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Chinese legends and

# CHINESE LEGENDS



## OTHER POEMS.

BY

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Dr. W. H. P. MARTIN.

M383



# CHINESE LEGENDS.

AND

OTHER POEMS.

---

BY

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DEDICATION.



TO

THE MEMORY OF MY WIFE,

WHOSE LOVE MADE LIFE A POEM,

AND WHOSE PRESENCE WAS

A CONSTANT INSPIRATION.

## PREFACE.



This little book is properly an appendix to my *Hanlin Papers*; \*—two of the poems having been included in the First Series, and the rest excluded from the Second Series. Such, in brief, is its apology for entering on a separate existence.

W. A. P. M.

Steamer *El Dorado*.

May 21st, 1894.

---

\* Shanghai:—Kelly and Walsh. Re-published by Harper and Brothers, New York, as *The Chinese, etc., etc.*

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詞 蘭 木

Mulan, the Maiden Chief.

A CHINESE BALLAD OF THE LIANG DYNASTY (502-556 A.D.).

---

*An officer being disabled, his daughter puts on his  
armour, and so disguised leads his troops to the conflict.  
The original is anonymous, and of uncertain date.*

---

Say maiden at your spinning wheel,  
Why heave that deep-drawn sigh?  
Is't fear perchance or love you feel,  
Pray tell—oh tell me why?



Nor fear nor love has moved my soul—  
Away such idle thought!  
A warrior's glory is the goal  
By my ambition sought.

My Father's cherished life to save,  
My country to redeem,  
The dangers of the field I'll brave,—  
I am not what I seem.

No son has he his troop to lead,  
No brother dear have I,  
So I must mount my Father's steed,  
And to the battle hie.

At dawn of day she quits her door,  
At evening rests her head  
Where loud the mountain torrents roar,  
And mail-clad soldiers tread.

---

The northern plains are gained at last,  
The mountains sink from view,  
The sun shines cold, and the wintry blast,  
It pierces through and through.

A thousand foes around her fall,  
And red blood stains the ground,  
But Mulan who survives it all  
Returns with glory crowned.

Before the throne they bend the knee,  
In the palace of Chang-an,  
Full many a knight of high degree,  
But the bravest is Mulan.

Nay Prince, she cries, my duty's done,  
No guerdon I desire,  
But let me to my home begone,  
To cheer my aged sire.

She nears the door of her father's home,  
A chief with trumpet's blare,  
But when she doffs her waving plume,  
She stands a maiden fair.



# 樓家望

Almanna.

A LEGEND OF PEKING.

---

*The Emperor K'ien-lung, it is said, having brought a Persian lady from his campaign in the West, erected for her the Home View Pavilion, where she had a Mohammedan Mosque before her eyes, and where she was permitted to receive the people of her own faith. The "Lily of Snow" is found in the heights of the T'ien Shan, on the margin of the melting snows.*

---

From wars in the West the Monarch returning,  
His new-gotten treasures in triumph displayed;  
The fairest and brightest—'twas easy discerning,  
Admitted by all—was Almanna the Maid.

Her eyes the soft lustre of day-break disclose ;  
Her blush, it surpasses the peach blossom's glow ;  
Her motions are grace, and grace her repose ;  
Her colour eclipses the "Lily of Snow."

Let dames die of envy, let monarch adore,  
Yet in secret distress fair Almanna repines ;  
The canker consuming the sweet flower's core  
Her sharp-sighted lover full quickly divines.

The glitter of images palls on her sight,  
The din of idolatry deafens her ears,  
No face of a kinsman to give her delight,  
No altar of Allah to quiet her fears.

A lofty pavilion of splendor divine,  
O'erlooking a mosque of the faithful, he makes ;  
With garden and terrace of Persian design,  
With fountains and streams and cool shady lakes.

---

Here, lovely Almann, the pride of my eyes,  
Here welcome thy kin, not again to depart ;  
Be no more a stranger, here banish thy sighs,  
For the shrine of thy God is the home of thy heart.

Almann looks up with a joy-beaming face ;  
From that day and onward no creature so blest—  
Restored to her God and restored to her race—  
As the lady Almann, the Maid of the West.



# 聞 奇 鐘 鐃

## The Maiden's Voice.

A LEGEND OF THE GREAT BELL OF PEKING.

---

*This Bell, next to that of Moscow, is the largest that is suspended, weighing 139,000 lbs. It is covered, within and without, with an impression of one of the Buddhist Classics.*

---

As a bee builds up her waxen cell,  
Was built the mould for the giant bell,  
Printed and carved and polished well,  
By a master's cunning hand.



---

Twice has he lost the toil of years,  
And now he waits, with anxious fears,  
The junction of propitious spheres,  
To issue his last command.

A lovely maid sits by his side—  
Her mother's joy, her father's pride—  
One whom he hopes to see the bride  
Of a noble's eldest son.

When on the crane the cauldron swings  
Into its jaws the Maiden springs,  
While back her little shoe she flings,  
And the arduous task is done.

To save her father from failure's shame,  
To win for her father a deathless name,  
She drowns herself in that sea of flame,  
But the bell her soul retains.

For now with the great bell's dulcet tone,  
There mingles low a plaintive moan—  
She calls for the slipper backward thrown :—  
“ *Wo-hie* ” her voice remains.\*

---

\* *Wo-hie*, my shoe.



# 禮 異 夕 除

## The Midnight Offering.

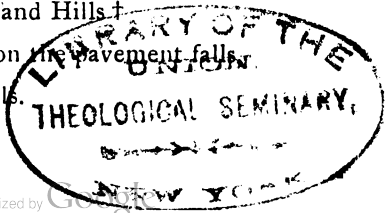
A TALE OF THE TARTAR WARS, RELATED BY A MANCHU  
OF THE IMPERIAL CLAN.\*

---

*On the last night of the year, the Emperor offers a sacrifice in one of his family temples on the East of the Canal, not far from the British Legation; and it is generally believed that this sacrifice is offered, in whole or in part, to the manes of a Chinese General, who nearly three centuries ago opposed the advance of the Tartars.*

---

You ask me to tell why, in yonder halls,  
The Lord of the Rivers and Hills †  
There at midnight low on the pavement falls,  
And an annual rite fulfils.



'Twas after the rise of our Manchu clan,  
When our sires were roaming the plains,  
This rite was ordained for a worthy man,  
Whose honour unfading remains.

One morning our Founder, the brave Tai-tsu,  
Was beat in a terrible fight ;  
His arrows were spent, his spear broke in two,  
And safety lay only in flight.

The cloud of pursuers waxed thin and few,  
As through the thick jungle he sped ;  
One warrior at last left alone to pursue,  
And fleeter the fugitive fled.

All way-worn and weary but not in despair,  
He sought in the jungle to hide ;  
Only hoping at best for a wild beast's lair,  
When a vine-covered cavern he spied.

---

My lady! he cried to an aged crone,  
Whom at the cave's entrance he found,  
Pray let me repose in your fortress of stone,  
And spread me a mat on the ground.

Refreshment and shelter I will not withhold ;  
You've nothing to fear, said the dame,  
For I have a son, who's a soldier bold ;  
In his need, I should wish him the same.

Just then the pursuer burst into the cave,  
The flash of his falchion was seen ;  
But, thoughtful the life of her stranger to save,  
The matron quick rushed in between.

Spare the life of my guest, and touch not a hair ;  
I received him for your sake alone!—  
For your sake, my mother, the stranger I spare,  
But you've bartered the life of your son.

For you have I broken my Chieftain's command,  
My blood must atone for my guilt ;  
So saying, the blade that he held in his hand  
He plunged in his heart, to the hilt.

Farewell, Noble Soul! the brave Tai-tsu exclaimed.  
My Brother! Your Mother is mine.  
In ages to come, you'll with honour be named  
And adored in our family shrine.†

---

\* Another version may be found among the Ballads of the late Mr. G. C. Stent. It is called *A Legend of Ta Ching*, and gives the story from the Chinese side.

† A title of the Emperor.



# 管 鮑 遺 蹟

## The Two Friends.

A CHINESE LEGEND.

---

*In Chinese history no friends are so celebrated as Kwan-chung and Bao-shu. The former, eminent as a statesman and general, is known by the more musical name of Yi-wu. The former was Jonathan, rich and prosperous; the latter, David, poor and pursued by enemies. The magnanimity of Bao-shu made the fortune of Kwan-chung. They lived circa 650 B.C.*

---

Bao-shu and Yi-wu were the names of the two,  
They lived long ago in Cathay.  
There never were two friends more faithful and true—  
The proof is the theme of my lay.

In a deep shady grove one evening they strolled,  
Absorbed in communion sublime ;  
When lo ! at their feet lay a nugget of gold,  
As large as the fruit of a lime.

The nugget is yours ; come, pocket your prize,  
For you saw it first, said Yi-wu.  
Not so, said the other ; for sharp are your eyes,  
And I'm sure that you saw it too.

To friendly persuasion, as neither would yield,  
Away through the forest they pass,  
And reveal to a clown, coming home from his field,  
What a treasure lay hid in the grass.

Not long was he gone when, returning again,  
The steps of the friends to pursue ;  
In anger, he cried, a great serpent I've slain—  
For that, I'm indebted to you.



---

Led back to the scene, with surprise they behold,  
In the place where the serpent he slew,  
Shining bright as before, the same nugget of gold,  
But the peasant had cleft it in two.

Lest a covetous thought their true hearts should divide,  
These friends could a treasure disdain ;  
And the Gods condescend their dispute to decide,  
That their friendship eternal remain.



## 歌 扇 秋

Lines inscribed on a Fan.

---

*Written by Pan Tsieh Yu, a Lady of the Court, and presented to the Emperor Chêng Ti of the Han Dynasty, 18 B.C. This plaintive little song has been set to music by Mrs. A. E. Pirkis, and the music published in London and New York.*

---

Of fresh new silk all snowy white,  
And round as harvest moon ;  
A pledge of purity and love,  
A small, but welcome boon.

While summer lasts, borne in the hand,  
Or folded on the breast ;  
'Twill gently soothe thy burning brow,  
And charm thee to thy rest.

But ah ! when autumn frosts descend,  
And winter winds blow cold,  
No longer sought, no longer loved,  
'Twill lie in dust and mould.

This silken fan then deign accept,  
Sad emblem of my lot ;  
Caressed and cherished for an hour,  
Then speedily forgot.



## 詞 別 長

Su Wu to his Wife.

ON SETTING OUT ON HIS EMBASSY TO THE COURT OF  
THE GRAND KHAN OF TARTARY, 100 B.C.

---

*This little Ode appears to have suggested to Li Po some touching lines, addressed by a wife to her husband who had gone to the wars; as also the verses addressed to his wife by Commissioner Lin, on going into banishment. The former are given in the sequel; the latter may be found in the Chinese Repository.*

---

Twin trees whose boughs together twine,  
Two birds that guard one nest,  
We'll soon be far asunder torn,  
As sunrise from the West.

---

Hearts knit in childhood's innocence,  
Long bound in Hymen's ties ;  
One goes to distant battle-fields,  
One sits at home and sighs.

Like carrier bird, though seas divide,  
I'll seek my lonely mate ;  
But if afar I find a grave,  
You'll mourn my hapless fate.

To us the future's all unknown,  
In memory seek relief ;  
Come, touch the chords you know so well,  
And let them soothe our grief.



## A Soldier's Wife to her Husband.

FROM THE CHINESE OF LI PO, 720 A.D.

---

*Li Po is without doubt the greatest of Chinese lyric poets. An emperor said of him that—"A god had become incarnate in his person; and during eleven centuries no one has risen to dispute with him the title of 謫仙." This little piece is characterized by simplicity of expression and naturalness of sentiment, rather than by strength and elevation.*

---

'Twas many a year ago,  
How I recall the day!  
When you, my own true love,  
Came first with me to play.

A little child was I,  
My head a mass of curls ;  
I gathered daisies sweet,  
Along with other girls.

You rode a bamboo horse,  
And deemed yourself a knight,  
With paper helm and shield  
And wooden sword bedight.

Thus we together grew,  
And we together played—  
Yourself a giddy boy,  
And I a thoughtless maid.

At fourteen I was wed ;  
And if one called my name,  
As quick as lightning flash,  
The crimson blushes came.

'Twas not till we had passed  
A year of married life  
My heart was knit to yours,  
In joy to be your wife.

Another year, alas !  
And you had joined your chief ;  
While I was left at home,  
In solitary grief.

When victory crowns your arms,  
And I your triumph learn,  
What bliss for me to fly  
To welcome your return !





## 酌 獨 下 月

On Drinking Alone by Moonlight.

A CHINESE ANACREONTIC.

---

*This is an attempt to render the best known Ode of Li Po, China's favorite Bard. He is not less famed as a bacchanal than as a poet, and tradition says that he met his death while in a state of intoxication, by plunging into a river to grasp the shadow of the Moon.*

---

Here are flowers and here is wine,  
But where's a friend with me to join  
Hand to hand and heart to heart  
In one full cup before we part ?

Rather than to drink alone,  
I'll make bold to ask the Moon  
To condescend to lend her face  
The hour and the scene to grace.

Lo ! she answers, and she brings  
My shadow on her silver wings ;  
That makes three, and we shall be,  
I ween, a merry company.

The modest Moon declines the cup,  
But Shadow promptly takes it up ;  
And when I dance, my shadow fleet  
Keeps measure with my flying feet.

Yet though the Moon declines to tipple,  
She dances in yon shining ripple ;  
And when I sing, my festive song  
The echoes of the Moon prolong.\*

---

Say, when shall we next meet together ?  
Surely not in cloudy weather ;  
For you, my boon companions dear,  
Come only when the sky is clear.†

---

\* The Poet fancies that the echo comes from the Moon.

† A common trait of boon companions.



# 堂 在 蟋 蟻

Adieu to the Year.

A TEMPERANCE SONG OF THE OLD WORLD.

---

*From the Book of Odes, 500 B.C.*

---

The voice of the cricket is heard in the hall,  
The leaves of the forest are withered and sere ;  
My spirits, they droop at those chirruping notes  
So thoughtlessly sounding the knell of the year.

Yet why should we sigh at the change of a date,  
When life's flowing on in a full steady tide ;  
Come, let us be merry with those that we love,  
For pleasure in measure there's no one to chide.\*

---

\* The 'temperance' comes in here, but it is not total abstinence. Chinese commentators regard this caution against excess as a leading feature of this poem.

餘有下比，足不上比

И Cure for Discontent.

---

FROM THE CHINESE.

---

Once o'er a burning plain I rode ;  
A stubborn donkey I bestrode,  
And vainly strove his steps to goad.

As on I crept with snail-like pace,  
A cloud of dust rose in my face,  
And pride sank down in deep disgrace.

For past me swift a horseman sped,  
With nodding plumes upon his head—  
“How wretched is my lot!” I said.

Then suddenly I overtook  
A footman with contented look,  
Who pushed a load and read a book.

“Thanks,” thought I, “to this sullen brute,  
I’m not compelled to trudge on foot,  
And push a barrow-load to boot.”

---

Since then, this simple little verse  
To cure complaint I oft rehearse—  
“Though some be better, more are worse.”



賦 鳥 鵑

五 Chinese "Raven."

THE FU-NIAO, OR BIRD OF FATE.

---

*From the Chinese of Kia Yi, 200 B.C.*

---

'Twas in the month of chill November,  
As I can very well remember—  
In dismal, gloomy, crumbling halls,  
Betwixt moss-covered, reeking walls,  
An exiled poet lay—

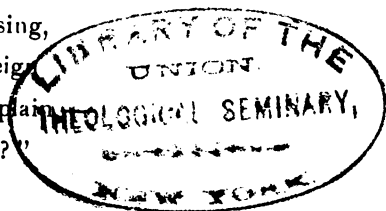


On his bed of straw reclining,  
 Half despairing, half repining ;  
 When athwart the window sill  
 Flew in a bird of omen ill,  
 And seemed inclined to stay.

To my book of occult learning,  
 Suddenly I thought of turning,  
 All the mystery to know,  
 Of that shameless owl or crow,  
 That would not go away.

"Wherever such a bird shall enter,  
 'Tis sure some power above has sent her  
 (So said the mystic book) to show  
 The human dweller forth must go,"—  
 But *where* it did not say.

Then anxiously the bird addressing,  
 And my ignorance confessing,  
 "Gentle bird, in mercy deign  
 The will of Fate to me explain  
 Where *is* my future way?"



---

It raised its head as if 'twere seeking  
To answer me by simply speaking,  
Then folded up its sable wing,  
Nor did it utter anything,  
But breathed a "Well-a-day !"

More eloquent than any diction,  
That simple sigh produced conviction,  
Furnishing to me the key  
Of the awful mystery  
That on my spirit lay.

"Fortune's wheel is ever turning,  
To human eye there's no discerning  
Weal or woe in any state ;  
Wisdom is to bide your fate ;"—  
This is what it seemed to say  
By that simple "Well-a-day."



## POSTSCRIPT.

---

It is probable that most readers of the foregoing lines will be reminded of the incident which forms the subject of Poe's celebrated poem *The Raven*.

The analogy of the two poems extends even to secondary circumstances, such as—

- 1.—The poet's state of mental depression, bordering on despair.
- 2.—His resort to books for relief before or after the appearance of the unwelcome visitor.
- 3.—The insolent familiarity of the intruder.
- 4.—The recognition of the bird as boding evil.
- 5.—A direct appeal to the bird for an explanation of the mystery.
- 6.—The bird's reply in one melancholy ejaculation.
- 7.—Finally, not further to press the parallel, the interpretation of that response by each poet to suit his own case.

If the Chinese poem were sufficiently recent—instead of being two thousand years old, or if Poe could have had a knowledge of its existence, which he assuredly had not—would not these numerous points of coincidence justify a suspicion of plagiarism, or at least of imitation on one part or the other?

As to the English dress in which the Chinese author appears, such a suspicion might be better founded; for, although I conscientiously abstained from referring to Poe while composing this version, and though I had not read *The Raven* for months, perhaps years, still some lingering echoes would naturally be recalled by similarity of subject. The imitation, if any, has been unconscious.

Whether, in the process of versification, the argument of the Chinese author has not been altered by some such unconscious influence, is a question of graver import. That it has not, will be made apparent to readers of Chinese by a glance at the original, hereto appended.

For the satisfaction of others, I give the following prose version, which is as literal as may be consistent with clearness.

#### AUTHOR'S NOTE.

For three years I was tutor to the Prince of Chang-sha. One day, a *fu-niao* flew into my room and perched in the corner where I had my seat. It resembled an owl and was evidently a bird of ill omen.

As I had been condemned to live in honourable exile at Chang-sha, where the ground is low and damp, I was much troubled by this apparition, thinking that I had not long to live.

I accordingly sought relief for my feelings by composing the following lines.

#### POEM.

One day, when the sun was declining, a *fu-niao* flew into my room, and, perching in the corner where I was wont to sit, appeared to feel quite at home.

This strange uncanny thing coming to associate with me, I wondered what might be the reason.

Opening a book to seek a solution of the mystery, the oracle responded—*When a wild bird enters a dwelling, it portends that the human occupant must go forth.*

I ventured then to interrogate the bird itself :—

“If I am to go forth, pray tell me whither. If to better fortune, announce it to me; if to deeper calamity, make known the worst and shorten my suspense.”

The bird raised its head and flapped its wings; its mouth could not articulate a word, but it heaved a sigh, and I ventured to interpret its meaning :—

---

“All things,” it seemed to say, “are revolving in a whirlpool of change. They go and return, but their transformations no words can express. Good often springs from ill; and evil lurks in the midst of good. Joy and sorrow meet at the same gate; woe and weal together dwell.”

The author goes on to give illustrations from history, which I omit, as they add nothing to the force of the poem.

Though no mean poet, Kia Yi was more eminent as a statesman. He had, previously to his exile, filled the post of prime minister; and his treatise on the *Art of Government* 治安策 continues to be studied at the present day.



## 鵬鳥賦

賈誼

單闕之歲兮四月孟夏庚子日斜兮鵬集予舍止於  
坐隅兮貌甚閒暇異物來萃兮私怪其故發書占之  
兮讖言其度曰野鳥入室兮主人將去請問於鵬兮  
予去何之吉乎告我凶言其災淹速之度兮語子其  
期鵬迺歎息舉首奮翼口不能言請對以臆萬物變  
化兮固無休息斡流而遷兮或推而還形氣轉續兮  
變化而蟪泐穆無窮兮胡可勝言禍兮福所倚福兮  
禍所伏憂喜聚門兮吉凶同城云云

## Ode to the Buddhist Convent of Chang-an.

FROM A CHINESE INSCRIPTION.

---

*This is the first of the Eight Great Places which give name to the valley of Pa-ta-chu. It is known as "Dr. Dudgeon's Temple." On the slope of the Western Hills and overlooking the plain in which the Capital is situated, these temples afford the Foreign colony of Peking a welcome shelter from the heat of summer. The name Chang-an signifies Long Repose.*



Thy purling streams are crystal clear ;  
Thy hills of emerald green ;  
And from this charming belvedere,  
Unfolds a fairy scene.

O! who can to thy altars come,  
Thou House of Long Repose,  
And not forget their earthly home,  
With all its joys and woes.

Here cloistered in this mountain vale,  
As in another sphere,  
Of peace or war they hear no tale,  
Nor mark the passing year.

When bells are chimed and prayers are said,  
They sit in silent thought ;  
How few like them a life have led  
That fears and wishes nought !





# 洞 珠 寶

## Ode to Pearl Grotto.

ON READING INSCRIPTIONS BY CHINESE VISITORS.

---

*The temple that bears this name is the highest of the Eight Great Places, and stands on a hill overlooking the plain in which Peking is situated. The writer of these lines has for many years found in it a grateful shelter from the heat and dust of the Capital.*



Sweet refuge from the Summer heat,  
My country home, thou mountain grot,  
The empire holds no place so sweet—  
Here toil and care are both forgot.

On yonder rock a monarch great \*  
Extols thy scenery sublime ;  
And poets of a humbler state  
Scrawl here and there their homely rhyme.

“I lift my hand,” says one, “and graze †  
Apollo’s crown of golden light ;  
Downward I cast my eyes and gaze  
On eagles in their airy flight.”

“Yon boundless plain,” a second says, †  
“With countless peaks on either hand,  
The vastness of the globe displays,  
And with the view my thoughts expand.”

“My panting steed,” another writes, †  
“Has brought me to this mountain shrine,  
And while I tread these dizzy heights,  
A thousand worlds above me shine.”

---

The glittering roofs of Cambalu, §  
Encompassed by its massive walls,  
To me arrest the roving view—  
I stoop to count its palace halls.

There, on the bosom of the plain, ¶  
Gleams like a gem an azure lake ;  
While silvery lines show rivers twain, \*\*  
That devious courses seaward take.

What wonder that in such a spot  
The view should poetry inspire,  
When passing clouds around this grot  
Tip all these flinty rocks with fire! ††

With joy I've always turned to thee ;  
I quit thee now with inward pain.  
Who knows what lot betideth me,  
Ere I behold thy gates again!

\*A poem by the Emperor Kien-lung, a version of which follows this.

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§ A name of Peking, found in Marco Polo.

¶ The Kwen-ming Lake, near the Summer Palace.

\*\* The Pei-ho to the east and the Hwen-ho to the west of the Capital.

†† St. Elmo's fire.



## 詩 筆 御

To Pearl Grotto.

A POEM BY AN EMPEROR.

---

*The verses of which the following lines are a pretty free version were composed by the Emperor Kien-lung, to commemorate a visit to this Mountain Shrine in 1748. They are engraved in Imperial autograph on the face of a rock, near the entrance of the temple.*



Why have I scaled this misty height,  
Why sought this mountain den?—  
I tread as on enchanted ground,  
Unlike the abode of men.

Weird voices in the trees I hear,  
Weird visions see in air ;  
The whispering pines are living harps,  
And fairy hands are there.

Beneath my feet my realm I see,  
As in a map unrolled ;  
Above my head a canopy,  
Bedecked with clouds of gold.



# 現出龍白

The White Dragon.



A LEGEND OF THE FUTURE.



Right up the hill at close of day, \*  
I, weary, picked my doubtful way,  
And on a stone to rest I lay.

On rising, at my feet I view  
An object strange in shape and hue—  
A serpent, crowned with white and blue.

To cautious touch of alpenstock,  
It answered with a hissing mock,  
Then slowly glided down the rock.

Bold Ajax, in his dreadful fight,  
Asked nothing but a ray of light—  
Not having that, I took to flight.

For e'en St. George might miss his mark,  
If fighting dragons in the dark,  
Or Tam be chased by Cutty Sark.



---

Soon on my scalp a cooling wind  
 Brought all at once the fact to mind  
 That my old hat was left behind.

The sequel's sooner done than said—  
 Returning to my stony bed,  
 I found it on the dragon's head. †

---

\* I was climbing up to Pearl Grotto, in the summer of 1889.

† In simple prose, I found it on a stone, to which it had rolled on being touched. The rest is all fact. When first published, these lines were honored by two parodies,—both assuming that the Author was “in liquor,” which however *was not a fact*.



# 馬失翁賽

Reflections of a Fallen Statesman.

---

*From the Chinese of the Grand Secretary Pao Yun,  
who fell with the Cabinet of Prince Kung, on the  
outbreak of the French war.*

---

Through life as in a pleasing dream,  
Unconscious of my years,  
In Fortune's smiles to bask I seem—  
Perennial spring appears.

Alas ! Leviathan to take \*  
 Defies the fisher's art ;  
 From dreams of glory I awake,  
 My youth and power depart.

That loss is often gain's disguise †  
 May us for loss console ;  
 My fellow sufferers take advice,  
 And keep your reason whole. ‡

---

\* Job, 41, 1. Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fish-hook ?  
 (The Chinese word is *ao*, or *ngao*).

† Allusion to a philosopher who, when condoled with on the loss of his horse, replied that the loss of it might for all he knew be a piece of good fortune.

‡ Alluding to one who, in addition to other losses, lost his reason.




My Wife the best Friend.

---

FROM THE CHINESE OF AN ANONYMOUS POET.

---



For friendship's joys I need not far to roam,  
When all I wish of it I find at home ;  
With *her* absorbed in conversation high,  
I envy not the dwellers in the sky.

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## The Adept.

FROM THE CHINESE.

---

*This gives a concise view of the craze which seized on Chinese alchemists two thousand years ago, of which the search for the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone in Europe was a mere echo.*

---

A prince the draught immortal went to seek ;  
And, finding it, he soared above the spheres.  
In mountain caverns he had dwelt a week ;  
Of earthly time it was a thousand years.

---

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## The White Monitor.

---

FROM THE BOOK OF ODES, 500 B.C.



A speck upon your ivory fan  
You soon may wipe away ;  
But stains upon the heart or tongue  
Remain, alas ! for aye.

---

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## A Hymn to the Chuzengi Waterfall.

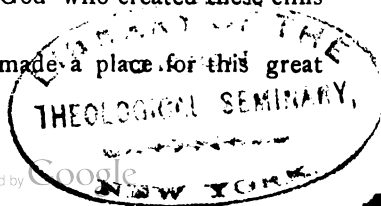
FROM THE CHINESE OF CHOGEN.

---

*I first became acquainted with this beautiful poem by reading it on the monolith overlooking the cataract. On mentioning it to the Rev. Dr. Knox of Tokio, he kindly procured for me a rubbing, from which this translation is made. The author is a man of genius, well known in' Japan. The poem is in excellent Chinese.*

---

Of all under heaven the Nikko mountains take the  
lead in scenery,  
And of all their scenery the crown is the Kegonotaki  
Waterfall.  
How great is the true God who created these cliffs  
and chasms,  
And between the two made a place for this great  
lake!



The lake has a gap in one corner, like the fabled gap  
in the corner of the sky ;

Through this the water rushes with violence,  
takes wings, and flies,

And the cataract hangs suspended.

At the first plunge it leaps a thousand yards,  
and then leaps ten thousand more.

Its angry roaring shakes the earth, and thunders  
echo from the sky.

Is it water or not water, snow or not snow,  
Which in wild confusion scatters these pearly gems?  
Struck by a gust from the foot of the fall,  
They dissolve into smoke in the slanting sunbeams  
that peep over the mountain tops.

The beholder's eye is dazzled with rainbow hues,  
and his ear deafened by the thundering roar.

It chills the stoutest heart.

Its strength is like that of Mêng K'o, whose spirit  
blended heaven and earth.



Its rapidity is like that of Hiang Yü.  
Who in the battle of Chü-lu slew men and horses  
ten thousand thousand.

Of a truth the universe has no finer spectacle.  
Alas! that the poet who descended from another  
sphere is no more,  
And that there is none to inherit his genius!\*

How can I, with unblushing face, dare to indite  
these verses?  
I have heard that of the books of Buddha the  
Kegono is the most esteemed; †  
Its name is not unfittingly bestowed on this  
wondrous Waterfall.

---

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.

This Kegenotaki Waterfall has long been famed,  
but recently the Brotherhood of Heart-Sincerity  
have proposed to set up a monument on its brink.  
I accordingly offer them this Inscription.

(Signed) Chogen.

11th year of Meiji (1878).

---

\* Li Tai-po, described as 謫仙

† 華嚴經

## The Cycle of Ghangé.

A HYMN TO THE RIVER DAYA.

---

*In arranging the contents of this little volume, it was my intention not to allow any of my own original compositions to appear in it. I have, for special reasons, relaxed this rule in favor of five or six pieces, which I here insert.*

*The reason for inserting the first (I say nothing of the others) was the fact that it had its birth near the scene celebrated in the preceding.*

*On July 5th, 1890, my wife and I made an excursion to Yumoto from Chuzengi, where we were staying; and, in the evening of the same day, after a walk of fourteen miles, I wrote this Hymn to the River Daya.*

*The view of the foaming torrent rising in the higher mountains, pausing for a brief moment in the beautiful lake of Yumoto and the larger lake of Chuzengi, and plunging over a succession of cataracts before losing itself in the ocean, suggested the train of thought, and the words came unsought.*



Little river ! little river !

Why forsake your mountain home,

Like an arrow from a quiver,

Flashing by in froth and foam ?

---

Downward dashing, plunging, leaping,  
Is it rest that you pursue ?  
Is it in yon lake that, sleeping,  
Calmly seems to wait for you ?

In that lake you may not tarry—  
Brief the pause allowed you there ;  
Soon you'll leave with all you carry,  
Rushing on your mad career.

A larger lakelet next receives you ;  
Longer respite it bestows ;  
Its seeming calm again deceives you—  
Respite only, not repose.

Will you seek it in the ocean,  
Mingling with its boundless blue ?  
Speedily dismiss the notion  
That the sea has rest for you.

With its restless billows blending,  
Tempest-tossed and turned to rain,  
On some mountain top descending,  
You'll begin your course again.

While the sun continues burning,  
I, like you, my race must run—  
The wheel of change forever turning—  
*Nowhere rest beneath the sun!*



## My Angel Bird.

---

*The following lines express the answer given to a question of the writer by a lady, who, after suffering from mental depression for eight years, was restored to health by a sudden outburst of emotion. The incident referred to is strictly true. The lady was a poet, and the author of a volume of poetry, besides many fugitive pieces.*

---

You ask me why with tender care  
I keep this lifeless bird? \*  
Come, listen to the tale I tell,  
And say if I have erred.

A spell had fallen on my soul  
That made me drear and lone,  
Like her who saw the fountains play,  
Though petrified to stone. †

My mental eye was unobscured,  
But sympathy was dead ;  
A suffering cry no pity woke,—  
My heart was cased in lead.

Nor flower nor bird-song pleasure brought ;  
Nor faith nor hope, relief ;  
For Heaven itself was quite withdrawn,  
And naught remained but grief.

A storm was sweeping through the trees,  
When coming home one day,  
Just in the path before my feet  
A helpless birdling lay.

With impulse to myself unknown,  
I caught it to my breast ;  
I warmed it, fed it, cherished it,  
And tenderly caressed.

He grew to beauty in my sight,  
And made my days less long ;  
He listened for my coming steps,  
And waked me with his song.

One day returning from a walk,  
I found him on the floor ;  
I caught him to my breast again,  
But naught could life restore.

A sudden tide of feeling rose,  
From heart to aching head,  
And gushed in streams from both my eyes,  
Which long no tear had shed.

---

The spell dissolved—my heart revived—  
I called the world my own ;  
Like him who, from a grazing beast,  
Was raised to Babel's throne.

I blessed the bird that brought me life,  
Whose wing the waters stirred ; †  
And when I wake in Paradise,  
I'll find my Angel Bird.

---

\* The stuffed bird was perched over the head of her bed,  
where his cage had hung.

† The petrified lady in *Arabian Nights*.

‡ An angel went down and troubled the water. (St. John, 5, 4).





To Jeannie.

---

*On her second birthday, she being eight years old.*

---

You're a fast young lady, Miss Jeannie,  
The fastest of any I know ;  
While others jog on in life's journey,  
'Tis always by *leaps* that you go. \*

You're a slow young lady, Miss Jeannie,  
And don't keep abreast of your peers ;  
Your birthdays, they come round but seldom,  
But theirs are as many as years.

You're a happy young lady, Miss Jeannie,  
Your advent, it ushered in spring ;  
And your footsteps, wherever they lead you,  
May they roses and amaranths bring !

---

\* Her birth-day occurring only in a *leap year*.



To a Gifted Lady, on her Birthday.

---

*For many years her voice charmed the gay circles of Peking. To music she added drawing, as a diversion and attained considerable skill in both oil painting and water colors. She sent some clever verses on a "London fog" to my sainted Wife only recently,—alas! it was more than a year ago! In this, as in the other accomplishments, may she not be called the modern Delaunay?*



On a sunny April day,  
In a land far away,  
A child in its cradle lay—  
Then came a fairy band.

One touched the infant's eye,  
Giving power to descry  
Fair scenes in earth and sky,  
And placed a pencil in her hand.

Another touched her ears  
So deftly that she hears  
The music of the spheres,  
And dropped honey on her tongue.

And every fairy of the train  
Aspired to be *marraine*,\*  
To shield from harm and pain  
The favored artist young.

---

\* The good Fairy, in *Contes de Fées*.



## A Morning Thought.

---

*Though I have often experienced the phenomenon below described, on this occasion the thaumatrope was unusually active.*



Last night I laid me down and courted sleep ;  
The lamp of conscious thought still burned awhile,  
Though sense, the world shut out, supplied no oil.  
My ego, like a child that's sent to bed,

Long struggled to resist oblivion ;  
And sought, by casting shadows on the screen  
Of eye's dark chamber, to detain a space,  
Impressions of the parting day.

Not memory alone—that play of images,  
Nor yet the work of voluntary thought ;  
The trembling humours shed their iris-hues,  
And fancy wove them into tapestry ;

As bright-plumed cavaliers in glowing coals,  
Or castles turret-crowned are seen in clouds.  
But paler grew each face, more dim each scene,  
Till thought's faint ray was quenched, and all was  
dark.

At length the wand, that waked old Memnon's stone  
To music sweet, fell on my drowséd lids ;  
My thought took wing and brought a world to view.  
Thus will the light of life's last evening fade,  
And sunrise on another world shall dawn.

## Song of the We We.

---

MY DEAR MRS. S.—*This morning my wife asked me to write something about the We-We.\* She of course must be in it; but the presence of our children is (alas!) a fiction. Yours are happily with you, and this little song may serve to amuse them.*



On the top of a hill, in the top of a tree, †  
We're living our life so merrily,  
My wife and I and our children three,  
We ! We ! We ! We !

---

A camp of soldiers below us we see,  
And farther away is the great citie ;  
But for cities and soldiers what care we ?  
We ! We ! We ! We !

We sing all the day in the highest of glee,  
And flit all about from tree to tree,  
My wife and I and our children three,—  
We ! We ! We ! We !

---

\* A kind of cicada that abounds in the Western Hills, and cries  
“ We We ” all day long.

† At Pearl Grotto.





# The Voice of Creation.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GELLERT.\*

---

*(Wenn ich o Schöpfer deine Macht u. s. w.).*



Almighty God, where e'er I gaze,  
The products of Thy power,  
The matchless wisdom of Thy ways,  
The love that guards us every hour,  
So rush on my bewildered mind  
That language fit I cannot find  
To praise my God and Father.

Mine eye beholds, where e'er it turns,  
The wonders of Thy might,  
The firmament of ether burns  
And praises Thee, the God of Light,  
Who gave the sun his fiery blaze,  
And clothed the moon with silvery rays,  
And ordered all the glowing stars—

Who bids the gentle breezes blow,  
And clouds their showers pour,  
To make the fertile harvest grow,  
And bless us with its store.  
Almighty and All glorious God,  
Thy boundless goodness spreads abroad  
As far as Heaven extends.

With voice sublime, sunbeams and storms  
Declare Thy glorious name,  
And grains of sand and tiny worms  
Are vocal with Thy fame.  
'Me'—saith the forest—'God hath made,'  
'Me'—saith the field in gold arrayed—  
'Come, praise our Maker's name.'

---

But man,— erect in majesty,  
The image of thine own,  
Whose spirit lives and moves in Thee  
And bows before Thy throne,  
But man,— creation's boast and lord  
Must still the brightest proof afford  
Of might and mercy too.

Then praise thy Sovereign, O my soul,  
And give Him glory due,  
Thy God with worship high extol,  
And all the world extol Him too.  
And all the world adore its King,  
And everlasting praises bring,—  
Who would not praise the Lord?

---

\* This version dates from 1848. The measure is that of the Original.



# The Minstrel.



FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.



“ Hark ! Hark ! a voice of music sweet  
Floats upward from the dusty street ;  
Haste, boy, the gifted singer bring,  
For in our presence he shall sing.”

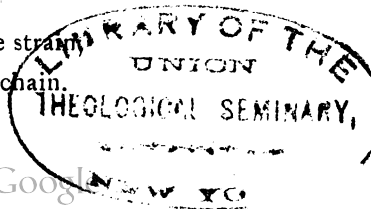
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So spake the King, then ran his page  
And found a minstrel grey with age.  
Before the throne the aged man  
His ballad unabashed began :

“ Hail King, hail knights, hail ladies fair,  
This hall may well with heaven compare ;  
Cold stars illumine the skies above,  
But this is lit with lamps of love.

Forgive, if to these glories blind  
We glories past recall to mind.”  
He shuts his eyes, he sweeps the strings,  
And, rapt, a tragic story sings.

The knights are fired with courage high—  
The ladies melt in ecstasy ;  
The King, delighted with the strain,  
Commands for him a golden chain.



“Nay, Sire ; bestow no chain on me,  
But let my spirit still be free.  
Perhaps your Chancellor of State  
Might walk beneath its golden weight—

I warble like the feathered choir,  
Nor gold nor silver I desire ;  
For tho' through life I've hardly fared,  
My song is still its own reward.”



# The Time Piece.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GABRIEL SEIDL.

---

*Mrs. Stuhlmann called this morning to request me to undertake this task. To her, therefore, I dedicate the result.*



A wonderful time-piece I carry  
About me wherever I go ;  
As time and tide never tarry,  
It beats neither fast nor slow.

'Twas made by a cunning master,  
Who wisely adjusted its springs  
That it goes neither slower nor faster  
Though I wish it had weights or wings.

I've wished it a swifter motion,  
Impatient to brook delay ;  
I've wished it a sleeping potion,  
To beguile my cares away.

In every pleasure or sorrow,  
In storm or in sweet repose,  
It measures to-day and to-morrow,  
Nor faster nor slower it goes.

It beat at the grave of my Mother,  
It beat by the bier of my Friend,  
It beat when I promised another  
A love that never would end.



---

It beat at the birth of my baby ;—  
God grant it continue to beat,  
Till I see her, as happy as may be,  
Unfolding in beauty complete!

If sometimes exhausted I find it,  
As though it would beat never more ;  
Another may skilfully wind it,  
And strength to its spring restore.

But ah! should it cease altogether,  
And come to the end of its chain,  
The Maker alone, and no other,  
Can set it in motion again.

Away beyond the horizon,  
He dwells in a tent of blue,  
'Tis He that my hope relies on  
To make it all good and new.

---

Thus when its long service is ended,  
Tho' my time-piece shall beat here no more,  
By the Maker refitted and mended,  
'Twill beat on yon further shore.



The Sariguc. \*



FROM THE FRENCH OF FLORIAN.



Where torrid suns in rich Peru  
Impart to flowers their brilliant hue,  
A little child, at close of day,  
Into a garden went to play.

What's that—a hare or fox, he cried,  
Retreating to his mother's side ;  
Which leads its young with steps so sly,  
And watches them with anxious eye ?

It is, she said, nor fox nor hare—  
True emblem of maternal care ;  
Make but a noise to cause alarm,  
And see her shield her young from harm.

The eager child now claps his hands—  
Erect the watchful sarigue stands ;  
And, startled by her warning cry,  
The young sarigues around her hie.

Each seeks the shelter she provides,  
And in its mother's bosom hides—  
She for her helpless young ones cares—  
And to the woods her treasure bears.

---

Let this, my child, a lesson prove,  
To trust in need your mother's love.

In future years, should storms assail,—  
Should hopes deceive and friends all fail,  
Then homeward turn a trustful eye,  
And to your mother's bosom fly.

---

\* A South American opossum, with a pouch like a kangaroo.



# L'Envoi of the Lusiad.\*

ADDRESSED TO THE KING.

---

*From the Portuguese of Camoens.*

---

To every clime thy willing subjects go,—  
Their zeal, their courage, let their King behold ;  
Thro' fire, thro' water, and thro' snow,  
As bulls in patience, and as lions bold,  
No weariness or fear they ever know.  
Unlike the common herd that's bought and sold,  
For God and King they wage a glorious war,  
With Pagan and with Moor in lands afar.

A wanderer I've been in every zone ;  
 To palace halls my face a stranger long,—  
 My very name perchance to Thee unknown.  
 Rude is my speech, and humble is my song ;  
 Yet sage by sad experience I've grown—  
 And praise is welcome from an infant's tongue.  
 How true my genius, in these pages see  
 Two things but rarely joined combine in me.

A body formed in arms to serve my King ;  
 A mind by studious discipline well trained,  
 And by the sacred Muse inspired to sing.  
 If access to the Royal Court be gained,  
 And Thou content accept my offering,  
 In such high strains my Muse shall sing of thee  
 That all the world shall Alexander see ;  
 Nor of Achilles shall he envious be.

---

\* The *Lusiad* is pre-eminently the Epic of the opening of the East.  
 For an account of it and its hapless Author, see *Hanlin Papers*,  
 Second Series.



