "Beg your pardon; may I trouble you to see if this is a good likeness of me?" The man looked at the customer for a long while, then said: "That hat is well painted." Afterwards they met another man; the customer again requested him to give his opinion of the likeness. The man replied: "The clothing is well drawn." When they met a third man, the painter did not wait for the customer to enquire, but he spoke first: "The hat and the clothes have been criticized, so you need not trouble yourself to repeat," and asked him if the face was a good likeness or not. That man, after having viewed the painting and pondering over it for a long while said: "The whiskers are very well painted."

CHAPTER XLV.—The Charm Against Mosquitoes. (驅蚊)

THERE was a Taoist priest who boasted that he could draw a charm against mosquitoes, so that they are sure not to bite anyone. One man begged of him several times and said: "There are a great many mosquitoes in my home. They bite me so that I cannot keep my eyes shut; will you give me one of your charms, so I may get some sleep? Then I will be very grateful to you." The Taoist priest drew a charm, told him to take it home and paste it up. He assured him that it would be effective. That night the mosquitoes were more than usual; he could not sleep a bit. The man searched for the priest and demanded an explanation from

him. The priest said: "I do not believe what you say; it depends where you pasted it." The other replied: "I stuck it on the wall." The priest answered: "That is where you cannot blame me. You did not paste it in the right place." The man said: "What do you call the right place?" The priest said: "Your should drive out all the mosquitoes, let down your mosquito netting, paste my charm inside of the netting, then there will be no mosquitoes."

CHAPTER XLVI.—One Pair of Shoes for Two. (夥穿靴.)

THERE were two brothers who had both reserved a sum of money to purchase one pair of boots. The elder brother wore them in the day time and went out every day, either visiting friends or attending dinners. The younger brother felt dissatisfied and disgusted, and thought of a plan to get equal with his brother. Every night he put on the boots and walked back and forth in the courtyard the whole night. After a few days the boots were worn out, so that they could not wear them again. The elder brother again approached the younger one to put money together and buy another pair of boots. The younger brother said: "You buy a pair alone. I will not wear them; then I will be able to get some sleep."

CHAPTER XLVII.—She is Thinking of the Boatman.

(想船家)

A SCHOOL MASTER, during the vacation, was at leisure at his home. One day his wife sneezed, then said: "It must be some one speaking about me behind my back." The teacher said: "I often sneeze in the school room." His wife said: "That is when I think of you." When the vacation was over, the teacher as usual went to the school and bid good bye to his wife. He went on board of the boat. Suddenly the

wind affected the nose of the boatman, who sneezed several times. The teacher stamped his feet and said: "It is bad. I have just left home and wife is thinking of the boatman."

CHAPTER XLVIII.—The Drum of Wonder. (謊鼓)

THERE was a man, who was fond of telling falsehoods, said: "In a temple in our village there is a big drum which takes several people to surround it. If it is struck once, the sound could be heard more than 100 *li* away." A bystander of intelligence said: "There is an ox in our native place whose head is in Kiangnan and tail in Kiangpei, several tens of thousands of catties in weight. Is not this a curious animal?" All present did not believe this; the man then said: "If there was not such a big ox as ours, how could there be such a big piece of hide to cover the big drum?"

CHAPTER XLIX.—Hypocrisy of Religious Persons and Cats. (心狠)

THERE was a mischievous boy who took a string of prayer beads and hung it onto the neck of a cat. When all the rats saw this, they congratulated the cat thus: "Mr. Cat you are wearing beads around your neck; it shows that you reverence Buddha and have become benevolent and kind. Surely you will not eat us any more." All the rats became very merry and came out to play all over the ground. When the cat saw them, he killed several of them at once. All the rats were frightened; then they hid themselves. They all regretted in their hearts and said: "We thought the old cat had changed from a life of wickedness to one of benevolence and had become kind-hearted; in reality he is only shamming reform." Another rat said: "You do not know that nowadays those who do good and pray are ten times worse in their ways."

CHAPTER L.—The Hasty Man. (作揖.)

THESE were two relatives, one of them hasty and the other slow in their tempers. One day they met on the road. The relative with slow temper bowed low to the ground to the relative with quick temper and said: "In the first moon we view the lanterns (逛燈) and feast on dumplings (元宵). During the fifth moon festival rice puddings are presented to me (粽子), and during the festival of the autumnal equinox moon cakes and fruits are presented to me. At various times I have accepted many good things, but I have not yet returned your compliments. Really I feel very sorry." After repeating all these words, he then straightened his back. Alas! the relative with hasty temper could not stand this boredom, and had already moved away. The man with the slow temper looked and found him gone; then he asked: "When did my relative go away?" The bystanders replied: "He left after you said that you viewed the lanterns. He has now been away half a day."

CHAPTER LI.—Riding a Tiger. (騎虎.)

A MAN who was walking among the mountains, met a tiger, and at once climbed a tree. The tiger was at the foot of the tree and wanted to climb up to attack him. He was in great terror and jumped down from the tree. Fortunately he fell just on the back of the tiger and, as he could not do otherwise, he rode on him. He held the tiger's waist with his legs and allowed the tiger to go at his will. Those who saw him did not know what was the matter and said one to another: "Look at that man riding on a tiger. When he is riding on top he looks like a genii. How easy he rides." When the man heard this he cried aloud: "You all seem to think that I look very grand and dignified; you don't know my thoughts within. I wish to dismount and I cannot. No one can tell how much I suffer."

CHAPTER LII.—Attraction of Music. (市中彈琴.)

A MUSICIAN was playing a harp in a crowded street. The natives of the place thought he must be playing a banjo or something of that sort. Many came to listen. After a while the music became low and unattractive. It grew unexcitable and monotonous. No one liked to listen to it; gradually they dispersed. At the end only one man was left. He was standing still. The musician said: "Very good, that is the man who understands music and has sympathy with me. I have not wasted my time playing half a day." The man said: "I do not understand music; the reason I did not move was on account of that table, which belongs to my family. I purposely waited for you to finish playing, so that I may carry it home. If it was not for that, I would have been gone long ago."

CHAPTER LIII.—Hardships of Travelling. (出外好.)

THERE was a traveller who engaged a boat to go to Hangchow. The boat people served him. He rose early that morning and gave out some rice to cook. The boatwoman stole a large bowl of washed wet rice behind the back of the traveller and hid it under the stove. Unexpectedly the traveller saw this, but he did not wish to speak out. He sat in the boat and kept repeating to himself: "There are 1,000 difficulties at home and many pleasant moments while travelling." When the boatwoman heard this she said: "Traveller, you are mistaken. I know it should be 'there is no place like home, and one meets with difficulties when travelling;' there are only these two sentences, why does the traveller say it in reverse?" The traveller at once replied: "Since you are aware that it is hard, please put that bowl of rice back into the pot, then there will be no more hardships."

CHAPTER LIV.—The Grievs of a Tiger. (虎訴苦)

THERE was a monk who held a prayer book under his arm and a pair of cymbals in his hand when he went to a village to worship. On his way he suddenly met a tiger running toward him. He was so frightened that he did not know what to do. He threw the cymbals straight at the tiger. The tiger caught them with his mouth and chewed them to pieces. He swallowed them, and again ran toward him. The monk was still more frightened. Hastily he threw the book of prayers at the tiger. Unexpectedly the tiger, seeing that it was a prayer book, quietly ran back to his cave. When the young tigers saw their mother, they said: "You have gone hunting for food; why have you returned so soon?" The old tigress replied: "I was much disappointed to-day; whom did I meet but a monk. I only ate two pieces of brittle cake, then he brought out his subscription book. Fortunately I ran quick. If I was one step behind, with what could I subscribe for him?"



CHAPTER LV.—Shensi Poetry. (陝西詩.)

THREE Shensi men one summer day
 Sat in a garden fair.
 Said one: "We've nothing else to do
 As we sit idly here.
 Why should not each compose a rhyme,
 And so we'll gaily pass the time?"

HERE is the pomegranate tree,
 And there the bamboo grove,
 And yonder are the cormorants
 Seeking the fish they love.

Be these our themes and I will try
 To turn the flowers to poetry,
 And afterwards you two shall chant
 The bamboo and the cormorant."

THE POMEGRANATE.

MID branches dark and leafy green
 Open the ruddy flowers.
 In our old garden too they're seen
 Bright'ning the sunny hours.
 Then for a space we do not see
 Their beauty rich and rare,
 But soon again upon the tree
 Burst forth the florets fair.

THE BAMBOO.

ON branches dark, mid leafy green
 No lovely flowers are seen,
 But daily when the dawn winds blow,
 The branches swaying to and fro,
 Sing low "Kalo, Kalo."

THE CORMORANTS.

HE stands upon the water's brim
 Catching the fish that rise,
 But who can catch a glimpse of him
 As from the snow he flies.
 Yonder's the old bird in his nest,
 We know him by his ruddy crest.

CHAPTER LVI.—How Books May Be Useful. (睡睡法.)

THERE was a nurse-maid in care of a child who was inclined to cry and would not go to sleep. The nurse instantly thought of a plan. She called out: "Master, master, bring me a book." "What do you want a book for?" asked the master. The nurse replied: "I often see the master; when not holding a book all is well, but whenever he holds a book to read instantly he goes to sleep."

CHAPTER LVII.—Sparing Half the Glass. (鋸酒盃.)

AGUEST was invited by a friend to dine at his house. It happened that the host was very stingy. Every time he poured wine into a cup, he filled it only half full. The guest then said to the host: "Have you a saw in the house? Lend me one to use for a little while." The host replied: "In the midst of a dinner, of what use have you for a saw?" The guest pointed to the wine cup and said: "Since the upper half of the cup does not hold wine, let me saw it off for you; what is the use of leaving that half empty?"

CHAPTER LVIII.—Very Good Fists. (拳頭好得很.)

THERE was a man from another province who had lived in Peking several years. Afterwards he went home. No matter what subject he spoke about, he always boasted that whatever came from Peking was the best. One night he was walking together with his father. A bystander said: "There is good moonlight to-night." When the one who loved boasting heard of this, he at once replied: "What is there good about to-night's moonlight; you do not know the kind of moonlight we get in Peking yet. There is where you get

good moonlight." When his father heard this, he was very angry and scolded him thus: "There is only one moon in the world; why is it only bright in Peking?" While he was saying this, he gave his son a blow with his fist. After his son had suffered punishment, he wept and shouted to his father: "What are your fists? You do not know the fists in Peking yet. When one hits, it is still harder."

CHAPTER LIX.—Difference of Taste. (蠢才)

THERE were two brothers who called together at a friend's house. The younger brother was very dull. When they arrived at their friend's home, and had taken their seats, the servants served tea. There were some dry peaches in the tea. The younger brother did not know what they were and quietly asked his brother about it. The elder brother answered: "Stupid one (蠢才 chune tsai)." (He did not know what it meant.) The elder merely said these two words because his younger brother was slow of understanding and fearing his friends would laugh at him. When the second cup of tea was made with almonds, he again asked his elder brother: "What is that?" His elder brother again said: "Stupid one." After a while, when both had left the house and arrived at home, the younger brother said: "A while ago, the first 'chune tsai,' though a little sour, had still some sweet taste to it, but the second 'chune tsai' was nauseous to the palate; there was not the least sweet taste to it."

CHAPTER LX.—The Taoist Priest on the Door.

(門上貼道人).

THERE was a man who, on account of the New Year, went out to purchase door joss portraits. By mistake he bought the Taoist priest's portrait and pasted it on the door.

When his wife saw this she said: "Door josses generally carry swords or axes, and they are drawn very fierce. When the devils see it, they are afraid. You use that benevolent looking likeness; of what use is pasting that up there?" Her husband replied: "You need not mention it. Nowadays people whose features appear benevolent and kind, their actions are generally wicked and contemptuous."

CHAPTER LXI.—Difference in Relation. (面貌一樣)

THERE was a man holding a child in his arms and standing at the door fronting the street. A bystander, who was fond of mischief, pointed at the child and said: "There is no doubt about the old saying that blood and bones of a father and son are from the same stock (a chip from the same block); just look at your son's features; they look exactly like me. There is no mistake about it." The man with the child in his arms replied at once: "You are right; you and this child are from the same mother, so you and he are brothers; why should your features not be the same?"

CHAPTER LXII.—The Humble Moon. (粗月)

THERE was a man who was always arguing with others, no matter on what subject. He always employed the word *tsu* (粗, meaning humble or rough) for humbling himself. One day he invited some friends to dinner at his house. The feast lasted till evening. Suddenly the moon rose, and the guests were very happy to see the bright moonlight and said: "We are to-day at your home; we did not expect to see such beautiful moonlight." When the host heard this he hastily folded his hands, bowed and said: "How dare I receive such high compliments; that is only the humble moon in our house."

CHAPTER LXIII.—The Ascetic Cat. (吃人不吐骨頭.)

A CAT was sitting at a place with eyes shut and purring. Two rats saw the cat, at a long distance, and said in a low voice: "Mr. Cat, you have to-day changed your character from fierceness to kind-heartedness. He is saying his prayers there. We may go out to play." As soon as they got out of the hole, the cat ran up and caught one of them. He ate the whole rat, even the bones. The other rat hastily ran back into the hole and told all the other rats: "I thought Mr. Cat with eyes shut, was saying prayer. He must have become benevolent. Who would suppose that what he did was most disgusting? He is really like the old saying: 'One who eats a man without throwing up the bones.'"

CHAPTER LXIV.—How Rare Are The Great Sages.

(連我纔得三人.)

THERE was a scholar conceited beyond measure. One day he said to the others: "A sage born to the world is a very rare occurrence. In the beginning 'Pan Ku' made heaven and earth, men and all animals. Who could be compared with him?" He bent one of his fingers and said: "I must place him first in the list. Afterwards came Confucius, who wrote the books of poetry and arranged the book of rites and music. He is most prominent among men. For generations he has been worshipped as a saint. Who does not respect him?" Then he bent his second finger and said: "Besides these two men, there is no one else that I could bend my fingers to count." After having said this, he thought for a while, nodded his head, and said: "Just so; do you not think it is difficult to be a saint?" He bent his third finger and said: "Counting myself there are only three."

CHAPTER LXV.—Riches of a Beggar. (少米少床.)

A BEGGAR once boasted before other people: "Although I am not regarded as a man of great wealth, there is nothing lacking in my house as to furniture and utensils." He counted with his fingers: "What is short are dragon cars and phoenix chariots. As to drinkables and eatables, I have every kind." He again bent one finger: "What is short is only dragon's heart and phoenix's liver." His little son, standing by his side, interrupted, saying: "Where is our bed for the night; we slept on the straw spread on the ground. To-night we have not even a grain of rice left; you still tell big lies before the people." The poor man, hearing these words, lifted his head and thought for a while and said: "That is so, that is so. I forgot. Surely, there is everything in my house; what is short is only dragon's heart, phoenix's liver, this evening's rice, dragon's car, phoenix's chariot, and bed for the night."

CHAPTER LXVI.—Prayers and Domestic Economy.

(燒螞蟻用鄰箕.)

A BENEVOLENT old lady, who held a string of praying beads, stayed all day at home and repeated aloud: "Omei-to-fuh, Omei-to-fuh." One day, after she had finished prayers, she at once called the two sons in the house and said: "You look at the hot cooking pan and see how many ants there are. It is really annoying; bring me a light and let me burn them to death." After saying this, she again repeated her prayers aloud. After twice repeating the prayers, she again called out: "Boys, boys, use a dust pan and take out all the ash under the cooking pan, but be sure not to use our own, lest it will be burnt; it will be all right if you use our neighbor Chang San's dust pan."

CHAPTER LXVII.—A Shoemaker in Hell. (要靴)

A JUDGE in hell, whose boots were worn out, came out to this human world and sought for a shoemaker and told him: "I give you two mace of silver as bargain money; will you make me a new pair of boots? When you have made them, I will pay you more money." After a few days the judge came to get his boots. The shoemaker said: "A few days ago you paid me the bargain money. I only bought leather for the top of the boots; there is no sole leather (底兒) yet. Will you come again in a few days to fetch them?" After a few days the judge again came for the boots. The shoemaker said: "I have not yet made the sole." The judge came several times for the boots, but the shoemaker always said: "The sole is not yet ready." One day the God of Hades sent a devil to fetch the shoemaker to hell. The God of Hades said to the shoemaker: "You always have been in the habit of cheating other people of money and would not deliver up goods to your customers; you are a base scoundrel. You should be put into a caldron of boiling oil in hell." The shoemaker saw the judge who wanted the boots standing by. The shoemaker sorrowfully begged him to think of some means of saving him. The judge answered: "No matter, that caldron has no bottom (無底)." (The character 底 in this chapter has two meanings—sole of a boot and bottom of a caldron or anything. It is a play on words of this character, having two meanings.) "If you are thrown in, you can run away from it." When the evil spirit threw the shoemaker into the oil caldron, he immediately felt the four sides of the caldron with his hands and called out loudly: "Your honor, the judge, there is a bottom to it, there is a bottom to it!" The judge replied: "Since you said there is a bottom, why do you not finish my boots."

CHAPTER LXVIII.—Difference in Punctuations.

(不打官司)

ONCE there was an On-whai man who was always engaged in law-suits, which he detested. At the end of the year, on the 30th of the 12th Moon, the father and two sons held a consultation together and said: "To-morrow is the first day of the New Year; each one of us should repeat some lucky sentence, hoping that the coming year will be accompanied with good luck and we will not be engaged in law-suits; is that not well?" The eldest son said: "Let father repeat the first sentence." The father said: "This is a good year" (今年好). The son followed saying: "I hope there will be fewer afflictions" (晦氣少). The second son said: "Not to engage in law-suits this year" (不得打官司). These form three sentences of eleven characters. They wrote them on a strip of paper, which was pasted in their guest room, so that people might repeat them to insure prosperity. Early in the morning his son-in-law happened to come to make a New Year call; he saw the strip of paper and divided the writing on the wall into two sentences, the first containing five characters and the second six characters, and read them thus: "There will be more afflictions this year, and law-suits are inevitable" (今年好晦氣, 少不得打官司).

CHAPTER LXIX.—How to Save a Father. (割股)

THERE was a man whose father was very ill. He called in a doctor to attend to his illness. The doctor said: "Although there is no means of curing his sickness, I will write a prescription and see how it will affect him. If you are filial and cut a piece of flesh from your leg to boil with the medicine, it may move the pity of heaven and earth; then the

medicine may prolong your father's life." The son said: "That is easy enough." After the doctor left he went out with a knife. It was then summer time. He saw a man at his own door, naked and asleep; he at once went over and forcibly cut a piece of flesh from the man's leg. The man woke up, greatly frightened and screaming with pain. The other man said: "Don't scream; don't scream; do you not know that to cut one's leg to save a father is the most noble deed in the world?"

CHAPTER LXX.—Bad Luck for a Doctor. (看上你了)

ONCE there was an unskillful doctor. After his marriage, a daughter was born to him. One day one of his patients died under his care. The relatives of the deceased would not stand this, so the doctor gave away his own son to replace the dead one. Again he happened to kill some one else's daughter by his medicine; he gave away his own daughter to the deceased's family. He had only a wife left at home. The couple were in grief. Just at they were in the moment of deep sorrow, some one knocked at the door to call the doctor, who went to the door himself and asked: "Who is it that requires medical treatment?" The man answered: "It is my wife." The doctor went into the house and said to his wife: "Bad luck on us; surely there must be some one who admires you."

CHAPTER LXXI.—The Charitable Deceiver. (看寫緣簿)

THERE was a soldier, wearing cotton clothing and cloth boots, who went into a temple to have a look around. When the monk saw his style of dress, he thought he must be a man of the common class; he did not receive him courteously.

The soldier then said to the monk: "If your income is short, let me have your subscription book so that I may give a donation." When the monk heard this, he was very happy. He immediately served tea and treated him with extra politeness. Hastily he brought a subscription book and opened it. The soldier wrote on the first line: "The Viceroy's yamên" (four characters). The monk thought he must be a high mandarin, who had come to do charity. He was agitated, and hastily knelt down. The soldier added below the words: "Viceroy's yamên" "A private of the left wing." When the monk saw the word private he became very angry; immediately he stood up and did not kneel. He again saw him write "34." The monk thought it must be 34 Taels; again he became happy, again he knelt down. The man added below the 34 the word "cash." The monk seeing that the soldier was subscribing so small a sum, again stood up and gave his body a turn; instantly his gladness turned into wrath. The soldier did not show his injured feelings and went his way.

CHAPTER LXXII.—Brotherly Cultivation of Fields.

(兄弟合種田)

AT one time two brothers together cultivated a field. When it was autumn, the younger brother wished to share the millet with the elder brother, who said: "We are brothers of the same blood; why should we divide our property thus; it is really disagreeable. It is better that I should collect the upper millet grains this year and you the lower straw. When next year comes I will receive the lower and you the upper portion. Each year we collect in turns. Is that not fair?" The younger brother said: "All right; let it be thus." When spring of the next year came, the younger said: "It is now time to plant the young rice." The elder brother replied: "You need not hurry. I hear people say that there

will be a great drought this year, so we will plant potatoes instead. Remembering what I said last year, I shall collect what is underground and you collect what is above ground. That is what I call fair and equal; each one receiving the product of each year. This rule will be adhered to without change hereafter."

CHAPTER LXXIII.—The Refrain of the Song. (茶飯不週全.)

THERE was a gay young man, who had spent all his money and property in debauchery, went from door to door singing and begging. Thus he passed his days. One day he passed the door of a girl whom he formerly knew. The girl was drinking, together with a guest, and he heard her singing in a low voice. These are the words: "On account of you, my rosy cheeks have lost color and become thin." He was just at the door when she sang these lines. He loudly joined the song, singing: "On account of you, my meals have become irregular."

CHAPTER LXXIV.—The Square Serpent. (方蛇.)

THERE was a man who, for the first time, saw a snake. He began to tell lies and spoke to another about this snake, which he described as 100 feet broad and 1,000 feet long. The other said: "Surely I cannot believe it." The liar again said: "If it is not 1,000 feet, it must be 500 feet." The other man replied: "Still I do not believe you." He again reduced his figures and said: "It may be 300 feet long and 200 feet broad." At last he reduced it to 100 feet. Then he saw that he had made a great mistake: "I said it wrong. According to my description, that snake would become a square one."

CHAPTER LXXV.—The Salt Eggs. (鹹蛋.)

THESE was a countryman who came to the capital. One day a friend invited him to dinner. One of the dishes was salt duck's eggs. When he was eating this he said: "It is curious how these eggs became salt." His friend then told him: "Do you not know that we in Peking have a special kind of salt ducks? hence they lay eggs that are already salt."

CHAPTER LXXVI.—Two Taels a Night. (扣除二兩一夜.)

THESE was an old man who was given to benevolence and charity. One day it was snowing heavily, and he saw a poor man standing under the eaves of his front door, sheltering himself from snow. The old man seeing that he was suffering from cold, had pity on him. He called him into the house. He gave him warm wine to produce sweat and made him stay over night. On the second day it was still snowing. He again kept him in the house. For three consecutive days he kept him. On the fourth day it was fine day, the man on his departure said to the old man: "Let me have the use of your knife for a little while." The old man handed the knife to him. He took the knife in his hand and said: "We two have never met each other, and to receive such kindness from you, I can only repay your kindness by killing myself." When the old man heard this he was much frightened. He hastily answered: "If it is like that, you are not repaying my kindness; instead you are ruining me." The man said: "Why is that ruining you?" The old man replied: "If a man dies this way in my house, even if there was no further trouble, at least what I have to spend in burial and burning paper money, will cost me 12 Taels. Besides there are other expenses." The other said: "Accepting your hospi-

tality, you need not count these trifling expenses ; instead you just give me 12 taels, being the cost of my burial and burning paper money to me ; then I will go." When the old man heard this, he became furious and created an uproar, and called for the neighbors to come together to discuss the matter. They decided to give one-half to show that there was no ill feeling between them, so 6 taels were given him. As soon as the man received the money, he wanted to get away. The old man uttered a soliloquy : " Who would think one would meet such an ungrateful man ? " The man said : " You should say that you are ungrateful yourself instead of calling me ungrateful." The old man replied : " Why do you say that I am ungrateful ? " The other answered : " If you call yourself grateful, you should not be so miserly. I stayed here three nights altogether ; you have deducted from me 2 taels a night ; do you call that grateful ? "

CHAPTER LXXVII.—The Way of Going to Hell. (女勾死鬼.)

THE God of Hell sent a death-snatching devil to this world to arrest some one. The death-snatching devil returned empty-handed. The God of Hell asked him : " Why do you not snatch a certain person for me ? " The devil replied : " Master, that man has at present two very beautiful girls attending him every day. They are more effective than I am. I know in a few days' time he will come himself ; what is the use of fetching him ? "

CHAPTER LXXVIII.—How to Pay Debts. (回債.)

THERE was a man who owed people money, and for a long time he had not paid his debts. One day he happened to meet a creditor on his way. The latter stopped him and

said: "When did you borrow my money? You should return it to me to-day." The debtor answered: "I know it is a little late. I tell you in comparison, if you understand it, then you will not ask me for it. If I paid that money before this, of course you would have spent it and not be likely to ask me for it again." The creditor replied: "What you said is only empty talk. If you returned the money, I could deposit it somewhere and get interest on it." The debtor said: "Do you say that my words are unreasonable? There is another way of looking at the matter. If I was away would you still come to me for debts?" The creditor replied: "If I waited for your return, I would be still more severe with you." The debtor answered: "I advise you to assume that I am absent and have not returned; then you have to wait a few days longer." The creditor replied: "You are now in my presence; why do you say that you have not returned?" The debtor said: "I have some more to say on this matter; you insist on my paying you, and if I have no money to pay, of course we'll come to blows, then you will not get the money; instead you may be sent to the yamèn and be punished. Your property will be wasted, you will be imprisoned and then afterwards be executed. Then it will be too late to repent. If I kill you, I will receive the same punishment. Could you come to life again and ask me for your money? If to-day you did not utter a single unfriendly word, this matter will pass away peaceably. Would that not be comforting? Why seek to quarrel and make things so disagreeable?" When the creditor heard this, he became furious, and said: "You can talk very well, but I still want the money." The debtor loudly said: "I have spoken a lot of good words and you would not listen; no matter how able you are in extorting, I will not pay my debts."

CHAPTER LXXIX.—The Theft of Wine. (偷酒.)

THERE was a school master who was very fond of wine. His servant having the habit of stealing wine, so that he dare not employ another. One day the teacher soliloquized to himself: "I must get one who does not drink wine, then he would not steal my wine. I must engage one who does not know what wine is. Then I would know that he does not really like wine, and then surely he would not steal mine." One day a friend recommended him a man. The teacher held up some yellow wine and asked him "what kind of wine is this?" The man replied: "That is Chun Shao (陳紹, old Shao Shing)." The teacher said: "He knows even the name of the wine; why should not he be fond of the cup?" He was immediately sent away. Afterwards another was recommended to him. The teacher again held up the yellow wine and asked him. That man answered: "That is real Hwa Diao (花雕, name of a wine)." The teacher said: "He even knows the quality of the wine and is able to give its special name; he cannot be one who does not drink." He at once dismissed him. After a while another man was recommended to him. As soon as the man entered the door, he took the yellow wine and asked him. He replied that he does not know wine. He took up the spirits and questioned him. He again answered: "I do not know what it is called." When the teacher heard this, he was very glad. He thought that this man is sure not to drink wine. He at once engaged him. One day the teacher wanted to go out to visit a friend, and left his servant to look after the house. He gave orders to him by saying that there was a ham on the wall and a fat chicken in the yard; you must look after these carefully. In the house there are two bottles: one containing white arsenic and the other red arsenic; be sure not to touch these. If you should drink these, your intestines and

liver will be torn to pieces and will cause immediate death. He repeated this thrice, then he went out. After the teacher had gone, the servant killed the chicken and boiled the ham. He drank the wines in their order. Suddenly he became drunk and laid on the ground. When the teacher returned and opened the door, he saw the servant lying on the ground and the chicken and ham both gone. He could not suppress his anger. He kicked him to conscienceness and questioned him minutely. The servant sobbing said: "After master left, your servant (addressing himself in the third person, which according to Chinese etiquette is the polite way of servants when speaking to their master) attentively kept watch. Unthought of, a cat came in and took the ham away. Suddenly a dog also walked in and chased the chicken until there was no trace of it. Your servant is really very sorry about it, and does not wish to live. I then thought of the words when you left, saying the red and the white arsenic, if drunk, would cause sudden death. Your servant first drank all the red arsenic and did not feel any effects. Afterwards I drank the whole bottle of white arsenic; even then I did not die. Now my head is in a swoon and brains are aching. I feel half dead. I lie here struggling between life and death."

CHAPTER LXXX.—The One Thousand Taels. (千金子.)

THERE was a man with one thousand taels in his possession. One day he met a poor man, to whom he boasted of his wealth. He braggingly said: "My wealth is worth a thousand taels; why do you not respect me?" The poor man replied: "If you possess a thousand taels, it is yours; what matter to me. Why should I pay respects to you?" The wealthy man said: "I will divide one half with you, then you should respect me." The poor man answered in a more expressive manner: "Since you have got a thousand taels, if you keep

500 and give me 500, then we both have equal amounts; why should I then respect you?" The wealthy man said: "Suppose I give you the whole amount, would you not admire me?" "When I have got your 1,000 taels, then you should respect me instead, and the more I should not compliment you."

CHAPTER LXXXI.—Conversational Misunderstandings.

(當屬問答)

THERE was a district magistrate who had obtained his rank by purchase. He did not speak the Mandarin dialect. After he had entered office, he called on his superior, who questioned him thus: "What are the prospects (風土 wind and earth means also prospects) of your district?" He replied: "There is no wind nor dust" (無大風, 更少塵土.) The superior again asked: "How are the spring crops?" (春花何如 spring flower.) He answered: "This year's cotton is worth 200 cash a catty." His superior again questioned him: "How is the grain crop?" (紳糧). He answered: "Your inferior wears a 3-ft. 5-in. long robe." (The two words 紳糧 have the same sound as length of a person 身量.) Again his superior asked him: "How are the people in your jurisdiction?" (百姓怎麼樣.) He replied: "Of white apricots (白杏) we have only two kinds, of red apricots we have collected a lot." (The words white apricots (白杏) and people (百姓) in Chinese have similar sounds, hence the misunderstanding occurs.) The superior said: "I enquired about the people" (黎庶 another word denoting people). He replied: "We have plenty of pear trees (梨樹); pear tree and (黎庶) people sound alike, but they produce very little fruit." The superior said: "I did not ask you about the pears and apricots, but what I asked you is about the citizens" (小民 also means 'name' 小名.) The magistrate hastily stood up and said: "Your inferior's Christian name is doggy" (叫狗兒).

CHAPTER LXXXII.—The Price of Boots. (問靴價.)

THERE was a man of slow temper who bought a pair of new boots. He met a man of quick temper, who asked him: "Old brother, what is the cost of your boots?" The slow tempered man lifted one of his feet and told him: "Two taels and four mace." When the hot-tempered man heard this, he at once took hold of his servant and gave him a beating and said: "You impudent slave, you bought these boots for me, why do you charge 4 taels for them? Just like you! One who is overbearing to his master and loves money. You are a most contemptible fellow." The slow-tempered man stood by his side and advised him thus: "If you have anything to say, say it slowly; why be in such a rage." After he said this, he again slowly lifted his other foot and said: "Old brother, this one also cost 2 taels 4 mace."

CHAPTER LXXXIII.—Sound Sleepers. (睡之又睡.)

THERE was a man named Chang, of Soochow, who was fond of a long nap. His friend Li has also the same habit. One day Chang made an appointment with Li to consult on some matter of importance. Li went to Chang's house early in the morning. Chang had not risen, so Li went to sleep on the sitting room couch. When Chang woke up, he went down to meet his guest and saw Li asleep. Chang slept again on the opposite side of the same couch. When Li woke up, seeing Chang still asleep, Li kept on sleeping. When Chang woke up and saw Li still asleep, he went to sleep again. When Li woke up, it was evening. Chang was still asleep, so Li went off quietly. When Chang awoke, he saw his friend had left, he hastily returned to his own room and went soundly to sleep again. These two men are always in the arms of Morpheus. When will they really awake?

CHAPTER LXXXIV.—Tall Monkeys. (問猴.)

THERE was a magistrate who called on his superior. After their conversation on business was completed, they chatted about ordinary matters. The superior enquired: "It is reported that monkeys are found in your district. How large are they?" He replied: "The largest is the size of a grown up person." (大人 Tai-jen has two meanings—a grown up person and a great man or a superior.) After he said this, he knew he had used the wrong words and felt frightened. He hastily stood up and said: "The smallest is about my (your inferior's) size."

CHAPTER LXXXV.—Rich and Poor. (十萬富.)

THERE was a man who had property worth 100,000 taels. One day he boasted to a poor man that he had 100,000 taels of property. Had he heard of that? The poor man replied: "I have also 100,000; there is nothing wonderful about that." The rich man said: "Where is your 100,000?" The poor man answered: "You always had that amount, but you would not use it. I wish to use it, but I have none to use. Is not that the same?"

CHAPTER LXXXVI.—The Boaster. (大嘮小嘮.)

IN the capital, Peking, those who are fond of telling exaggerated stories are called "Pon (嘮.)" In the eastern part of the city there was a "Great Pon" (大嘮 a boaster) and in the western part a Small Pon (小嘮). One day the Small Pon went to see the "Great Pon" and wanted

to give him some difficult work to do. He said: "Your nickname is Great Pon. If by your boasting you can scare away a tiger, I will then regard you as my teacher." The Great Pon replied: "There is nothing difficult in that; if you do not believe it, we'll go immediately in search of a tiger." While they were saying this, they both entered a mountain fastness to find the tiger's lair. The Small Pon said: "This is the place where the tigers and leopards wander about. You wait here for the tiger, while I go up the hill and see what tactics you will use." The Great Pon, who was leaning against a tree, sat down. Suddenly a tiger came roaring and running toward him. The Great Pon hurriedly pulled from behind him a willow twig and held it in his hand, then commenced boasting thus: "I have just eaten a leopard and then a tiger, but the tiger's meat was tough, and it stuck in my teeth." While he was talking, he took the willow twig and pretended to pick his teeth. When the tiger observed this, he at once ran away and met a monkey. The tiger said: "There is a very fierce man who ate a leopard and a tiger. He is at the willow there picking his teeth. How dare I attack him. I was afraid that he would eat me." The monkey replied: "You have no courage; let me go with you to see what kind of a man he is really like." The tiger said: "I would not trust myself; you must go with me. You must be tied to my back." The monkey consented to this. The tiger had the monkey tied up and the monkey rode on his back. They reached the presence of the "Great Pon." When the "Great Pon" saw them, he commenced rating them in a loud voice: "You falsehood-spreading monkey. Yesterday I caught you and would have eaten you, but you sorrowfully begged me and promised to bring me two tigers and two leopards for my breakfast. Who would have thought late as it is you've presented me with only a thin wild cat as a substitute." When the tiger heard these words he said: "It is all up with

me. I have been cheated by the monkey." He then at once ran away. Unthought of, as the tiger ran very fast, the monkey could not keep his seat and fell off. He was caught by the branches, hung up and cut into two parts. Only the monkey's head was left on the tiger's back. The tiger returned to his cave. For a half a day he was out of breath. He went back to look for the monkey's body, and saw the monkey's head tied up by a rope. The tiger was in great terror and said: "Fortunately I ran fast; even then the monkey's lower half was left behind."

CHAPTER LXXXVII.—The Voyage to Soochow. (蘇空頭.)

THERE was a Pekinese who was on a voyage to Soochow for the first time. People told him that the natives of that place were apt to swindle him. "If you wish to purchase anything, and if they demand two taels for anything, you should only offer one tael for it. If they are conversing with you, and they speak two sentences, you should only believe one-half of what they say."

The Pekinese, after he arrived at Soochow, tested the plan of purchasing goods. When he offered one-half price for some goods, he got them. Afterwards, when he met a native, he asked for his name. The other answered that his name was Luk (meaning six). The Pekinese replied: "So you must be No. 3." He again asked him: "How many rooms do you occupy?" The other replied: "Five rooms." The Pekinese said: "So it is two and a half rooms you have." Again he asked the man: "What people have you at home?" The man answered: "I have only a wife." The Pekinese then said: "I suppose you went halves with another person and married her."

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.—The Two Pairs of Boots. (恍惚.)

THESE was a man who wore the wrong pair of boots. When he walked, it appeared that one of his legs was shorter than the other. He looked very awkward and he himself felt there was something wrong. He said: "Why is one of my legs shorter than the other to-day; perhaps the cause is that the roads are not level." The others then told him: "You have worn the wrong pair of boots." He at once ordered his servant to go home and bring him another pair. After the servant was gone for a long time, he came back empty-handed and said: "Master, you need not change; the pair at home also has soles one thicker than the other."

CHAPTER LXXXIX.—The Mud Shoes. (泥鞋)

AH HSI, a native of Soochow, came to Shanghai to look for employment. A friend recommended him to a family to act as sedan carrier. One day he happened to pass a shoemaker's shop at the New North Gate. There were shoes with nailed soles exposed for sale. On the signboard was written: "Just arrived from Peking, water-proof cloth shoes with paper and hob-nail soles, 500 cash per pair." There were small characters on the side of the signboard stating that the shoes are most suitable for those who ride in sedan chairs.

Ah Hsi, seeing the shoes were strong and cheap, bought a pair. One night it rained; the streets were wet and slippery; he wore the new shoes and walked into a ditch full of water. The soles of his shoes came off. The spikes cut through to his feet, which were so sore that he could not stand up. He fell into the ditch, and some one assisted him to his feet. He wondered why the shoes did not last longer, as they appeared

to be durable. He could not find the soles. He at last found two piles of mud in the ditch; then he knew the soles were made of mud and covered only with a layer of paint, so that, as soon as they got wet, they at once dissolved. He was enraged, and called a few friends together and went back to the shop with the soleless shoes. He said to the shopkeeper: "You are selling mud sole shoes to cheat the unwary." The shoemaker replied: "Our rain shoes are made for people who ride in sedan chairs; it is plainly written on our sign board; who told you to wear them to carry chairs?" Ah Hsi became more enraged and wanted to use his fists. Neither party would give in. Finally the bystanders acted as peacemakers; the matter was settled by the shoemaker returning one-half of the price of the shoes.

CHAPTER XC.—The Mosquitoes. (大蚊)

THERE was man, after he had been abroad, returned to his home. He said to his wife: "I arrived at a place called Yen Tze Chi (燕子磯), where the mosquitoes are as large as chickens. Then I passed through Mu Shan Kai (巫山峽); there the mosquitoes are as large as ducks." His wife answered: "I do not believe you; can it be possible that there are such big mosquitoes?" "One night," said the husband, "when I was asleep under a mosquito curtain, there came a mosquito. He put his head through the curtain. I held him by the neck and did not let him go. That mosquito was outside of the netting. His wings were flapping all the night. It was very cooling." His wife said: "Since you had hold of him, why did you not bring him back with you and give him to me to eat?" "It was fortunate enough," said the husband, "that he did not eat me; and you still wish to eat him."

CHAPTER XCI.—The Brother Liars. (兄弟兩謊)

THERE were two brothers by adoption; both were fond of lying. One day the elder brother said to the younger one: "Yesterday I ate a very large cake (煮餛飩); there is no other larger. It contained 100 catties of flour, 80 catties of meat, and 20 catties of vegetables; all these were made into a cake. After it was cooked, it took eight square tables to hold it. It required more than 20 people going around continuously to eat it. After eating at it a whole day and night, it was not half eaten. When the feast was at its height, we lost two persons. We looked for them everywhere and could not find a trace of them. Suddenly we heard some one talking under the crust of the cake. We lifted the crust and saw the two men standing inside, eating away at the meat part of it. Do you not consider that cake large?" The younger one said: "Yesterday I also ate a very large meat dumpling (肉包子) (a steamed bread stuffed with meat) that you may say is a large one. Several tens of people ate of it for three days and three nights; even then they could not see the meat stuffing. They ate very heartily toward the centre, then a piece of stone was met, on which was written: 'The meat is still 30 *li* away.' Do you not consider this dumpling large?" The elder brother asked him: "What kind of a pot was used to steam your dumpling?" "The same as the one used for cooking your cake," said the younger one.

CHAPTER XCII.—Talking of The Sky. (譚天.)

THERE was a gathering of people to talk about the sky, that is, to debate about the degree of inclination of the sky and its distance. Each one had his own idea. Their

opinions widely differed, and they could not come to a decision. There was a wood gatherer among the crowd, who said: "I can explain it. As to the distance of the sky from the earth it is about 300 or 400 *li*. Going from below, walking slowly, it could be reached in four days. If one walks fast, it could be done in three days. In six or seven days, the return journey could be made with time to spare. Why do you all dispute about this and cannot come to a conclusion?" Those who heard what he said were surprised, and they asked him: "According to what you have said, what proof have you?" The wood-gatherer replied: "Do you not all know that on the 23rd of the 12th moon it is customary for every family to worship the God of the Kitchen and send him to heaven. On that day he goes up to heaven and on the 30th we receive him back. From the 23rd to 30th is but seven days. Calculating one-half of the way, it is only 300 or 400 *li* distant. It is not very far." When they heard his manner of calculation, they could not help laughing heartily. "What you have stated is quite correct, and you are an able debater," they said.

CHAPTER XCIII.—Dead by Mistake. (死錯了人)

THERE was a man, whose mother-in-law had died, who requested a school master to write a posthumous address. The teacher found an old book of miscellaneous literature and copied one page from it. It was a posthumous address to a grandfather-in-law that he gave him. When the man took it over and read it, he said: "It is wrong."

When the teacher heard that it was wrong, he became very angry, and said: "I tell you that posthumous address was copied from a book. There cannot be a single mistake in it, unless the wrong person has died."

CHAPTER XCIV.—Kill Me One Half. (打個半死.)

THESE was a very poor man who met a wealthy man, who said: "I will present you with Tls. 1,000 if you let me kill you outright." The poor man, after meditating for a while, answered: "You give me Tls. 500; then you may half kill me."

CHAPTER XCV.—How to Heal a Hunchback. (醫駝背.)

A DOCTOR boasted that he could cure hunchbacks, similar to those whose backs are like a bow, or a dried shrimp. He said: "If anyone asks me to make the cure, I could make them straight as a penholder." A hunchback happened to believe his words, and requested him to cure his deformity. The doctor brought two large pieces of boards; he put one on the ground and asked the hunchback to lie down on it. He placed the other board on top of the hunchback. He then got a big rope and tied the boards together at both ends as tight as possible. The hunchback felt the pain and loudly screamed out saying: "I do not wish to be cured; loosen me." The doctor did not mind what he said, but stood on the top of the boards, used his utmost strength, and stamped with his feet. Although the hunchback's spine was straightened, he had no breath left. The bystanders took hold of the doctor, and would not stand this method of treatment, and said: "Why have you killed him by your method of healing?" The doctor replied: "I only know how to straighten his spine, and do not care whether he lives or dies."

CHAPTER XCVI.—Economy in Danger. (溺水.)

THESE was a man who fell into the water. His son shouted out in a loud voice: "Come and rescue! If any one can save him, I will give him a handsome reward." His

father, in the water, stuck out his head and said, in a loud voice: "If it is three candareens of silver, come and save me; if more is wanted, tell him he need not come to save me."

CHAPTER XC.VII.—Only I and a Beggar. (剩個窮花子與我.)

THESE were two men—one named Chang and the other Li—while walking together one day, met a wealthy man travelling in a sedan chair, with many followers. Chang took hold of Li, and they hid themselves behind the front door of a house. The former said: "The gentleman in the sedan chair is my most intimate friend; if I do not hide myself, he will come out of his chair and perform the necessary ceremonies. We would have to trouble each other; that would not be convenient for either of us." Li answered: "You were right to keep yourself from his view." They were walking and conversing together, and after a while they met a cultured and well-dressed gentleman riding on horseback; his followers not a few. Chang again took Li aside and hid themselves behind a front door and said: "That man on horseback is a good friend of mine from our youth. If I do not hide myself, he will have to come down from his horse and chin-chin to me; that will be a bother." Li again replied: "You are right to hide yourself." They again started on. From a long distance they saw a beggar with ragged clothes and torn hat, crying and coming toward them. Li said: "Let us run quick." He took hold of Chang, and they hid themselves behind a front door. Li said: "You see that beggar; he is not only my near relative, but he is a good friend of mine. If I do not hide myself, and if he gets a sight of me, he will feel ashamed." Chang was surprised to hear this and said: "Why do you have this sort of intimate friend?" Li replied: "The rich and the honoured you have owned; there is only a beggar left for me. Let me make friends with him."

CHAPTER XCVIII.—The Great Wash Tub. (大澡盆.)

TWO strangers happened to meet each other. Each spoke of the curiosities of his own place. One of them said: "There is a wash tub in our place that can take in over 1,000 people to bathe in it." The other stranger replied: "That tub is not considered curious; there is a bamboo in our place; it is so long that it reaches the heavens. Even the heaven is not high enough for it, so it is bent back toward the earth; that is what you can consider curious." The first man then inquired: "Where is there such a long bamboo?" The other replied: "If there was not such a bamboo as mine, what is there to hoop your great wash tub with?"

CHAPTER XCIX.—The Arrow Wound. (剪箭桿.)

THERE was a soldier who had received an arrow wound. The pain was most excruciating. He called a celebrated surgeon to attend to him. When the doctor saw him, he said: "It is not a difficult operation; it is very easy to cure." He then took a large pair of scissors and cut away square the arrow handle that was protruding from the flesh. He at once demanded his fees and wanted to leave. The soldier said: "The arrow handle has been cut, but the arrow head is still in the flesh; why do you not pull it out before you go?" The surgeon shook his head and said: "It is not my business; my surgeon's work is finished. As to the arrow head in the flesh, it is the physician's work; why do you ask a surgeon to do it?"

CHAPTER C.—Unlucky Sayings. (不利語.)

THERE was a man who had the habit of saying unlucky things. It was known to all. A child was born to a man of fifty. On the third morning friends went to congratulate him.

This man also went. A friend advised him thus: "You are always saying unlucky things; it is better that you should not go." The man said: "I will go with you and will not utter a word; what do you think of it?" The friend answered: "If you really will not speak, then you may go." They went together to the new-born child's father's house to pay their congratulations. The man went straight to the dining room and commenced eating, not saying a word. His friend was very glad of this. After the feast, he went to thank the host and said: "I have not spoken a word to-day. After I leave here, if your baby gets fits and dies, don't blame me for it."

CHAPTER CL.—The Stupid Worm. (糊塗蟲.)

THERE was a Mandarin whose decision in law suits was not always fair. The people hated him and nicknamed him a "stupid worm." Notices were pasted up in public places criticizing his actions. The mandarin seeing that some notices were on the walls, said to his underlings: "There is an order to catch 'stupid worms,' why do you not go to arrest them? The people will be displeased. I will allow you three days to catch three stupid worms. If one is left unarrested, you will be beaten to death." He hastened their going. After the underlings received the warrant, they started on their way. They complained to themselves: "Such a mandarin, issuing such orders; where are we to make the arrests?" When they got outside of the city walls, they saw a man riding on horseback with a package on his head. Being curious, they asked him why he did not put the package on the horse. He replied: "Fearing the weight is too heavy for the horse, I placed it on my head, so as to save the horse's strength." When the underlings heard this, they said: "This man can be considered a stupid worm." They took him to the

mandarin. At the gates of the city they saw a man with a bamboo pole trying to pass the gate. Holding it vertically, the gate was too low; horizontally, it was not wide enough. After making several attempts, he failed to enter. The underlings said: "This is another stupid worm; we will take him along. There is one more whom we cannot find anywhere. We can only take these two along and ask for more time to catch the third." They were brought before the magistrate, who asked the one that rode on horseback: "Did you place a package on your head to relieve the horse? You may be regarded as a stupid worm." Then he asked the one with the bamboo pole: "Did you carry a bamboo pole to pass the gate? When you held it straight up, the gate was too low; crosswise, it was not wide enough. Why did you not use a saw and saw it in two? Then you could enter the gate."

When the underlings heard this, they hastily knelt down and addressed the mandarin thus: "We have found the third stupid worm." They were asked: "Who is he?" They replied: "Wait till your successor arrives; we will know whom to arrest."



