漢文詩解

POESEOS SINENSIS COMMENTARII.

XXI. *On the Poetry of the Chinese.*—*By* JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, *Esq.*, *F.R.S.*, *M.R.A.S.*

Read May 2, 1829.

" Quærere cœpit
Quid ——————— utile ferrent:
Tentavit, quoque, rem si dignè vertere posset."
HOR.

IN the arrangement of our subject, it may perhaps be useful to preserve so much regard to method, as to treat of it separately, under the two following heads:

Part I. Versification, or the particular rules which prevail in the mere construction of lines, couplets, and stanzas; and the sources whence these derive their melody and rythm.

Part II. A general view of the style and spirit of Chinese poetry, the character of its imagery and sentiment, and the extent to which it seems to admit of a precise classification, relatively to the divisions and nomenclature adopted in European literature.

To such as should find the first portion of our treatise dry and technical in its details, the second may possibly prove more attractive: but the order of discussion could hardly be inverted with propriety.

PART I.

In Chinese versification the following are the circumstances which seem chiefly to demand our notice: 1. The nature of the sounds of which

the spoken language consists, and the fitness of this for metrical composition. 2. The variation of certain tones, or accents, as prescribed by rule. 3. The use of poetical numbers, or measure. 4. The observance of a regular cæsural pause, about the middle of each verse. 5. The use of terminal rhymes. 6. The rythmical effect produced by the *parallelism* of couplets, which will be explained in its proper place.

1. Of the sounds of the spoken language. The attention of curious persons may perhaps be excited to ascertain, what powers of melody can be possessed by a system of speech, which has been represented to contain merely about four hundred *monosyllabic* sounds. They may naturally enough imagine, that Chinese poetry must, in point of euphony, rank with those defective verses censured by our own great poet,

"Where ten low words oft creep in one dull line."*

A summary disposal of the question, by assuming, at once, that it is a case in which melody is unattainable, has to be reconciled with the obvious fact, that the Chinese take a passionate delight in their poetry. Is it likely that so large a portion of the human race should have persisted in the enthusiastic cultivation of an art, which is essentially incapable of possessing that very charm, which every where else forms a main element of its attractiveness?† It has pretty generally gone abroad, that *all* the Chinese words are strictly monosyllabic—which only proves that opinions, which

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* *Low words*, of any length, are certainly out of place in poetry: but that an English verse is much the worse for consisting of ten monosyllables, does not so clearly appear; and Pope's own poems abound in monosyllabic lines, as may be proved by the slightest examination. A few instances occur even of *couplets* so distinguished:

'Ah, if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools!'

'Talk what you will of taste, my friend, you'll find
Two of a face, as well as of a mind.'

'—There are who have not—and, thank heav'n, there are
Who, if they have not, think not worth their care.'

† A writer of the *Mémoires sur les Chinois* asserts, that their poetry is susceptible of even imitative harmony, and this is no doubt true: but the instance which he adduces may perhaps make the reader smile. "On vante," says he, "l'harmonie imitative d'Homère. Elle est très-familière à la poésie Chinoise: au lieu de dire, par exemple, on entend le bruit des tambours, le Chiking dit, 'On entend le *tang-tang* des tambours.' Cette citation n'est pas des plus heureuses, mais c'est la seule qui me vienne."

nobody is particularly concerned in correcting, will sometimes pass current for a surprising length of time.—Perhaps the circumstance of every word filling the same space in the page, has assisted to perpetuate the notion. It is the business of the present treatise, however, to state all that can fairly be said in favour of its subject; and, with the concurrent opinion of Dr. Morrison, we will endeavour to produce facts, and institute comparisons, which may tend to prove that a considerable portion of the Chinese words are not *absolutely* monosyllabic.

Some of these, if expressed by the powers of the English alphabet, are written *heāe, keūen, heūĕ, leāou*—every vowel being distinctly pronounced,—and others cannot be properly expressed, except with the direct use of the diæresis, as *lëen, t'hëen, kĕĕ*, &c. Now, with respect to the latter of these, if the necessity for using such a mark were not, of itself, sufficient to prove that they are something more than mere monosyllables, the metrical examples of another language might serve to settle the point.

> " Their *flüid* bodies half dissolv'd in light"—
>
> " Like some gaunt *lïon* in his gloomy lair."

Any person who has been in the habit of hearing the Chinese pronounce their own language, knows that *lëen, sëen*, &c. are quite as dissyllabic as *lion, fluid*, and such other words, wherein no consonant intervenes between the two syllables. Similar examples, however, are by no means so abundant in our harsh modern languages, especially those of Germanic extraction, as in Latin and Greek, where almost every line of poetry teems with such vowel sounds; and where (at least in the latter) we constantly meet with *three* successive vowels, forming as many separate syllables—the very circumstance which constitutes the ground of its superior melody.

But let it be objected, and let us admit for a moment (what in fact is not true), that in Chinese every word is pronounced *in the same time*, and therefore the above distinction signifies little. Does it, with reference to a sister art, make no difference in *music*, whether two or three notes be struck in the same measured time—or only one? What but something very similar to this was the Greek and Roman practice, as far as we can understand it, of making two short syllables exactly equivalent to a long one, and pronouncing them in the same time. That such matters are not totally indifferent, might be proved by the trite example from Virgil—the well-known verse, descriptive of an eager and restless horse, which derives its imitative

character from the rapid succession of dactyls: and again, by the opposite artifice, used by the same poet in painting the blinded giant, where the heavy spondaic measure of the line, joined to the redundant terminal syllables, is equally expressive in another way. The discussion of this point, however, is rendered somewhat superfluous by the plain fact, that all Chinese words are *not* pronounced in the same time. Of what are called the "four tones," it is the professed business of the *third* to prolong, and of the *fourth* to shorten them.

The truth seems to be, that the language of China abounds in diphthongal at least, if not in triphthongal sounds, which contribute, when found blended with others that are more strictly monosyllabic, to give to its verse a certain share of varied euphony. There is no occasion to incur the charge of attempting to prove too much—at the same time it does not seem very easy to shew, why such words as *keaĕ* and *keaou*, with every vowel clearly pronounced, should not advance nearly as good a claim to the title even of trisyllabic,* as those marked in the following examples, each of them consisting of as many metrical *syllables* as it has *letters*.

Ατρεῖδη, συν αμμι παλιμπλαγχθεντα· ΟΙΩ—

ΗΙΕ σύν τε Μηνοιτιάδη, και οἱς ἑταροίσιν.

Not only, however, do *vowel* sounds so extensively prevail in the language of which we treat, but the few *consonants* that are to be found in it are, almost without exception, free from the reproach of harshness. There is no terminal consonant whatever, except *n* and its nasal *ng*;† and the initials are only *Ch*—*F*—*G* hard—*H* (if it may be called a consonant)—*J*, soft as in French—*K*—*L*—*M*—*N*—*P*—*S*—*Sz*—*Sh*—*T*—*Th*—*Ts*—and *T'sz*. Of these, *Tsz*, and if you please *Ts*, are the only sounds which approach to the character of harshness. The Chinese find it no easy matter to pronounce English words; but Englishmen meet with little difficulty in pronouncing theirs—the natural inference from which is, that our own language, though certainly more varied, is the harsher of the two.

We shall presently see that they possess the usual means, employed by other nations, to give harmony and rythmical effect to their verse: but it

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* They might more strictly, perhaps, be termed *triphthongal*.

† It must be kept in mind, that we here treat of the dialect of literature, and of educated persons. In the south of the empire, words end in *k* and *t*; but provincial corruptions and vulgarisms form no part of the subject.

may not be unimportant first to shew, that the native and original qualities of the language are such, as not to unsuit it altogether to the purposes of melodious composition,—that the raw material is not unfitted for the manufacture. A notion seems to have existed, that the whole merit of Chinese poetry lay in some curious and fanciful selection of the characters, with a reference to their component parts. As a medium for the communication of ideas, the written language certainly differs from alphabetic systems: but, after all, the characters are the *means* only, and not the *end*. The melody of the sound—the harmony of the structure—and the justness of the sentiment, or beauty of the imagery—constitute, as they do everywhere else, the merits of poetical composition.

2. Such being the natural qualifications of the Chinese language, considered in its *oral* capacity, for poetry—it derives cadence and modulation from the artificial use of the tones, or accents; which appear, however, to have been originally adopted for a very different purpose, and to have owed their existence, rather to the necessity of *perspicuity in speech*, than of *melody in verse*. It may easily be imagined, that where a whole spoken language consists of not more than about four hundred words of different sounds, there would be great danger of two interlocutors misunderstanding each other, from the unavoidable use of the *equivoque*; and hence the necessity for the tones, or accents, consisting of what may, in sufficient conformity with the meaning of their original names, be styled the *even* or *natural*, the *acute*, the *grave*, and the *short*. In point of fact, the first is no accent at all, but rather a negative quality—the absence of all marked intonation; and accordingly the Chinese themselves call it *ping*, 'even or smooth,' while the three others they class together, under the general name of *tsëë*, 'deflected,'—that is, deflected from the *natural* tone. These last are, in regular poetical composition, used indifferently for each other: they are considered as being opposed to, and required in verse to be alternated with, the even-toned or unaccented words. It would be quite unprofitable to dwell here upon their minute distinctions, or to endeavour to give particular description of them, because nothing but the mouth of a native can illustrate them properly: they are really—*vox et præterea nihil*, and have already been as fully noticed, as such a subject admitted of, by several writers on Chinese grammar. Suffice it then to say, that by their use the original sounds of the language are varied or multiplied about fourfold, and a great accession made to its fitness for metrical composition.

Of a species of technicality which admits so ill of illustration on paper, it is enough to observe, that the words (we shall presently see that these are equivalent to *feet* in other languages) which answer to the *even* numbers in each line,—the second, fourth, sixth, according to the length of the verse, —together with the last word of all, are, in regular poetry, the subjects of attention with regard to the *alternate* position of the tones called 'natural,' and 'deflected.' The rule for placing them seems to have variety, or the avoiding of a too frequent recurrence of the same tone, for its principal object. Their attention to this point goes beyond the single lines, and extends to the couplets: for whatever the intonation of the second, fourth, or sixth words in the first line may be,—whether natural or deflected,—that of the corresponding words in the next line is required to be the opposite. M. Freret, in the Mémoires de l'Académie, fell into a great error, in asserting that 'les Chinois n'ont jamais connu la versification cadencée par l'arrangement de ces tons musicaux: leur poésie a seulement été consacrée par le nombre des syllabes, et dans la suite on a y ajouté la rime.' Even the most irregular species of Chinese verse, called *Tsze*, is to a certain degree regulated by the tones, though in a different manner from the foregoing.

3. The next source of harmony that we have to notice, is the use of poetical numbers. Every word of Chinese poetry, instead of being regarded as a mere syllable, may more properly be considered as corresponding to a metrical foot in other languages. It has already been shewn, that a considerable portion are really dissyllabic—and all of them are pronounced, in the recital of verse, with an emphasis and prolongation of the voice, very different from the manner in which we slur over the unaccented portion of our syllables.

To begin with the smallest number of words that form a measured line in Chinese, we sometimes meet with so few as *three*, repeated like a kind of 'refrain' in popular songs. This short measure also constitutes occasionally a species of chime for the inculcation of moral maxims; and it was, no doubt, for the similar purpose of *assisting the memory*, that it has been adopted in the composition of the *San tsze king*, or "Trimetrical Classic,"—a work evincing considerable ingenuity, though intended for the humble purpose of conveying to youth the rudiments of general knowledge. In China, as elsewhere, persons of high attainments occasionally think it worth their while to devote their talents to the promotion of the great busi-

ness of education. The following lines are taken, as a specimen of this particular kind of verse, from that portion of the above work, in which the regular succession of all the dynasties, and most celebrated emperors, is turned into rhyme; and it may perhaps remind the English reader of a well known song, called the "Chapter of Kings."

TRIMETERS.

高祖興　至孝平　光武興　四百年　魏蜀吳　號三國

漢業建　王莽篡　為東漢　終於獻　爭漢鼎　迄兩晉

Kaou-tsoo hing — Han nëĕ këen,
Che Heaou-ping — Wong-mang tsuon:
Kwong-woo hing — Wei Tung-Han;
Sze pih nëen — Chung yu Hëen:
Wei, Shuh, Woo — Tseng Han ting,
Haou San-Kwŏ — Heih leang Tsin.

"Kaou-tsoo arose—And the race of Hān was established,
Until the reign of Heaou-ping—When Wong-mang usurped the empire:
Kwong-woo arose—And established the Eastern family of Hān:
After enduring four hundred years—The Hān ended with Hëen-te:
Wei, Shŭh, and Woo—Contended together for the empire of Hān,
They were called the THREE NATIONS—And continued till the rise of the two dynasties Tsin.

The line of *four* words is the shortest that seems ever to have been used in the higher species of composition. It constitutes the chief part of the measure of the sacred book of odes, called *Sheeking*, the oldest poetical

work in China.* There, however, the measure of some pieces is altogether irregular, varying from three, to seven or eight words in a line. Poetry, in most countries, begins with being the vehicle of religion and morality, and the first record of historical facts. Venerated at first as the language of wisdom or inspiration, it is at length cultivated as a pleasurable art, and never fails to improve in harmony, however it may degenerate in other points, with the progress of time. "Il faut distinguer dans la poësie," says Racine, "ce qui vient de la *nature*, et ce qui est ajoûté par l'*art*: la nature inspire d'abord la rapidité du style, et la hardiesse des figures; l'art vient ensuite, et pour rendre le style poëtique encore plus rapide, et en méme tems plus harmonieux, le resserre dans les bornes étroites de la versification. La poësie naissante n'a point du connoître cet esclavage, puisque les règles de l'art ne s'établissent qu'avec le tems et la reflection." The earliest Chinese poetry, as we find it in the Sheeking, appears certainly to have made use of the embellishments of both measure and rhyme, but with a degree of irregularity very different from the polish of modern versification. The lines are occasionally of all lengths; and the rhyme seems to be subject to little rule. It will occasionally occur for six or eight consecutive verses, and there will sometimes be none at all. For the same reason that Pope is more harmonious than Chaucer or Donne, Boileau or Racine than Ronsard, Virgil or Tibullus than old Ennius,

> ———"Sic horridus ille
> Defluxit numerus"——

so the poetry of China, from the Tāng dynasty (when this art attained its highest perfection) down to the present time, is in point of *mere versification* a vast improvement on the Sheeking. It would be strange indeed, if this people were an exception to a rule so general; if an art, in which they took so much delight, had not improved by cultivation, or were, at the present day, devoid of so essential a qualification as the harmony of numbers. The old measure of four words, or feet, is now seldom adopted, being from its shortness unsusceptible of much melody. At the same time it does occasionally occur, chiefly for moral and didactic purposes; and the following may be taken as a specimen.—They are some lines of the Budhists.

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* For two of the most regular odes of this collection, vide infra, Part II.

TETRAMETERS.

靈哉一點
不擾不驚
無思無慮
至聖至明
天理昭著
善性根成
一雜於僞
五體摧傾

Ling tsae yih tëen — Puh jaou, puh king;
Woo sze, woo leu — Che shing, che ming:
T'hëen le chaou choo — Shen sing keu ching:
Yih tsă yu wei — Woo tee tsuy king.

"When the heart is enlightened by a spark of the æthereal intelligence,
There is neither perturbation, nor alarm;
There is neither thought, nor anxiety:
But all is moral perfection, and the complete radiance of truth:
Where the heavenly principle pours its light,
The root of a virtuous disposition is perfected:
But once mingling with human frailty,
The whole man will be subdued and overturned."

The improved system of versification consists in lines of *five* words or feet, as well as in the longer and still superior measure of *seven*. These now constitute what are properly called *Shee*, or regular poems, and we give an example of each in this place, though many others will appear in the sequel.

PENTAMETERS.

又客初歸里
追隨到古榕
聊尋行樂境
且愁倦遊蹤
僧對空饒舌
山觀不改容
流連忘日暮
回首晚堂鐘

Kew kih tsoo kwei le,
Chuy suy taou Koo-yoong;
Leaou tsin hing lŏ king,
Tseay kee keuen yew tsoong.
Seng tuy koong jaou shĕ;
Shan kwon puh kae yoong.
Lew lëen wong jĕ moo,
Hwuy show wan t'hang choong.

"When my ancient guest first returns to our neighbourhood,
I accompany him to the monastery Koo-yoong:
We stroll along together, in search of pleasant walks,
And then rest our weary footsteps within:
The priests sit opposite, indulging their tongues in leisure talk,
—We look at the distant hills, and remark the unchanging features of nature.
Carried on by the stream of converse, we forget the day is closing,
But at last, turning our heads homewards, we listen to the vesper bell."

Heptameters.

五峰如指翠相連
撐起炎州半壁天
夜盥銀河摘星斗
朝探碧落弄雲烟
雨餘玉笋空中現
月出明珠掌上懸
疑是巨靈伸一臂
遥從海外数中原

Woo foong, ju che, tsuy seang lëen,
Chang ke Yen-chow, pwan peih t'hëen:
Yay yu yin ho tsih sing lów,
Chaou tan peih lŏ, loong yun yen:
Yú yu, joo seun koong choong hëen,
Yuĕ chŭ, ming choo chang shang heuen:
Ee she Keu-ling shin yih peih,
Yaou tsoong hae wae soo Choong-yuen.

"See the five variegated peaks of yon mountain, connected like the fingers of the hand.
And rising up from the south, as a wall midway to heaven:
At night, it would pluck, from the inverted concave, the stars of the milky way,
During the day, it explores the zenith, and plays with the clouds:
The rain has ceased—and the shining summits are apparent in the void expanse;
The moon is up—and looks like a bright pearl over the expanded palm:
One might imagine that the Great-Spirit had stretched forth an arm,
From afar—from beyond the sea,—and was numbering the Nations.*

The boldness of the imagery in the last example is somewhat striking, and the two concluding lines may perhaps serve to redeem it from the reproach of the bathos, to which the simile of the hand might otherwise have exposed it.

Verses containing the number of six, or eight, or more words, form no part of regular poetry in modern times; though they are occasionally found alternated with others, in pieces which do not aspire to regularity of structure, but whose figurative style elevates them above the level of mere prose.—Lines of every length are used in those measured couplets, or sentences in pairs, so nicely balanced both in words and sense, which are adopted in the inculcation of ethical precepts, and of which more will be said hereafter, under the head of *parallelism.*

4. In aid of the effect of metrical quantity, the Chinese possess another rule of versification, well known to Europeans, but which has never yet been noticed with reference to the subject of the present treatise. It may be premised, that no *sentential* pause ever occurs in the middle of a verse; at least, none which could be punctuated with any thing beyond a comma in English. Every line is complete within itself; there is nothing of what the French call *enjambement.* But while a reference to written poetry easily establishes this point, the writer of the present observations thought he could plainly perceive, in the correct recital of the longer measures by natives, a very marked *cæsural* pause near the middle of the lines. Repeated trial tended to shew, that in verses of *seven* words, the cæsura was invariably after the fourth—and in those of *five*, after the second word. With a view to being quite clear upon this subject, reference was made to a gentleman, whose profound knowledge of the language renders him a very competent judge in all matters connected with it. He was soon

* China was formerly divided into separate and independent states.

persuaded of the existence of the fact; and a properly qualified native, being summoned into the room, was requested to read out the longer measures of verse in a slow and deliberate manner. The result was, that the cæsura fell exactly in the places above-mentioned, being more strongly marked in some lines than in others, but still unchangeable with regard to *position*—and the native himself (who, by the way, was a *Sewtsae*, *i. e.* had taken his degree) admitted that such was the case. While the long measures admit of, and in some degree require, this pause of the voice, all lines which contain less than five words appear, by reason of their shortness, to be entirely devoid of it.

The existence of the cæsural pause in a particular part of each verse might, of itself, be considered as deserving of notice in a treatise of this nature: but the farther connexion that it has with the structure of the verse makes it still more worthy of attention. The language of China is in a great measure composed of what, for want of a better expression, we will call "compound terms," consisting of two words or characters, which may be a noun with its adjective, a verb with its adverb, two nouns united—and a great many other grammatical combinations of the kind. These are always pronounced together,—as much so as parts of the same compound word in other languages. In a verse of *seven* words, the cæsural pause being after the *fourth*, the first section of the line generally * consists of two of these compound terms. The *fourth* and *fifth* characters can never be coupled in this manner, because the pause cannot take place in the middle of a compound term—but it must be the *first* and *second*, the *third* and *fourth*, which are thus related. This being the case with regard to the *first* section of the verse, the *last*, which contains three characters, is commonly a compound term, with the addition of a single word, which may either precede or come after it. But as this is a subject which may best be illustrated by examples, here follow some lines of *seven* words, in which the verbal construction can be observed—together with the place of the cæsural pause after the fourth word, as far as this may be shewn without actual recital.

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* *Generally*, because it is not meant to be asserted that Chinese verses are *always*, or *entirely* composed of such terms: they frequently contain a number of single characters, or simple terms; but whenever the others are used, their position in the verse is invariably as above stated.

世事忙忙無了期
何須苦苦用心機
尋些樂處酌杯酒
偷個閑時誦首詩

名花不放不生芳
美玉不磨不生光
不是一番寒徹骨
怎得梅花撲鼻香

She sze mang-mang—woo leaou ke,
Ho seu koo-koo—yung sin ke:
Tsin seay lŏ choo—chŏ pei tseŭ,
Tow ko hëen she—soong show she.

Ming hwa puh fang—puh seng fāng,
Mei yu puh mo—puh seng kwāng:
Puh she yih fan—han chĕ kŭh,
Tseng tih mei hwa—pŏ pe heang.

"The affairs of the world are all hurry and trouble—without end:
Why then with bitter anxiety—waste the heart's springs?
Search for some pleasant spot—to pour out a cup of wine,
Steal a leisure hour—to sing the stanzas of an ode!

"The fine flower unblown—exhales no sweets,
The fair gem unpolished—exhibits no radiance:
Were it not that once—the cold penetrated its stem,
How could the plum-blossom—emit such fragrance?"

We next come to the line of *five* words, where the cæsura falls after the *second*. Here the first division of the verse usually constitutes one compound term; and the last three words are subject to the same law as in the longer line. The following are examples.

人人若共遵
家國賀太平
放之充海宇
廣之塞乾坤

山色無遠近
看山終日行
峰巒隨處改
行客不知名

Jin jin—jŏ koong tsun,
Kea kwŏ—ho tae ping:
Fang che—choong hae yu,
Kwong che—sih këen koen.

Shan sih—woo yuen kin,
Kan shan—choong jĕ hing:
Foong lwan—suy choo kae,
Hing kih—puh-che ming.

"The whole people—unitedly obeying the laws,
The nation, as a family—will rejoice in peace:
Promulge it—to the extremities of the ocean,
Extend it—to the foundations of the world!

"The tints of the hills—are confounded in their distance,
As the traveller views them—to the end of his daily journey:
The shapes of their peaks and ridges—alter with every change of place,
Until the wanderer—ceases to know their names.

Our English verse of ten syllables derives great advantage from the power of varying its effect, without any prejudice to its melody, by occasionally shifting the place of the cæsura,—unlike the Chinese, where it is fixed and immoveable. In this, however, the latter bears some resemblance to the French alexandrine, always divided into hemistiches by the cæsural pause, with which the sentential pause is most commonly coincident*—as well as to that law of the Latin hexameter, which seems to

* 'Que toujours dans vos vers—le sens coupant les mots,
Suspende l'hemistiche—en marque le repos.'
Boil. *Art Poét.*

demand, that in a line *perfectly* euphonic, the cæsura should fall after the first syllable of the third foot.*

5. Of rhymes, it is chiefly to be observed, that they occur, in regular poetry, at the end of the alternate verses which answer to the even numbers, —that is, at the termination of every *second verse*. The first one of all frequently gives the rhyme to the whole stanza; but the rest of the uneven numbered lines seem subject to no rule, and end with any sounds indifferently. The length of the stanza is determined by the recurrence of the same rhyme, and, in a poem of any continuity, it is generally of four lines only—that is, a quatrain, whose second and fourth lines rhyme together; but occasionally it consists of eight verses, of which four have the same ending. Stanzas, however, or rather short pieces of poetry, are very common of twelve, and even sixteen lines, some of which might, with no great impropriety, be assimilated to what we call sonnets. In the stanza of four lines, it cannot be objected that the rhyme is too frequent; and even in that of eight, it should be considered, that only the second line of every couplet possesses the rhyme; while the intermediate ones are blank, and thus afford a relief to the ear. In our own Spencerian stanza, consisting of nine lines, no less than four of them have the same ending, that is, the second, fourth, fifth, and seventh—while three others likewise rhyme together, the sixth, eighth, and ninth. The Chinese, however, do not seem to have a very nice ear for the perception of true rhymes; and this inaccuracy may partly arise from their not possessing such precise symbols, or marks of sound, as our alphabetic letters. In the odes of the Sheeking, as the lines and stanzas are occasionally extremely irregular in their length and general structure—"numeri lege soluti"—so the rhymes appear to be under no strict regulation. This seeming neglect may partly result from a change of pronunciation: but there can be little doubt that the subjection of rhyme to more rigid laws was, as well as the other improvements in versification, introduced in the general advancement of the art, under the Tāng dynasty.

The following specimen affords an example of the rhymes in two stanzas of eight lines each.

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* 'Purpureus veluti — cùm flos, succisus aratro,
Languescit moriens — lassove papavera collo
Demisere caput — pluviâ cum forte gravantur.'

三冬晴暖久　柳色未遮徑
一雨正相宜　桃花已滿林
漠漠沉山閣　物猶憐氣候
輕輕點石池　吾豈忘天心
春風搖蕩日　隱几人空老
萬物發生時　乘時力未任
爲向農人說　柴門對滴瀝
西疇事莫遲　行坐一沉吟

STANZA I.

San-tung tsing-nwan kew,
*Yih-yu ching seang-*ee:
Mo-mo chin shan-kŏ,
*King-king tëen shih-*che:
Chun foong yaou tang jih,
Wan-wŭh fä-seng she:
Wei heang noong-jin shwŏ,
Se-chow sze mo che.

STANZA II.

Lew-sih wei chay king,
Taou-hwa ee mwan lin:
Wŭh yew lëen ke how,
*Woo ke wong t'hëen-*sin:
Yin ke jin koong-laou,
Shing-she leih wei jin:
Chae-mun tuy tëih-lëih,
*Hing tso yih chin-*yin.

"*Felicitous Rains.*"

1.

"The last month of winter was for the most part clear and mild,
And now at length approach the well-timed showers:
The wide-spread mist has involved yon mountain dwelling,
Its dews are slowly filling each rocky hollow:
The vernal winds obscure the clouded sun,
It is the season for all things in nature to germinate:

Let us convey an exhortation to the husbandman,
That he delay not the business of his western fields.

2.

"The green foliage of the willows has not yet shaded the path,
But the peach-blossoms already cover the grove:
Every inanimate thing seems to feel the influence of the season,
Shall I then be unmindful of the purposes of heaven?
Like some who lean on their tables, and grow unprofitably old,
Who exert not their strength in the proper time:
—The rain falls in drops before my rude door-way,
As I stroll about, or sit, immersed in such meditations."

Rhymes, however, are by no means confined to regular verse (of which it is our particular business at present to detail the laws), being very apparent in the following citation, a species of composition called *Tsze*, something between prose and poetry, in which the rhyme is repeated at the end of lines of indeterminate length. The passage is descriptive of a field or bed of chrysanthemums, flowers which the Chinese admire on account of the brilliancy of their colours, and which they display towards winter in large quantities about their houses.

瘦影滿籬疎香
三徑深深淺淺
黃相映露下集
英飢可飡風有
黃色誰堪並正
談到可憐嬾如
新病厭厭開出
秋情性漫言盡
日只閑閑須知
詩酒陶家興

Sow ying mwan le, soo heang san king, *shin-shin ts'en-ts'en hwong seang* ying; *loo hea tseih* ying; *ke ko tsan foong; yew hwong sih, shuey kan* ping: *ching tan taou ko l'en lae joo sin* ping; *yen-yen kae chŭ tsew tsing* sing: *man yen tsin mŏ chĕ hëen-hëen; seu che she tsew Taou-kea* hing.

"Their slender shadows fill the enclosure, and a scattered perfume pervades the flower-beds, planted in triple rows: their deeper and lighter tints reflect a yellow light,

and the leaves shine varied from beneath the drops of dew: each hungry flowret inhales the passing breeze, as it sheds around its incomparable lustre. The gazer sympathizes with the languishing blossoms, bending their heads all faint and delicate: the mournful view awakes in his mind thoughts suitable to autumn. Say not that it is a sight to satiate the eyes of the indifferent beholder—know that such flowers as these once inspired the poet Taou yuen ming,* as he indulged his genius amidst verses and wine."

6. The next feature in the construction of Chinese verse is perhaps the most interesting of all, as it presents a striking coincidence with what has been remarked of the poetry of another Asiatic nation. In the preliminary Dissertation on Hebrew Poetry, prefixed to his translation of Isaiah, Bishop Lowth has treated at some length of a peculiar property which he calls *parallelism*. What this is, will be best explained in his own words.

"The correspondence of one verse or line with another, I call parallelism. —When a proposition is delivered, and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical construction, these I call parallel lines; and the words or phrases, answering one to another in the corresponding lines, parallel terms.—Parallel lines may be reduced to three sorts: parallels *synonymous*, parallels *antithetic*, and parallels *synthetic*."

The *first* kind, Dr. Lowth defines to be those "which correspond one to another by expressing the same sense in different, but equivalent terms: when a proposition is delivered, and is immediately repeated, in the whole or in part, the expression being varied, but the sense entirely or nearly the same."

EXAMPLES.

"Because I called, and ye refused;
I stretched out my hand, and no one regarded:
But ye have defeated all my counsel;
And would not incline to my reproof:
I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your fear cometh."

"Bow thy heavens, O Jehovah, and descend;
Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke:
Dart forth thy lightnings, and scatter them;
Shoot out thine arrows, and consume them."

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* For some account of *Taou yuen ming*, see Mémoires sur les Chinois, tom. iii.

The reader is furnished below with examples from the Chinese, which will perhaps be considered as answering to the above description of the Hebrew—with this only difference, that the peculiar structure of the language, of which we now treat, generally renders the parallelism much more exact, and therefore much more striking and obvious—as it is usually *word for word*, the one written opposite to the other. The first two lines have a figurative reference to the perfection of a person's moral character.

白壁無瑕呈至寶
青蓮不染發奇香

心到亂時無是處
情當苦際只思悲

莫嫌地窄園亭小
不怨家貧活計微

Pih peih, woo hea, ching che paou,
Tsing lëen, puh yen, fă k'he heang.

Sin taou lwan she, woo she choo,
Tsing tang koo tse, chĕ sze pei.

Mo hëen te tsih, yuen ting seaou,
Puh yuen kea pin, hwŏ ke wei.

"The white stone, unfractured, ranks as most precious;
The blue lily, unblemished, emits the finest fragrance.

"The heart, when it is harassed, finds no place of rest;
The mind, in the midst of bitterness, thinks only of grief.

"Be not discontented, though your land be narrow, and your garden small;
Be not disturbed, though your family be poor, and your means contracted."

The second kind of parallelism is the *antithetic*, "when," according to the definition of Bishop Lowth, "two lines correspond with one another by an opposition of terms and sentiments." He observes, with reference to his own subject, that "the degrees of antithesis are various, from an exact contraposition of word to word through the whole sentence, down to a general disparity, with something of a contrariety in the two propositions." It may be remarked, with regard to the Chinese, that the antithesis is commonly perfect, both in sentiments and terms.

It is farther to be observed, that the learned prelate takes most of his examples, under this head, from the Proverbs of Solomon, "where they abound: for this form is peculiarly adapted to that kind of writing, to adages, aphorisms, and detached sentences."

EXAMPLES.

"The memory of the just is a blessing;
But the name of the wicked shall rot."

"There is that scattereth, and still increaseth;
And that is unreasonably sparing, yet groweth poor."

—As relates to the Chinese, the case is precisely the same, and no doubt for the same reason. In going over, by way of experiment, a collection of Maxims* compiled by himself, the writer of this immediately found that a very large portion answered to the foregoing description. For example:

慾寡精神爽
思多血氣衰

清貧常樂
濁富多憂

勿以惡小而爲之
勿以善小而不爲

從善如登
從惡如崩

* 8vo. London, 1823.

Yŏ kwa, tsing shin shwong;
Sze to, heuĕ ke shwae.

Tsing pin chang lŏ;
Chŏ foo to yew.

Wuh e gŏ seaou, urh wei che;
Wuh e shen seaou, urh puh wei.

Tsoong shen joo teng;
Tsoong gŏ joo peng.

"With few cravings of the heart, the health is flourishing;
With many anxious thoughts, the constitution decays."

"Unsullied poverty is always happy:
Impure wealth brings many sorrows."

"Consider not any vice as trivial, and *therefore* practice it:
Regard not any virtue as unimportant, and *therefore* neglect it."

"Prosecuting virtue, is like ascending a steep:
Pursuing vice, like rushing down a precipice."

But the antithetic parallel is used not merely to give a force to aphorisms. It appears occasionally, though perhaps somewhat less often, in the course of poetry; and is found to exist in every degree, from the strong mutual opposition of *all* the corresponding words in a couplet, to that of only *some* of them.

觀生如客豈能久　心境靜時身亦靜
信死有期安可逃　慾生還是病生時

貧寒親子離　俯面空長嘆
富貴他人聚　低首淚雙垂

Kwon seng joo kih, ke neng kew;
Sin sze yew ke, gan ko taou.

Sin king tsing she, shin yĕ tsing;
Yŏ seng hwan she ping seng she.

Yang mëen, koong chang tan,
Te show, luy shwong chuy:
Foo kwei,—t'ha jin tseu,
Pin han,—tsin tsze le.

"Look on life as an uncertain guest, that cannot remain;
Believe that death is fixed, and cannot be escaped."

"When the region of the heart* is at rest, the body too enjoys ease;
But the passions being excited, then disorders of the body arise"

"Supinely gazing, now I vent my sighs,
Now, bending down, in tears my sorrow flows;
The wealthy alien claims connubial ties,
The needy kinsman no relation knows!"†

The third sort of parallel, noticed by Dr. Lowth, is what he denominates the *synthetic*, or constructive, where each word and line does not exactly answer to its fellow as either equivalent or opposite in sense: but where there is a marked correspondence and equality in the construction of the lines—"such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative."

EXAMPLES.

"Is such then the fast which I choose?
That a man should afflict his soul for a day?
Is it, that he should bow down his head like a bulrush;
And spread sackcloth and ashes for his couch?
Shall this be called a fast,
And a day acceptable to Jehovah?"

This is by far the most common species of parallelism with the Chinese. Indeed the two first sorts, already described, are generally accompanied

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* Morally speaking, and meaning the *mind*.

† The 'Heir in old Age,' page 9.

by this last—the correspondence of sense, whether it consist in equivalency or opposition, is almost always attended by correspondence of construction: the latter is often found without the former, while the converse seldom takes place. It pervades their poetry universally, forms its chief characteristic feature, and is the source of a great deal of its artificial beauty. In nearly every specimen produced in the course of this treatise, it may be observed to exist in a more or less marked degree, and unless for the sake of regularity, it would seem almost superfluous to adduce particular examples here. In the romance called *Haoukewchuen*, or the "Fortunate Union," the first of the two following quatrains is introduced, in application to the hero, who is distinguished at once by his bravery and his abilities—in the second example, it will be observed that the words are very nicely balanced.

孤行不畏全憑膽
冷臉驕人要有才
膽似子龍重出世
才如李白再生来

百千萬事應難了
五六十年容易来
得一日閒一日
遇三杯飲飲三杯

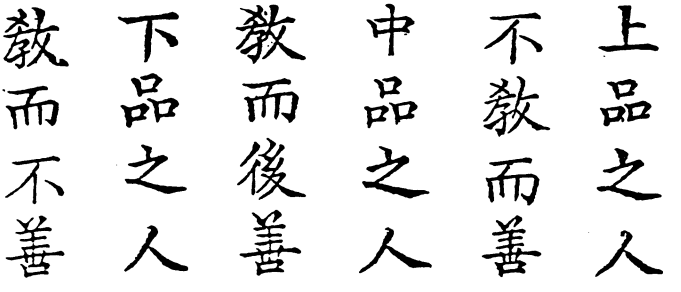
Koo hing puh wei, tseüen ping tan,
Leng lëen keaou jin, yaou yew tsae;
Tan, sze Tsze-loong choong chŭ she,
Tsae, joo Le-pih tsae seng lae.

Pih, tsëen, wan sze, ying nan leaou,
Woo, lew, shĕ nëen, yoong e lae:
Tĕ yih jĕ hëen, hëen yih jĕ,
Yu san pei yin, yin san pei.

"Thus alone and dauntless he walked—all confident in his courage;
Thus proud and reserved—he must needs possess high talents:
Courage—as if *Tszeloong*, the hero, had re-appeared in the world;
Talents—as though *Lepih*, the poet, had again been born."

"A hundred—a thousand—ten thousand projects are hard to accomplish;
Five times—six times—ten years very soon arrive:
When you have found a day to be idle—be idle for a day;
When you have met with three cups to drink—then drink your three cups!"

The constructional parallelism of sentences extends to prose composition, and is very frequent in what is called *wun-chang*, or fine writing, which is a measured prose, though not written line beside line, like poetry. Indeed all the three kinds may be met with occasionally in every description of writing that soars above the style of mere conversation or narrative. They do not *alone* constitute poetry, which must have the several other qualifications already mentioned, as measure, rhyme, &c.—but being allied to art and embellishment, they claim verse as their proper province, and are carried there to a greater degree of refinement than elsewhere. The three following prose sentences, in which there is a parallelism throughout, combined with a sort of anti-climax, are introduced chiefly for the sake of noticing a striking coincidence of sentiment, in a quarter where one is not prepared to meet with it, except in the case of the most obvious, simple, and general truths.



Shang pin che jin, puh keaou urh shen;
Chung pin che jin, keaou urh how shen;
Hea pin che jin, keaou urh puh shen.

"The highest order of men (called *Shing*, perfect or inspired) are virtuous, or wise,

independently of instruction:—the middle class of men (*Hëen*, good or moral) are so after instruction—the lowest order (*Yu*, stupid or worthless) are vicious in spite of instruction."

These three classes are, strange to say, most exactly defined in the following passage from the Works and Days of Hesiod*—the sentiment could scarcely be more nearly rendered.

Οὗτος μεν ΠΑΝΑΡΙΣΤΟΣ, ὸς αυτος παντα νοήσει,
ΕΣΘΛΟΣ δ' αυ κἀκεινος, ὸς ευ εικόντι πιθηται,
'Ος δε κε μητ' αυτος νοεῃ, μητ' αλλα ακὐων
Εν θυμῳ βαλληται, ὸδ' αυτ' ΑΧΡΗΙΟΣ ἀνηρ.

Of the different sorts of parallelism it is perhaps needless to observe, that in no other language could they be carried to such a height as they are in Chinese: the exact equality in the number of words, which form each line of a poetical couplet, and the almost total absence of recurring particles that encumber our European languages, admit of their being adopted with peculiar effect. There is something of an antithetic parallel in the two first lines of Horace's well-known apologue.

"Rusticus urbanum murem mus paupere fertur
Accepisse cavo, veterem vetus hospes amicum."

But to make this resemble the arrangement of a Chinese couplet—to make the antithesis *sentential* as well as *verbal*, it would be necessary to set prosody at defiance, and write the corresponding words opposite to one another, somewhat in the following way:

Rusticus mus, vetus hospes, accepisse fertur
Urbanum murem, veterem amicum, cavo paupere.†

Such refinements, though to some they may appear to savour of trifling, certainly contribute to heighten the peculiar rythmus of the poetry into which they are introduced, at the same time that they tend to increase its difficulties, and enhance the merit of the composition on the same principle that makes our neighbours, the French, so tenacious of rhyming

* Edit. Robinson: page 146.

† It is evident that this transposition ruins the peculiar beauty of expression in the Latin, arising from the immediate contiguity of the antithetic, or corresponding words in the same line, which would be impracticable in the Chinese—a language entirely devoid of all inversion.

tragedies, and the unities of the drama—"L'art en devient plus difficile, et les difficultés vaincues donnent en tout genre du plaisir et de la gloire."

The Chinese are so fond of their parallelisms, that the most common decorations of rooms, halls, and temples, are ornamental labels hung opposite to each other, or side by side, and called *Tuy-lëen*, which has precisely the meaning of the English term. These are sometimes inscribed on coloured paper, sometimes carved on wood, and distinguished by painting and gilding—but always in pairs. They have generally an allusion to the circumstances of the dwelling, or of the inhabitant: and, by way of illustration merely, we might imagine some Chinese, who affected a just mediocrity in his desires and wishes, suspending on one side of his study a sentence which should have the meaning of

Caret obsoleti sordibus tecti,

and, exactly opposite to it, another sentence in as many words,

Caret invidendâ sobrius aulâ.

The two first of the following examples were supplied by the kindness of Dr. Morrison:* they were taken down by him, during our progress with the British embassy, in the interior of China. The last couplet I wrote down myself, on a visit to a native.

松栢蒼龍層漢上
梧桐丹鳳五雲邊
練達人情皆學問
洞明世故即經綸
赫赫有時還寂寂
閒閒到底勝勞勞

* In conversing with Dr. Morrison on this property of Chinese verse, and remarking that it was common to other languages, he suggested my adding to the present treatise a close comparison (like the one which I have here instituted) with the instances adduced by Bishop Lowth from the Hebrew. For the hint, therefore, I stand indebted to him.

Soong-pih tsang Loong tseng han shang;
Woo-tong tan Foong woo yun pëen.

Lëen tă jin-tsing keae heŏ-wun;
Tong ming she-koo tsëĕ king-lun.

Hih-hih yew she hwan shuh-shuh;
Hëen-hëen taou te shing laou-laou.

"From the Pine forest, the azure dragon ascends to the milky way:
From the Dryandra cordata, the crimson phœnix aspires to the borders of the variegated clouds."*

"Experience and discernment of the human passions may both be called learning;
Deep and clear insight into the ways of the world also constitute subtle genius."†

"Fame and ambition themselves must have their intervals of repose:
Retirement and leisure are, after all, preferable to labour and anxiety."

PART II.

Thus much having been said concerning mere versification, or what may be styled the outward form of Chinese poetry, we have next to consider the spirit that animates it—and to ascertain, moreover, under what separate classes this department of their literature may be properly arranged, when viewed in relation to the divisions and nomenclature of European criticism.

It is here deemed necessary to premise, that such a mode of treating our subject is not adopted with the desire, or indeed with much prospect, of discovering any great correspondence or resemblance: but the process of comparison, to whatever result it may lead, is always useful on such occasions. It serves to methodize and give clearness to our conceptions of a subject comparatively new, as the artist sometimes introduces into his sketch a few objects of known and determinate dimensions, to assist in con-

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* The dragon and phœnix are here typical of the prosperous man rising to high fame and honours.

† Intended to shew, that true scholarship and genius are not confined to the mere knowledge of letters.

veying juster notions of what he represents besides. On this occasion, too, it has another, and a peculiar use: for every thing concerning China stands unfortunately so insulated and remote from whatever generally constitutes a source of interest to Englishmen, that the only effectual way of attracting attention to it, is by bringing it in contact with objects nearer home, and thus allowing it to derive, from association, its fair share of advantage.

Unless submitted with some degree of allowance to the touchstone of European taste, the poetry of China might possibly succeed but indifferently. The test, if it be not considerately applied, is not only an illiberal, but an absurd one; and we have no right hastily to condemn the devotion which the ultra-Gangetic muse (however foreign to ourselves may be her features and garb) inspires in her own native haunts; or to be surprized at the number of her exalted admirers, from Confucius down to Keënlong,—considering that national taste is the most conventional and capricious thing in the world; that it is determined by the infinite varieties of national character, national models, and national associations; and that even with the same old copies to refer to, and with a general similarity of institutions and customs, the different nations of the great European community vary, on such points, not a little among themselves.

Scimus,—et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.

There seem to be two causes, to which Chinese literature, of the lighter or ornamental kind, has owed its indifferent reception in the West—first, a want of choice and selection in the subjects—and secondly, a considerable absence of taste and judgment in the mode of treating them. It is really too much to expect that people will trouble themselves to look at what is either stupid and good-for-nothing in itself, or so marred in the intermediate process, as to have lost all the attraction that it possessed in the original state. Let us only place the Chinese in our own situation on such occasions, and imagine the dismay of some fastidious scholar who should unluckily stumble upon one of our street-ballads, *done* into bad Chinese, that is, with a verbal adherence to the original. It would either prove a perfect enigma, which is supposing the most fortunate case,—or he would thank his stars that the broad ocean divided him from such savages, and burn a supernumerary stick of incense before the shrine of his deified patron. The interests and reputation of Chinese literature in Europe therefore seem to demand, that its professors take some pains to render its introduction as attractive as possible, by a careful selection of the best subjects,

and by treating these in such a manner as shall interest the greatest number of tasteful and cultivated readers. To weary the attention with a mere list of barbariphonous and uncouth names, to produce some bald and miserably verbal translation, to present the mere *caput mortuum* of something that in its original shape possessed spirit and beauty, is in fact scaring away attention from a new subject, which, with a little discretion, might be rendered sufficiently attractive even to *general* readers. With such considerations in view, we might look to the successful exploring of the Chinese mine, and to the extraction of the ore of genius and sense from the mass of baser matter in which it happened to be imbedded.

Whenever a work of taste meets with universal approval in its own country, we may be assured that its success is in great measure owing to the merits of its style and language; and therefore it seems singularly injudicious to think of transferring the spirit and effect of such a Chinese composition into bad English, which it must inevitably become, by a servile adherence to the letter of the original. Between the greater number of European languages there is a certain connection, which allows literalness of rendering to be carried to a great extent—but a verbal translation from the one concerning which we now treat, must of necessity degenerate into a horrible jargon, which few persons will undergo the disgust of perusing. These observations do not apply in the same manner to works of scientific or doctrinal detail, as to those of mere *taste*, whose end and aim is to convey pleasure, as well as instruction,—though perhaps chiefly the first. A certain distinction, too, must be made between *prose* and *poetry*: the former doubtless both requires and admits of a closer rendering—with regard to the latter, we may adopt the happy illustration used on a similar occasion, "Celui qui prétendrait juger de quelque POEME que ce fût dans une traduction littérale, pourrait aussi raisonnablement espérer de trouver, sur le revers d'une tapisserie, les figures qu'elle représente dans toute leur délicatesse et toute leur splendeur." Verse, then, must be the shape into which Chinese, as well as all other poetry, ought to be converted, in order to do it mere justice; though in the present treatise, where so many different pieces are introduced for such different purposes, it has been thought expedient to adopt by turns a *prose translation*, a faithful *metrical version*, or an *avowed paraphrase*, as might best suit the subject and the occasion. More has been deferred herein, than suited the writer's own judgment and

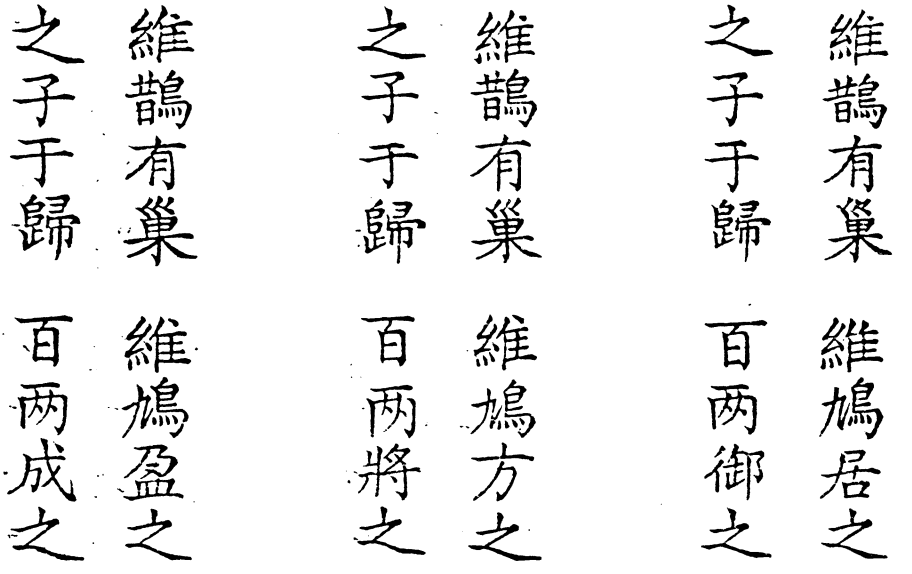
inclinations, to the prejudices of those who are still partial to the literal side of the question.

To take up our subject at its commencement—the earliest poetry of China, like that of all other nations, appears to have consisted in songs and odes, intended occasionally to be accompanied by music. Such is the nature of that curious compilation, made more than two thousand years since by Confucius, and illustrative of a state of things certainly very different from that which exists at the present day. It is divided into four portions, of which the first, the largest, and most interesting, is called *Kwŏ foong*, "the manners of different states,"—that is, of the states into which a portion of the present empire was then divided. These had all of them a kind of feudal dependence on one sovereign, who, in order to possess himself of the best means of estimating the character and sentiments of the various people more or less under his sway, was furnished with the songs and odes most popular among each of them. This agrees in a singular manner with the following remark of a writer in the Spectator.* "I have heard," says he, "that a minister of state in the reign of Queen Elizabeth had all manner of books and ballads brought to him, of what kind soever, and took great notice how much they took with the people; upon which he would, and certainly might, very well judge of their present dispositions, and of the most proper way of applying them according to his own purposes."

The bulk of these curious vestiges of antiquity in the Sheeking do not rise beyond the most primitive simplicity, and their style and language, without the minute commentary that accompanies them, would not be always intelligible at the present day. This commentary, however, explains and elucidates their meaning, and, by means of the historical associations which it serves to convey, renders these songs the favourite study of the better informed at the present remote period. Every well-educated Chinese has the most celebrated pieces by heart, and there are constant allusions to them in modern poetry and writings of all kinds. Each stanza frequently ends with a species of repetition, or 'refrain,' common to such compositions in general, and, in proof of the extreme simplicity of these primitive songs, one of them is presented below. In the paraphrase which follows, it has been necessary to embody the full sense of what is only hinted at

* No. 502.

in the original, and explained at length in the commentary; according to which commentary, the ode has a reference to the success of a rich and powerful suitor, who carries off the bride that had already been contracted to a humbler rival. The *kieu*, or robber-bird, is constantly alluded to in modern writing, as the emblem of unjust appropriation.



" The nest yon winged artist builds,
The robber-bird shall tear away:
—So yields her hopes th'affianced maid,
Some wealthy lord's reluctant prey.

" The anxious bird prepares a home,
In which the spoiler soon shall dwell:
—Forth goes the weeping bride, constrain'd,
A hundred cars the triumph swell.

" Mourn for the tiny architect,
A stronger bird hath ta'en its nest:
—Mourn for the hapless, stolen-bride,
How vain the pomp to soothe her breast!"

The second and third parts of the ancient book of odes, called respectively *Taya*, and *Seaouya*, are said to have been composed for the purpose of being sung or recited on state occasions; they treat of the great and virtuous actions of heroes and sages, or express their sentiments. The

following example, however, which is taken from the Seaouya, would seem rather to be of a more private description. It is explained as referring to the pain, felt by the poet, at the unworthy conduct of some ungrateful friend; and the allusions to the storm, &c. are of course figurative.

習習谷風　維風及雨
將恐將懼　維予與女
將安將樂　女轉棄予

習習谷風　維風及頹
將恐將懼　寘予于懷
將安將樂　棄予于遺

習習谷風　維山崔嵬
無草不死　無木不萎
忘我大德　思我小怨

"Now scarce is heard the zephyr's sigh
To breathe along the narrow vale:
Now sudden bursts the storm on high,
In mingled rush of rain and hail.
—While adverse fortune louring frown'd,
Than our's no tie could closer be;
But lo! when ease and joy were found,
Spurn'd was I, ingrate—spurn'd by thee!

"Now scarce is felt the fanning air
Along the valley's sloping side;
Now winds arise, and light'nings glare,
Pours the fell storm its dreadful tide!
—While fears and troubles closely prest,
By thee my love was gladly sought;
But once again with quiet blest,
Thou view'st me as a thing of nought!

"The faithless calm shall shift again,
Another gale the bleak hill rend,
And every blade shall wither then,
And every tree before it bend:
—Then shalt thou mourn thy lonesome lot,
Then vainly seek the injur'd man,
Whose virtues thou hadst all forgot,
And only learn'd his faults to scan."

The fourth and last portion, of the ancient poetical classic, is called *Soong*, that is, eulogies or panegyrics on the ancestors of the dynasty Chow, then filling the throne, and on the great personages of antiquity. They appear to have been a species of hymn, sung before the emperor when he sacrificed as *pontifex maximus*, (which has always been the particular office of Chinese sovereigns) in the temples of heaven and earth, or in the hall of his ancestors. Whatever may be the real character of the Sheeking on the score of poetical merit, it is at least curious, as having been *compiled* more than twenty centuries prior to our time, and some portions of it *composed* at a still earlier date. A pervading characteristic of the whole, as might be predicted of the early poetry of every country, is the boldness and frequency of the figures which are introduced.*

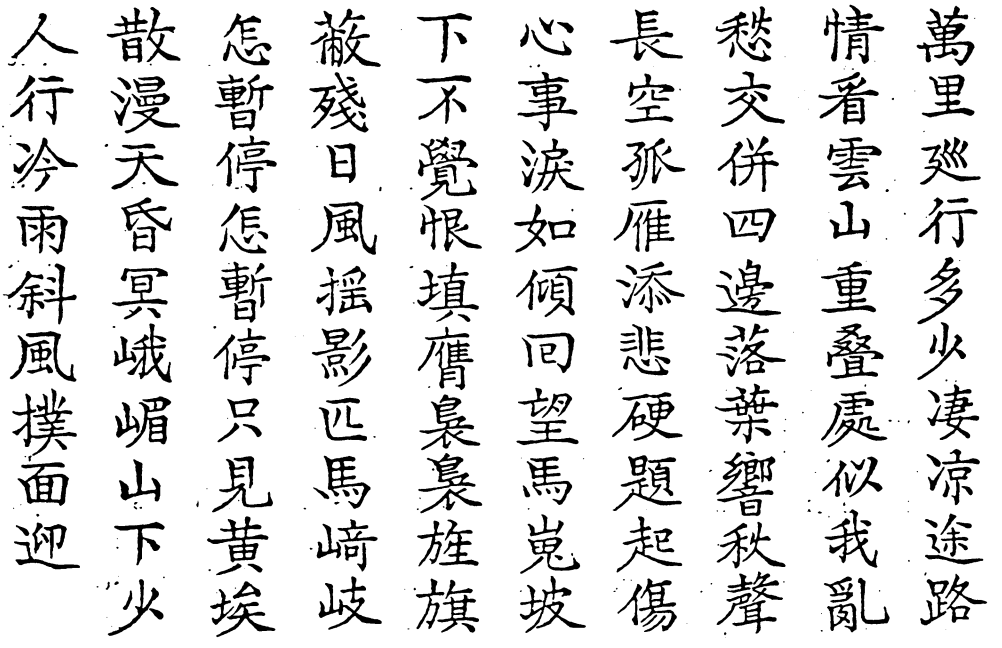
It may be laid down as a rule, that every species of composition will be studied and perfected, in exact proportion to the estimation in which it is held, or the grandeur or interest of the occasions on which it is employed. When lyric compositions, like the odes of Pindar, and the Carmen Seculare, &c. of Horace, were displayed on great national and religious festivals—or shone forth the subjects of public, or imperial patronage, they became objects to which the first geniuses of the age directed their efforts; and the perfection which they attained was commensurate with the esteem

* One of the most striking examples appears as a quotation in Dr. Morrison's Dictionary, Part I. page 434:

"The royal legions were numerous and imposing;
Swift, as if they flew upon wings;
Impetuous, as a torrent or a cataract;
Firm, as the base of a mountain;
Resistless, as the course of a river;
Forming an unbroken line, in matchless order;
Their motions inscrutable, their prowess invincible,
They proceeded to the conquest of the state Seu."

in which they were held. In modern China, if odes are expressly composed for great court ceremonials, we have not yet met with any—such ceremonials are frequently accompanied by music, but that there are words to the music has not been so clearly ascertained.

There is a common species of composition called *Keŏ*, which cannot be better rendered than by Song, or Rhapsody. Its structure is as wild as the thoughts and imagery which it generally contains, the lines being of every length, but distinguished by recurring rhymes at intervals. Here follows a specimen.



"In my wanderings of a thousand leagues, how many mournful thoughts afflict me on the road—I behold yon cloudy mountains piled one upon the other,—the emblems of my accumulated sorrows.—Around me the dropping leaves produce an autumnal sound—In the vast expanse, the solitary wild-fowl adds to my silent grief—I brood over my cares, and my tears descend—Looking back towards the base of *Matuy* Hill, an involuntary melancholy fills my breast—I see the waving banners intercept the setting sun—their shadows dancing in the breeze*—My horse has stopped at the pre-

* This alludes to a tragical event in history, which occurred at the above-mentioned place. The emperor Yuentsoong (A.D. 702) had a mistress named Yangkuei, who was discovered carrying on an intrigue with a Tartar prince or noble, called Ganloshan. The emperor abstained from punishing the guilty female, which led to remonstrances on the part of his ministers; but instead of attending to them, he complied with the request of Yangkuei, and

cipitous turning—Wherefore do we linger, wherefore do we linger—There is nought but the yellow sand drifting around—The sky is growing dark and gloomy—Few are the passengers at the foot of yon arched mountain:—the cold rain, urged by the gusty wind, is driving in my face."

Popular songs and ballads hold but a low rank in the literature of the country: and if we should even go so far as to include under this denomination the detached snatches of irregular verse (also called *Kcŏ*) which are met with in their drama, the truth of the position would not be materially affected. The stage, and every thing pertaining to it, enjoys a lower estimation than in any part of Europe: and we may take occasion to notice in this place, that the Chinese cannot strictly be said to possess *dramatic* poetry, in the sense which the term bears among ourselves, who apply it to the whole of a dramatic composition, and chiefly to tragedy. They make no distinction between tragedy and comedy in their stage pieces, the dialogue of which is composed in ordinary *prose;* while the principal performer now and then chaunts forth, in unison with music, a species of song or 'vaudeville;' and the name of the tune or air is always inserted at the top of the passage to be sung. Here follow a few lines from the drama* called 'An Heir in Old Age.' The chief character in the piece, an old man who is anxious to obtain an heir before he dies, sets fire to his bonds of debt, hoping that such a sacrifice may induce the accomplishment of his wishes—and when the papers are consumed he breaks out thus:

"Do'st ask me why, by this rash hand,
A treasure to the flames was given?
Why but t'avert, ere yet too late,
The vengeance of offended heaven!

Full sixty years, by various arts,
For wealth I've toil'd, without an heir:
Who knows but heaven may yet relent,
And listen to a suppliant's prayer!"

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gave the Tartar a military command within his dominions. No sooner had the latter reached his destination, than he set up the standard of rebellion, and the emperor, hastily assembling a large army, and accompanied by his favourite Yangkuei, proceeded to meet him in Szechuen. When they had reached the base of the mountain *Matuy*, the soldiers mutinied, declaring that Yangkuei was the occasion of the rebellion, and demanding that she should be put to death before they consented to meet the enemy. The emperor was obliged to comply, and ordered her to be strangled on the spot—but his subsequent grief for her fate was the cause of his own death.

* London, 1816. French version, Paris, 1819.

While it is true that the Chinese themselves made no distinction between comedy and tragedy, a translator from their language is still at liberty to apply those terms, according to the serious and dignified, or comic and familiar character of the composition which he selects. The writer of this has therefore not scrupled to give the title of tragedy to a rather favourable specimen of the Chinese stage, which he lately put into an English dress. In the unity of the plot, the dignity of the personages, the grandeur and importance of the events, the strict award of what is called poetical justice, —nay, in the division into five principal portions or acts, it might satisfy the most fastidious and strait-laced of European critics. Love and war, too, constitute its whole action, and the language of the imperial lover is frequently passionate to a degree one is not prepared to expect in such a country as China. The nature of its civil institutions, and the degraded state of the female sex, might generally be pronounced unfavourable to the more elevated strains of the erotic muse. The bulk of the people, it might be thought, are too much straitened for the bare means of subsistence, through the pressing demands of an excessive population, to admit of their lounging about and singing after the most approved manner of idle shepherds and shepherdesses; and the well-educated class, which comprehends almost all the higher ranks, or those in the employ of the government, too proud and unfeeling to make love the theme of their compositions, which are doubtless *chiefly* confined to moral and speculative, or descriptive subjects. The Drama in question, however, if it served no better purpose, might teach us not to pronounce too dogmatically on such points by reasonings *a priori*, but to wait patiently for the fruits of actual research and experience.

It has been observed in Part I. that the most flourishing era of modern poetry was under the Tāng dynasty. The most celebrated poet of that age was the renowned Letaepih, born in the province Szechuen, about A.D. 720. He is made to give the following account of himself in a play called the "Golden Token," which the writer of this once thought of putting into English, but abandoned as deficient in plot and incident. "When I was born," says the poet, "my mother dreamed that the morning star shone upon her bosom, and hence called me Taepih, 'surpassing brightness:' when the Emperor Yuentsoong commenced his reign, I was admitted to an audience in the imperial hall, and conversed of state affairs: the son of heaven conferred on me a repast, and helped me with his own hand." The poetical character in China has of old been associated with

the liberal use of wine. Letaepih's intemperate propensities occasioned, it is said, his banishment from court; but he remained uncured, and at last fell overboard from the boat in which he was travelling, and was drowned. Any one who thought it worth his while to know more concerning this person, and some of his cotemporaries, might find their lives (though without their poetry) given at some length by Father Amyot, in the fifth volume of the Mémoires sur les Chinois.

A number of esteemed collections, called Tāngshee, or 'Poems of the Tāng Dynasty,' are regarded, for the most part, as the compositions of Letaepih, and a few more of the better poets of that day. They contain many favourable specimens, evincing both taste and imagination, and the following passage may perhaps be considered as tolerable. A person fishing in a boat, upon a lake, is supposed to have been led, by the track of peach blossoms floating on the water, into a narrow creek, which he pursued to a distance, until he reached a place inhabited by beings who, from the primitive simplicity of their manners, seemed to have escaped, in that secluded retreat, the persecution of the celebrated tyrant Tsinchehwong, and to have had no communication with the rest of the world since. On his return from this little Chinese paradise, the adventurous boatman related what he had seen,—or perchance only dreamed; but on attempting to find the place again, it had vanished. There is a neat allusion to the famous burning of the books by the tyrant's command.

炊煙落落少人居
風景依稀太古餘
草木盡生無稅地
子孫常讀未燒書
鷄鳴白日来溪洞
犬吠紅雲出草廬
若使扁舟能再返
十年余欲效為漁

"*The Inlet of Peach Blossoms.*"

"Few were th' inhabitants of that fair dell,—
Remnants their manners were of other days,—
Flourish'd their fields in peace,—no impost fell
Midway check'd labour's fruitful course,—the lays
Their children sung had 'scaped the *general blaze:*
Adown the vale was heard the cock's shrill strain;
The watch-dog's voice welcom'd the morning rays;
Oh, could my bark those happy fields regain,
Long years of toil I'd brave—nor deem my labours vain."

The following specimen is from the same collection with the preceding. The value of timely showers, to which it alludes, can only be duly felt in a hot climate and a thirsty soil like the south of China, where, according to the common saying, "Three days make a short drought—five days a long one."

好雨知時節
當春乃發生
隨風潛入夜
潤物細無聲
野徑雲俱黑
江船火獨明
曉看紅濕處
花重錦官城

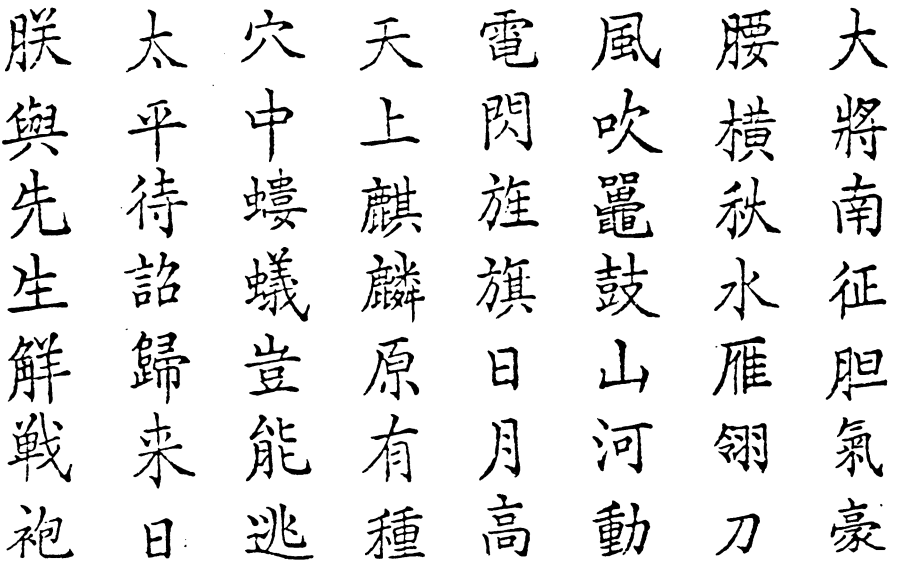
"*An Evening Shower in Spring,*'

"See how the gently falling rain
Its vernal influence sweetly showers,
As through the calm and tepid eve
It silently bedews the flowers:

"Cloudy and dark th' horizon spreads,
—Save where some boat its light is burning:
But soon the landscape's tints shall glow
All radiant, with the morn returning."

There exist abundant materials of poetry in what may be called the heroic ages of China, when she was divided into independent states, con-

tending against each other for sovereignty. The following lines are supposed to have been written by a certain emperor to his victorious general, of whose successes in the south he had just heard. The third and fourth lines are transposed in our version.



"*The South subdued.*"

"Servant, well done—the erring south restor'd,
Bends to the prowess of thy glittering sword;
High as the orbs thy light'ning standard gleams,
Thy drum's loud music shakes the mountain streams:
And heaven's own race alights on earth again,
The foe to scatter to their murky den!
Know, when with pride thy glad return we hail,
Thy sovereign's hand shall loose his hero's mail!"

No composition, however, to which the name of Epic could properly be applied, has ever rewarded European research. Though poetry exists in some shape or other all over the world, the same universality hardly attaches to that modification of it which we style the Epopee: and, but for the two great prototypes of Homer, there seems to be no absolute necessity for supposing that it must have arisen, or at least been so frequent, in our western literature. It was confessedly in imitation of Homer

that Virgil wrote, and all subsequent epics have been more or less, in conception at least, if not in execution, imitations of these two, or of each other. Voltaire himself has informed us, that when he consulted the advice of a friend previous to composing his own poem, he met with no better encouragement than this: "You undertake a work which is not suited to us—les Français n'ont pas la tête epique"—But without going farther for reasons, the first part of this treatise may perhaps have served to demonstrate, that the turn and construction of Chinese verse unfits it for such sustained compositions. To be esteemed good, it must be so highly elaborated, that the costliness of the material may place limits to the size of the structure. It would be a tremendous attempt to preserve such nicely balanced couplets through the slow length of an epic poem; not to mention, that when the task had been completed, it might weary the reader as much as it had disquieted the author, and bestow upon the first all the sleep of which it had deprived the second. The only long metrical narrations of the Chinese are some novels and licentious* pieces, in which the structure of the verse is altogether loose—a sort of 'stans pede in uno' measure—and devoid of those characteristics which constitute the chief merit of their poetry. Such compositions, accordingly, do not possess that degree of estimation, nor hold that rank in literature which, as we have before observed, is necessary to the due perfection of every department of the art.†

There is another description of poetry which we should not look for in China, namely, the Pastoral,—and for very obvious reasons. It has not only been the care of the government, from the earliest ages, to give every direct encouragement to agriculture, and to the production of food for man

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* There never was any assertion more incorrect than this of Martinius, concerning the lighter poetry of China. "Insunt iis quædam de amando, sed castitatem magis quam nostrorum poetarum mollitiem spirantia, *magnâ decori ubique curâ*."—In translating the excellent prose romance of *Haoukewchuen*, otherwise unexceptionable, the writer of this was obliged to exclude two passages in verse, which were distinguished—'*minimâ decori curâ*.' There are whole poems of the same description.

† Those half-mechanical conceits, of which the principal merit consists in the imitation, in tortured verses, of some object in art or nature, as a knot, a circle, a sceptre, &c. are well known to the Chinese: but sound taste and real genius have universally consigned these *difficiles nugæ* to a very low rank in literature, and we therefore abandon them without further notice.

alone, but there have always existed some absurd prejudices and maxims, not to say positive laws, against an extended consumption of flesh food.* The penal code denounces severe punishments against those who kill *their own* cattle without an express license.† It is a well known principle, that where tillage exists to a considerable extent, the rent of land reserved for pasture must, in proportion to its goodness, be equal to that of land employed in producing grain; and this, under a rice cultivation, where three crops per annum are said sometimes to be obtained, must have such an obvious effect in raising the comparative price of meat, as must necessarily discourage its consumption among so frugal a people as the Chinese, even without the intervention of any positive law. There is accordingly no people in the world (the Hindoos‡ always excepted), that consumes so little meat, or so much fish and vegetable food—nor, again, is there any country in which fewer cattle are employed for the purposes of draft and burthen. Where every institution tends so fatally to keep a population up to the very utmost limits of a bare subsistence, and where neither pride nor prejudice steps in between the labourer and his work, human exertion naturally supplants every other. In the southern parts of the empire, therefore, beasts of carriage and draft, with the exception of a few miserable riding horses, and a few buffaloes for ploughing, are nearly unknown. Towards Peking, and the uncultivated borders of Tartary, the case becomes altered: but the Great Wall may still be considered, generally, as the boundary which separates two people, one of them exclusively pastoral, and the other as exclusively tillers of the earth.

The esteem in which the business of tillage is held, may be expected to have rendered it the subject of poetical celebration: and we find the praises of fertile fields sung in such strains as the following. Years of dearth they term 'years of nothingness.'

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* See a long paper, 'Sur l'usage de la viande en Chine.' Mémoires, T. xi.

† Book iv. sect. 233.

‡ Bishop Heber's Journal proves that the Hindoos themselves are not so scrupulous as they have been supposed. They consume milk, too, which the Chinese, strange to say, never think of.

人工雖未及
不任耕耘早
無年皆有穫
膴膴千畝
何須祭田祖
況值春臺啟

地力信非常
偏宜黍稷良
後種亦先芳
菁菁保萬箱
詎要察農祥
和風日又長

"Fields that know no years of Dearth."

"Though man's superfluous labour ceas'd to till
The fertile glebe, ne'er would its bounties end:
Though rusting lay the abandon'd ploughshare—still
O'er the fair land would waving harvests bend.

"Less happy soils may pine in years of dearth—
Late though we sow, we *early* reap the field;
A thousand roods of richly-teeming earth,
In verdant crops ten thousand measures yield!

"Why haunt we, then, the sylvan's mossy shrine—
Why ask what harvest shall our toils attend?
See the sweet spring with surer presage shine,
And balmy airs, and length'ning days descend!"

We have next to notice a large class of poetry, which may be properly styled Moral or Didactic. The long citation from the philosopher Kwou-

footsze, given by Dr. Morrison at p. 147 of the Third part of his Dictionary, comes under this head. It commences thus:

> " Venerate heaven and earth: perform the rites to the gods;
> Worship your ancestors: be dutiful to your parents:
> Observe the laws: revere your teachers and superiors,
> Love your brothers: and be true to your friends," &c.

The whole piece bears some resemblance to the Golden verses of Pythagoras, particularly in the commencement, which may be thus literally rendered:

> " First, as the laws ordain, th' immortal gods
> Worship: observe your vows: the great of yore
> Next, and the manes of the dead revere:
> Honour your parents, and your next of kin," &c.

There are innumerable poems, or rather metrical essays, whose object it is to convey the doctrines and precepts of the great national sages and others. The whole of the well-known work called Shingyu, or Instructions addressed to the people by the second Emperor of the present Tartar family, has been cast into a short, chyming verse. The example, given in Part I. at page 401, comes likewise under this head; as do all the similar productions of the Budhists, and other sects. We must consider them as forming a portion of the national literature in the gross, although they have nothing to do with Confucius or his doctrines, and are commonly held by the privileged learned in as great contempt as the superstitions to which they pertain.

In the course of their lighter works, Chinese writers frequently introduce moral reflections in verse with very good effect. A couplet, a quatrain, or a passage of eight or more lines agreeably engages the reader's attention in his progress through a romance or novel, and generally accompanies the transition to some other part of the story. They are not altogether unlike the rhymes at the close of the scenes in our older plays, and usually consist, as those did, of some reflection upon what has gone before, or what is immediately to follow; though in a narrative they certainly find a more proper place than in the drama, and are not there subject to the reproach of bad taste, which has very properly excluded such passages from our own modern stage pieces. Here follow examples from the " Fortunate Union."

奸狡休誇用智深　　糢糊世事倏多變
誰知敗露出無心　　直至交情久自深
勸君不必遮人目　　若問老天顛倒意
上有蒼蒼日鑒臨　　大都假此煉人心

"Vain are the crafty villain's wiles, most vain,
Often, when vaunted most—disgrace, defeat,
Rush headlong in from quarters little fear'd!
Hearken to counsel, friend, and when secure
You deem yourself from mortals' purblind eyes,
Think there's a heaven above, that surveys all!"

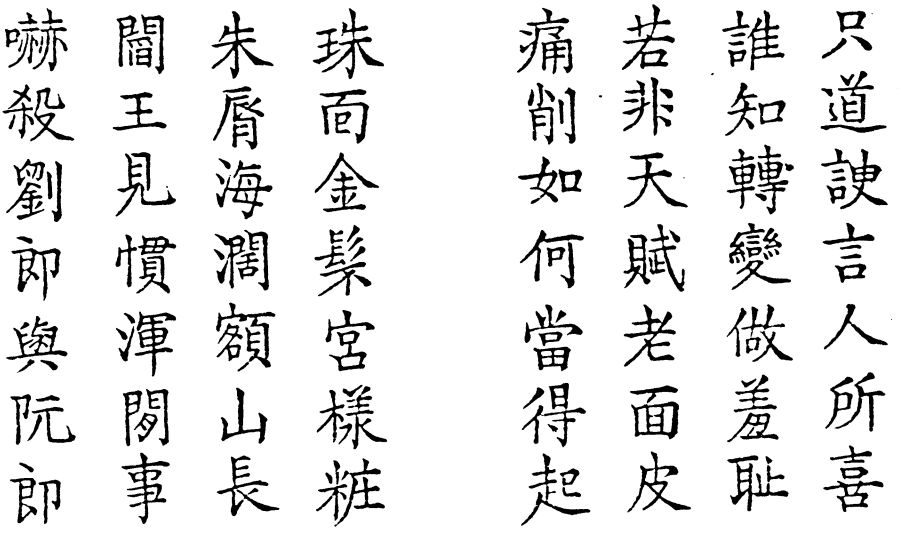
"Human events in quick vicissitude
Succeed each other: but true friendship's ties
Gain strength from time! Ask ye why sovereign heav'n
Thus vexes mortals?—'Tis to try their hearts
Like metal in the fiery crucible."

Satire, viewed as a means of recommending virtue by discrediting vice, cannot be said to exist in any regular form, or to constitute a particular branch of literature. Some of the ancient pieces in the Sheeking have been considered as levelled at persons existing when they were composed; but they have no more claim on this account to the name of satires, than Horace's ode "In Mævium." There is no country, at the same time, in which anonymous lampoons, and similar vehicles of invective or ridicule, are more common. They form one of the most ordinary outlets for the ebullitions of public feeling: and must be considered, by every person who

has had opportunities of making the observation, as a very important check, under so absolute a despotism, upon the conduct of Chinese rulers. The highest officers of government are not exempt from these covert attacks, which are constantly made, notwithstanding the severest punishments in case of detection.

—— "I will ease my heart,
Although it be with hazard of my head."

The following are specimens of satirical passages introduced in the course of a novel, to ridicule the worthless characters, both male and female.



"He thought his flattering phrases needs must prove
Welcome—nor dream'd of foul repulse and shame:
And had not bounteous heav'n his forehead arm'd
With impudence unmatch'd, this keen rebuff
Had stung him!

"In pearls and gold all gorgeously attir'd,
No arts could deck her native ugliness!
The demon king might view her as his own—
She carried terror to a bridegroom's eye!"

We now proceed to consider a very extensive department of Chinese poetry, the Descriptive, which to us strangers must be the most agreeable of all, and which really possesses some attractive features. The whole language abounds in figurative expressions, derived from the most pleasing or most striking objects and circumstances in nature. Thus 'Spring dreams and autumnal clouds' mean flitting visions of happiness—unattainable good is represented by 'the moon's reflection in the wave'—'floating clouds obscuring the day' express the temporary shade thrown by detraction on illustrious characters—difficulty of acting is figured by 'the grass and tangle in one's path'—female beauty by the obvious and common semblance of 'a fair flower'—'spring' is the emblem of joy, 'autumn' of sorrow—gladness is expressed by 'the heart's flowers being all full-blown'—the virtue of the female character is pictured under 'the white gem, the pure crystal, the cold and transparent ice'—'the season when peach-blossoms are in beauty' means that of marriage, because marriages were anciently celebrated in spring—searchers after pleasure are depicted under the figure of 'bees and butterflies among flowers'—and so on without end.

There exist a great number of figurative allusions, which contain a particular reference to some event in history or romance; and as the facts, or fables, at which these only *hint*, cannot sometimes be discovered without the assistance of a well-informed native, this circumstance constitutes a considerable obstacle, in the present state of our knowledge, to the successful study of Chinese poetry, any where but in the country itself. The following are examples of such allusions. 'The heart that responds to the lute,' means yielding to seductive arts, and refers to the story of a young damsel named *Wunkeun*, who being beloved by a youth called *Szemā*, was serenaded by him on the lute, with a song called Foong kew hwong, or the "Bird *foong* in search of its mate." The story says that *Ke sin tōng*, 'her heart was moved,' and she eloped with her admirer towards morning, leaving the traces of her flight along the dewy pathway.

A grateful return for benefits is implied under these expressions:—'The spirit which knit the grass'—and 'the bird that brought the yellow flowers.' 1. An emperor of the dynasty called *Chow*, enjoined it on his son and successor to bury alive, after the old Scythian or Tartar fashion, one of his favourite mistresses in the same grave with himself. The son, however, refrained from executing this portion of the imperial will, on the ground

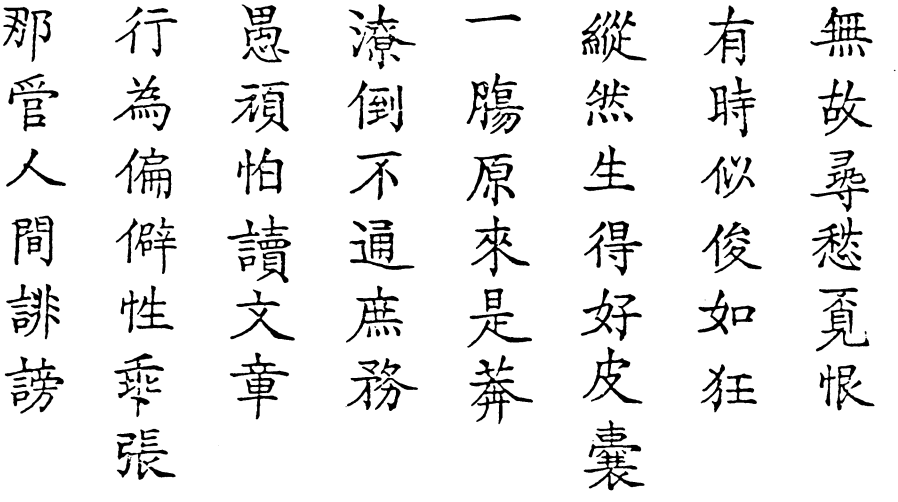
of its cruelty, and gave away the lady in marriage to a noble. On making war against the state called *Tsin*, the new Emperor was opposed by a formidable leader; but he dreamed at night that he saw the deceased father of the lady he had saved from death, who told him that in return for the life granted to his daughter, he would assist him against the enemy. The result proved the vision to be prophetic—the hostile leader was defeated, and some invisible agent so twisted the long grass which impeded his flight, as to cause his capture. 2. A person who saw a bird fall to the earth, wounded by an arrow, had the humanity to draw out the weapon, and restore the bird to liberty as soon as it recovered. Being soon afterwards sick and in danger of his life, the bird appeared to him, bearing in its bill some yellow flowers, which the patient was advised to try, and which presently restored him to health.

The poetry of China is not unsupplied with mythological aids: every element of nature,—with all the phenomena that these exhibit,—each hill, stream, and wood, has its presiding spirit. There is *Hwuyloo*, the monarch of fire; *Luykoong*, the thunder god; *Lŭhshin*, the spirit of the autumnal wave,—and others innumerable. An interesting divinity, called *Yuĕlaou*, 'the old man of the moon,' deserves some notice. It is his peculiar business to tie together at their birth, with an invisible silken cord, all youths and maidens who are predestined for each other, after which the most distant separation, and apparently insurmountable obstacles, cannot prevent their ultimate union. This is what is called *yewyuen*, 'having a connection in fate.' With such a variety of imaginative resources, and with some of the brightest leaves of the book of nature, displayed to them in an immense tract of country, surpassed by none in natural advantages, this people would be dull indeed if they could not turn to some account the materials which they possess.

The muse, too, may call to her assistance the smaller race of fairies or sprites, who are supposed to haunt the recesses of hills and woods, and to exercise either a benign or a malicious influence over mortals. Possessing but a vague notion of the ideas which the Chinese really entertained of these imaginary persons, the writer of this applied for information to his Sëenseng (or *pundit*, as such a character would be called less far to the east), and the reply was to this effect. "They are mysterious beings who convert themselves at will into the semblance, sometimes of beautiful wo-

men, at others of ugly monsters,—in infinite variety. They delight most in frustrating the attempts made by the devotees of Fŏ, or Budha, to reach a superhuman state, and whenever these chance to waver the least in their faith or practice, they become immediately *possessed* (chŏ leaou moo), that is, the malicious spirits acquire a dominion over them." Being asked if he believed in their existence, he seemed rather unprepared to answer, but observed, that they possessed the greatest influence over the minds of the country people, and the devotees of the superstition above-mentioned. It may be noticed, that Confucius neither gave the express sanction of his opinion to the existence of unembodied spirits, nor did he expressly deny the same: but transmitted these early traditions of his country exactly as he found them; busying himself chiefly with the more important concerns of political government and morals.

Several of the pieces already given might be arranged under the descriptive class. The following quotation from a novel called the 'Dreams of the Red Chamber,' is rather a poetical account of a young Chinese profligate, although it consists of a very irregular species of verse, in six and seven words.. The version below is lineatim, and almost verbatim, and pretends to nothing more than a very close adherence to the sense of the original; which, it must be remarked, is not an extract from a long poem, but one of those poetical breaks, with which prose works of taste are generally embellished.



富貴不知樂業
貧窮難耐凄凉
可憐辜負好韶光
于國于家無望
天下無能第一
古今不肖無雙
寄言紈袴與膏粱
莫效此兒形狀

"The paths of trouble heedlessly he braves,
Now shines a wit—and now a madman raves:
His outward form by nature's bounty drest,
Foul weeds usurp'd the wilderness, his breast;
And bred in tumult, ignorant of rule,
He hated letters—an accomplish'd fool!
In act deprav'd, contaminate in mind,
Strange! had he fear'd the censures of mankind.

Titles and wealth to him no joys impart—
By penury pinch'd, he sank beneath the smart:
Oh, wretch! to flee the good thy fate intends,
Oh, hopeless! to thy country and thy friends!
In uselessness, the first beneath the sky,
And curst, in sinning, wi[illegible] supremacy!
Minions of pride and luxury, lend an ear,
And shun his follies, if his fate ye fear!"

The language of descriptive poetry exists in every intermediate gradation, from the perfectly formed couplet and stanza, to those figurative compositions, which differ from prose in little else than the brilliancy of their imagery, or the elevation of their sentiment. Besides the *T'sze*, of which an example has been given in the First Part (page 409), there is a still less

fettered species—a kind of impassioned prose, into which the writer of a narrative now and then breaks forth, when inspired by the occasion. The following example is taken from the romance of the 'Fortunate Union,' and describes the heroine when she is first seen by her future lover. The parallelisms are marked and divided by colons in the translation.

嬌媚如花而肌膚光艷羞灼灼之浮華輕盈似燕而舉止安詳笑翩翩之失措眉畫春山而淡濃多態覺春山之有愧眼橫秋水而流轉生情怪秋水之無神腰纖欲折立亭亭不怕風吹後影難描鶴翼翼最宜月照髮光可鑑不假塗膏秀色堪飡何須膩粉慧心悄悄越掩越靈望而知其為仙子中人俠骨冷冷愈柔愈烈察而識其非閨閣之秀蕙性蘭心初只疑美人顏色珠圓玉潤久方知君子風流

"With the delicacy of a flower, her complexion displayed a clear brilliancy which put to shame the floating light of day: with the buoyant lightness of the swallow, her movements were ordered with inimitable grace and propriety. The arches of her brows were like the outlines of the vernal hills in the distance, but in their changeful expression they shamed the varying tints of even the vernal hills: the brightness of her eyes equalled that of the clear wave in autumn, but the living sentiment which flowed from them made you wonder how the autumnal wave had lost its deity.* Her waist, like a thread in fineness, seemed ready to break, yet was it straight and erect, and feared not the fanning breeze: the shadowy graces of her person it was as difficult to delineate, as

* Called Lŭhshin.

the form of the white bird, rising from the ground by moonlight. The natural gloss of her hair resembled the bright polish of a mirror, without the false assistance of unguents: her face was perfectly lovely in itself, and needed not paint to adorn it. The native intelligence of her mind seemed to have gathered strength from retirement, and beholding her, you might know she was of a superior order of beings: the cold and rigid strictness of her manners, severe as she herself was soft and delicate, proved her to be no ordinary inhabitant of the female apartments. Her sweet and feminine disposition, comparable to fragrant flowers, might lead one at first to class her with other fair ones: but the perfection of this pearl, the polish of this gem, discoverable on a longer acquaintance, proved that she possessed qualities not inferior to the most spirited of the opposite sex."

Under the descriptive class may be properly introduced a very singular production,—a poem on London, composed by a Chinese who visited England about the year 1813. Some notice of it appeared, for the first time, in the Quarterly Review for 1817; but as the present opportunity admits of the translation being accompanied by the original, no apology perhaps is needed for the insertion of the whole poem, notwithstanding its length, considering that it is a native of the remotest shores of Asia who sings the glories of the British capital—' præsertim cùm omne studium atque omne ingenium contulerit Archias ad populi Romani gloriam laudemque celebrandam.'—The reviewer made a trivial mistake in stating that it was written by ' a common Chinese,' for the author was in a respectable station of life, and a person of good acquirements, who accompanied home an English gentleman as his instructor in the language. He was in fact a very *uncommon* Chinese, inasmuch as he appears to have possessed an inclination and capacity for observation by no means usual among his travelled countrymen, who are generally of a class much inferior to himself. The remarks are, as might be expected, confined exclusively to objects which at once strike the eye, and they do not extend to the remoter points of intelligent investigation, since the author's very limited knowledge of our language, and total inability to comprehend the nature of our institutions, placed such higher objects entirely out of his reach. Being a simple description, the poem contains but few flights of fancy; and as it would be a hopeless attempt, however well they may sound in Chinese, to give dignity in verse to matters so perfectly domestic and familiar to ourselves, it has been judged best to subjoin a literal prose translation.

蘭塾十咏

海遥西北極　有國號英崙　地冷宜親火　樓高可摘星　意誠尊禮拜　心好尚持經　獨恨佛啷嘶　干戈不暫停

"London, *in Ten Stanzas*."

1.

"Afar in the ocean, towards the extremities of the north-west,
There is a nation, or country, called England:
The clime is frigid, and you are compelled to approach the fire;
The houses are so lofty, that you may pluck the stars:
The pious inhabitants respect the ceremonies of worship,
And the virtuous among them ever read the Sacred books:
They bear a peculiar enmity towards the *French* nation,
The weapons of war rest not for a moment (between them)."

山澤鍾靈秀　層巒展畫眉　賦人尊女貴　在地應坤滋　少女紅花臉　雀人白玉肌　由來情愛重　夫婦樂相依

2.

" Their fertile hills, adorned with the richest luxuriance,
Resemble, in the outline of their summits, the arched eye-brows (of a fair woman).
The inhabitants are inspired with a respect for the female sex,
Who in this land correspond with the perfect features of nature:
Their young maidens have cheeks resembling red blossoms,
And the complexion of their beauties is like the white gem:
Of old has connubial affection been highly esteemed among them,
Husband and wife delight in mutual harmony."

炤 相 尋 拾 欄 草 行 夐
霧 呼 花 麥 潤 長 人 月
恐 早 興 歌 任 資 不 村
迷 回 未 宜 棲 牧 斷 郊
留 首 休 唱 牛 馬 遊 晚

3.

" In the summer evenings, through the hamlets and gardens beyond the town,
Crowds of walkers ramble without number:
The grass is allowed to grow as a provision for horses,
And enclosures of wooden-rails form pastures for cattle.
The harvest is gathered in with the singing of songs:
The loiterers roam in search of flowers without end,
And call to each other to return in good time,
Lest the foggy clouds bewilder and detain them."

人 最 跳 曲 衣 生 燈 戲
人 是 舞 歌 裝 旦 後 樓
笑 詼 鼓 琴 錦 姿 綵 鬧
臉 諧 簫 笛 繡 容 屏 永
迴 趣 催 和 裁 美 開 晝

4.

" Their theatres are closed during the long days;
It is after dark that the painted scenes are displayed:
The faces of the actors are handsome to behold,
And their dresses are composed of silk and satin:
Their songs resound in unison with stringed and wind instruments,
And they dance to the inspiring note of drums and flutes:
It constitutes the perfection of harmonious delight,
Every one retires with a laughing countenance."

兩岸分南北
三橋隔水通
舟船過胯下
人馬步雲中
石磴千層疊
河流九派溶
洛陽天下冠
形勢畧相同

5.

" The two banks of the river lie to the north and south,
Three bridges interrupt the stream, and form a communication.
Vessels of every kind pass between the arches,
While men and horses pace among the clouds:
A thousand masses of stone rise one above the other,
And the river flows through nine channels:
The bridge of *Loyāng*, which out-tops all in our empire,
Is in shape and size somewhat like these."

富庶炤花地
人工鬪物華
帝城雙鳳闕
雲樹萬人家
公子馳車馬
佳人曳穀紗
六街花柳地
何處種桑蘇

6.

" It is a rich, populous, and highly adorned land,
Its workmen vie with each other in the excellence of their manufactures.
Within the circuit of the imperial residence is a splendid palace;
Lofty trees are immingled with unnumbered dwellings.
The young gentry ride in wheel-carriages and on horseback,
And the fair women clothe themselves in silken garments:
*The space in each street being devoted to ornament,
Where is there room for the mere useful productions of the earth?"

7.

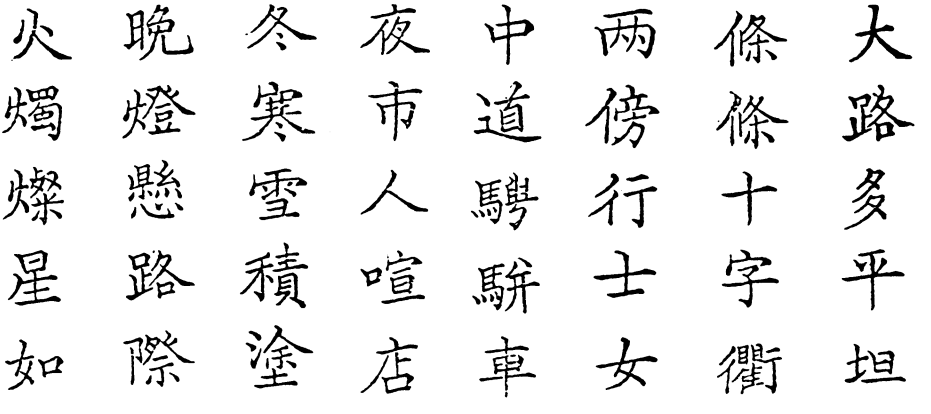
" The towering edifices rise story above story,
In all the stateliness of splendid mansions:
Railings of iron thickly stud the sides of every entrance,
And streams from the river circulate through the walls:
The sides of each apartment are variegated with devices;
Through the windows of glass appear the scarlet hangings:
And in the street itself is presented a beautiful scene,
The congregated buildings have all the aspect of a picture."

---

* Literally, " Every street being devoted to flowers and willows,
Where is there space to plant mulberries and hemp (to produce silk and flax)?"
—There are explanatory notes, and a commentary, in the original, which we have not thought it necessary to give here.

8.

" In London, about the period of the ninth moon,
The inhabitants delight in travelling to a distance:
They change their abodes, and betake themselves to the country,
Visiting their friends in their rural retreats:
The prolonged sound of carriages and steeds is heard through the day:
Then in autumn the prices of provisions fall:
And the greater number of dwellings being untenanted,
Such as require it are repaired and adorned."



9.

" The spacious streets are exceedingly smooth and level,
Each being crossed by others at intervals:
On either side perambulate men and women,
In the centre career along the carriages and horses:

The mingled sound of voices is heard in the shops at evening:
During midwinter the heaped-up snows adhere to the pathway:
Lamps are displayed at night along the street sides,
Whose radiance twinkles like the stars of the sky."

入 土 佳 美 烘 濃 由 地
席 風 醪 饌 麵 茶 來 冷
預 尊 酌 盛 裹 調 不 難
更 飲 玉 銀 脂 酪 阻 栽
衣 食 卮 盒 肥 潤 饑 稻

10.

"The climate is too cold for the cultivation of rice,
But they have for ages been exempt from the evils of famine:
With strong tea they immingle rich cream,
And their baked wheaten bread is involved in unctuous lard.
Here excellent meats are served in covers of silver,
And fine wines are poured into gem-like cups:
The custom of the country pays respect to the ceremony of meals,
Previous to the repast, they make a change in their vestments."

Of a similar description with the stanzas on London is another poem, not concerning the English exclusively, but Europeans in general, composed by a Hong merchant who has been dead some years. This person, notwithstanding his unpoetical profession, was possessed of very respectable literary acquirements, and one of his sons held a high rank in the imperial college at Peking.—"After an intercourse of thirty years (to use his own expressions), which had made him tolerably familiar with the peculiarities of foreigners, he had retired, stricken in years, into solitude, and amused himself over his cups (like Letaepih, of course) in composing a score of stanzas commemorative of some strange customs and opinions prevailing beyond the seas."—The production corresponds with its title, *Seyang tsăh-yoong*, "Unconnected Stanzas on Europeans;" and, after the perusal of the

foregoing description from a person who had viewed us at home, may be deemed curious, as depicting the estimate formed of us by one who had never left his own country. With that want of minute discrimination which might be expected under such circumstances, the verses treat chiefly of those leading features which are common to all nations wearing hats and coats, and mingle, together with the rest, the Roman Catholic ceremonies of the Portuguese at Macao. Being less interesting to Englishmen than the poem which has already been given at full length, it may suffice to present an abstract of whatever observations it contains most deserving of notice.

The retired Bard commences with lauding the good faith of the foreigners, who "make use of no formality, in their most extensive bargains, more solemn than a mere shake of the hand," and proceeds to hint, in the next verse, that "the simple virtues of barbarians have been the subject of praise from the oldest times." It is quite true that commercial transactions of the largest description are frequently conducted at Canton on the mere faith of promises; and the good poet had never been in the way of seeing our legal stamps and parchments at home, which might have gone far to make him withdraw his last compliment.

"When a guest arrives, the host helps him with his own hand to the juice of the grape,"—and it is added in a note, "they welcome visitors with wine, and not with tea," which is the Chinese fashion. "To touch glasses in drinking is a mark of friendship. In winter evenings they sit by the fire and pour out *cold* wine, careless of the snows which lie deep beyond the door." In China they always warm their wine.

"They make light of their lives," it is observed, "on occasions of personal contest, and when two of them quarrel, the consequences may be very serious. They stand face to face, and discharge fire-arms at each other on a given signal." In a note it is said, "If one fall, the survivor is not punished: if neither fall, there is an end of the quarrel." "They do this," adds the poet, "to shew that they are not afraid,—and so forth."

Our author marvels much at the comparatively late period at which Europeans marry, but endeavours to explain it in this way. "Their distant voyages abroad keep them long from home, and it is not until they have accumulated a fortune that they return to take a wife. Many do not marry before fifty years of age; and if the bride be very young on these occasions, it is no scandal." The knowledge of the worthy Hong merchant on this subject seems to have been much on a par with that of the St. Helena

lady, who asked if London were not thrown into a great bustle by the arrival of the India fleet.

" In the regulationof the annual period, they have no intercalary moon, but the new year always commences ten days after the winter solstice. On this occasion they powder their heads with white dust, and all get tipsy." This evidently refers to good old times, and to manners now gone by. The author himself adds in a note: " This habit has of late years worn out."—There is a variety of other detached observations, less worthy of notice, and the poem concludes with mentioning, that " the foreigners had been fighting together for some twenty years; but it was to be hoped they would soon make peace with one another, and all have an opportunity of improving themselves by an intercourse with China."

A retrospect of our subject might tend to shew, that the poetry of China most naturally arranges itself under three general heads. 1. Odes and Songs. —2. Moral and Didactic Pieces.—3. Descriptive and Sentimental. These different kinds are, however, so blended together occasionally, and run so much into one another, that it is not always very easy, nor indeed perhaps is it of much consequence, to separate them. It has been remarked before, that as the substance and dialogue of their drama is always in prose, and the musical parts come properly under the definition of songs, the Chinese cannot with strictness be said to possess what *we mean* by dramatic poetry, that is, tragedies or plays of any kind composed mainly in verse.

At the end of this treatise will be found a miscellaneous selection of poetical pieces, extracted at random; and for the satisfaction of those who may prefer such a mode, they are accompanied, not by metrical versions, but by prose translations, as literal as they could be well rendered;—although it must always be kept in mind, that this is a most disadvantageous dress for the poetry of any language whatever.

In thus coming to a conclusion, the author feels himself bound, as well for the sake of the subject, as his own, to notice the manner in which Professor Rémusat, of Paris, has done him the honour to quote his opinion regarding Chinese poetry. In the preface to his translation of the *Yu keaou le*, when treating of the passages in verse with which that novel is interspersed, and of their frequent obscurity, M. Rémusat observes, " Le traducteur des Nouvelles dont j'ai précédemment fait mention, assure que les vers dont il s'agit sont principalement destinés à flatter l'oreille, et que le sens y est très souvent sacrifié à l'harmonie." Now the passage to

which M. Rémusat alludes is the following, and it confines itself so expressly to the *musical*, or *operatic portions of the drama*, that it would seem impossible to extend its application either to novels, or to any other part of Chinese literature. "A considerable portion of the PLAYS of the Chinese consists of a sort of irregular verse, which is *sung, or chaunted with music.* This is often very obscure in its import; and as, according to the Chinese themselves, the gratification of the ear is its main object, sense itself appears sometimes to be neglected (not *sacrificed*), for the sake of a pleasing sound." That this is really the case, as regards the songs of the drama alone, is proved, as well by the verbal testimony of natives, as by the following passage from the preface to the "Hundred Plays of Yuen," which refers chiefly to stage rules.

雖字有差訛不傷音律不害爲也大低先要明腔後要識譜

"Although the words may be wrong, provided that the laws of sound and cadence be not violated, there is no harm done:—generally speaking, the study of the tune, or air, must be the first consideration, and the knowledge of the part (or rôle) the second." This is all extremely possible, and finds a parallel in our own opera and stage songs, some of which are sufficiently insignificant, and intended merely as pegs to hang musical notes upon—but that he should ever have said any thing so extravagant regarding poems which are addressed expressly to the *eye* and the *understanding*, and to them only, the writer of this must utterly disclaim. As M. Rémusat could not have intended to misrepresent his meaning, he feels persuaded that the quotation was made from memory.

Since it would appear, then, that Chinese poetry generally *has* a meaning, although this meaning may not always be very easy to arrive at,* some effectual means of increasing our acquaintance with it is perhaps one of the greatest desiderata in eastern literature. It is very easy to "harden ignorance into contempt," and to assume that whatever is unknown is not worth knowing: but the excellent use which has already been made of oriental thoughts and imagery, derived from languages of Asia more familiar to us, might encourage some extension in the range of our enquiries. Fruits of the highest culture may be improved and varied by foreign grafts; and as

* 'La langue poétique des Chinois est véritablement intraduisible; on pourrait peut-être ajouter qu'elle est souvent *inintelligible*.'—M. RÉMUSAT.

our gardens have already been indebted to China for a few choice flowers, who knows but our poetry may some day lie under a similar obligation? However small the prospect of advantage, every scrap of *novelty* may turn out to be a real gain;—the declining age of some of the finest literature the world ever saw having borne witness, that ordinary topics of poetry will at last grow threadbare, and become tiresome through much use.

> " Nota magis nulli domus est sua, quàm mihi lucus
> Martis, et Æoliis vicinum rupibus antrum
> Vulcani—quid agant venti, quas torqueat umbras
> Æacus—unde alius furtivæ devehat aurum
> Pelliculæ—quantas jaculetur Monychus ornos:
> —Exspectes eadem a summo, minimoque poetâ."

MISCELLANEOUS POETRY.

高瀑三千尺　芙蓉九疊屏　揷天開日月　飛雪走雷霆　我作雲中鶴　凌風控杳冥　回看吳楚裏　點點暮烟青

" *On ascending the highest Peak of the* Leushan."*

" There falls a precipitous cascade of three thousand feet;
Here the Hibiscus shades every rising summit:
The mountain touches the sky, and separates the orbs;
The drifting snows fly amidst the thunder.
I am like the white bird among the clouds,
I insult the winds, and invade the profound abyss.
—As I turn and look down on each neighbouring province,
The evening smoke of the dwellings rises in blue specks."

---

* A mountain visited by the Embassy in 1816.

十年不相見
相見即相離
縱有重來約
殊非少壯時
流雲多逐影
落葉不歸枝
又作南來雁
青山何處期

"*On taking leave of a Friend.*"

"Ten years have elapsed since last we parted,
And no sooner have we met, than we part again:
We may bind ourselves by promises to renew this meeting,
But we shall never be so young as we are now!
The shadows of the passing clouds speedily vanish—
The fallen leaf returns not to its branch:
Should I fly, like the wild bird, to seek you in the south,
In what part of yon blue mountains shall we meet?"

文彩宜深隱
羅浮是汝鄉
芳菲那可久
雲路好翱翔
露濕丹囊重
風清錦翅長
兒童憐復損
珍重此行藏

"*On giving liberty to a Butterfly.*"

"Those variegated hues should be less rashly exposed,
The recesses of the mountains are thy proper haunts:
The fragrant but short-lived herbs are there,
And those airy paths will best suit thy flight:
Thy crimson form is heavy with dew,
Thy embroidered wings should expatiate in the clear breeze:
Destruction here awaits thee from the fondness of the boy,
Go then, and hide thy treasures from his reach."

惡樹何年值
崔嵬信不材
高花飛不斷
落葉掃難開
影徹三冬日
陰含萬古苔
恨無柯在手
剪伐實堪哉

*"On a worthless Tree."**

"In what year wast thou planted, vile tree!
Thy lofty, bare trunk, is truly good for nothing:
Thy blossoms fly aloft incessantly,
Thy falling leaves there is no sweeping away:
Thou hidest the sun during the winter months;
The shady side of thee is overrun with old moss:
Alas, that I have not an axe in my hand
To cut thee away, as thou well deservest!"

作客春將暮
飛飛花亂開
浮雲未北返
孤鴈且南廻
海響先知雨
風多不辨雷
瓊南清絶地
長嘯一徘徊

"Written at the Capital of the Island of Haenan."

"While here I travel, the Spring is drawing to a close,
The blossoms fly confusedly, and leave their branches:
I am a floating cloud that returns not north,
I am a solitary wildfowl, bewildered in the south:
By the ocean's murmur, the rainy storm is approaching,
The loudness of the winds conceals the thunder's sound:
This *Keungnān* is a land clean divided from my home,
Here I breathe my long sighs, all perplexed and irresolute.'

* 'Ille et nefasto te posuit die,' &c. *Horat. in Arborem*, II. 13.

虹亭橋畔海螺東
蘭芷羅生別作叢
芳氣自盈空谷裏
一枝飛入玉瓶中
蕭蕭孤影如良友
習習虛堂有素風
日夕馨香懷袖裏
不知心賞有誰同

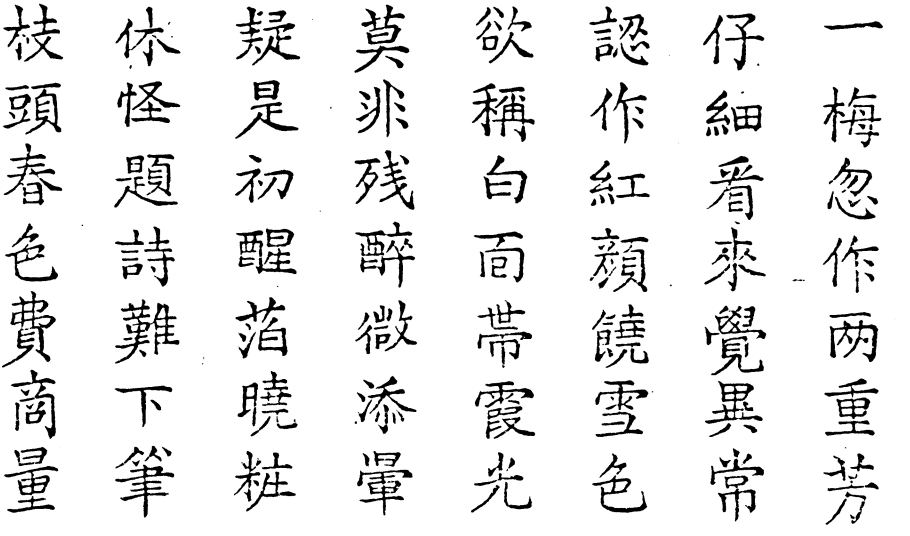
"On a sprig of Epidendrum, in a Porcelain Vase."

"By the side of *Hoongting* bridge, to the east of the stream *Haelo*,
There grows thickly the Epidendrum, making a grove of its own:
Its fragrant breath fills the lonely valley,
And a single sprig hath flown hither, to replenish this precious vase:
The solitary flower finds a companion in its own shadow,
Blown by the gentle breeze that pervades my empty hall:
My sleeves are scented with its morning and evening sweets,
I know of none whose delight in it can equal mine."

巖巖低斂淡黃衫
緊抱孤芳未許探
香口倦開檀半掩
苦心欲吐栢猶含
一枝瘦去容儀病
幾瓣攢來影帶慚
不是畏寒疑不放
要留春色占江南

"*Inscribed under the Drawing of a wax-coloured* Calycanthus." (Lămei.)

"Tranquilly bending, clothed in its vest of pale yellow,
The flower preserves, in single seclusion, its inviolate sweets:
With faintly opening mouth, its fragrance is but half exhaled,
Like some half-told sorrow, still half undisclosed:
It droops, with slender stalk, in delicate guise,
While its close petals carry all the aspect of modesty:
Deem not, that fear of the chill will prevent it from blowing,—
It reserves those vernal hues to compete with the fairest flowers of *Keangnān*."



"*On the Drawing of a blush-coloured Plum Blossom.*" (Meihwa.)

"One flower combines in itself all the merits of two,
While a closer examination only displays its rare charms:
Would you style it a rosy beauty—it is rich, too, in snowy hues;
Would you call it a pale one—it displays the tints of the morning sky:
It resembles some fair complexion, slightly heightened by wine—
It is like some maiden, risen fresh from sleep to her morning toilet:
Cease to wonder at the hesitation of the poet's pencil,
The loveliness of the object has dispersed his powers of thought!"

夜中不能寐
起行無所適
依然扃柴扉
孤燈坐永夕
寒蟲一何悲
唧唧鳴空壁
如將平生心
相與訴孤寂

"*Midnight Thoughts.*"

1: "'Tis the depth of night, and I cannot slumber—
I rise up and stroll without object or purpose;
I return, and again bar my humble door,
And sit by my solitary lamp until the morning—
What is the cause of lament to that cricket,
Whose monotonous note sounds from yon bare wall?
It would seem to take up the history of its life,
—To tell me of its state of solitary desertion.

孤寂亦可苦
我行當遠役
關山去千里
蒼芒雲水錫
未知他鄉意
安忘故園戚
悠悠百年間
憂傷終難極

2. "This solitary desertion!—how bitter do I find it!
Let me then push my rovings to a distance:
Let me visit the passes and mountains a hundred leagues hence,
Like some devotee of Budh, wandering amidst clouds and torrents.
Ignorant of what is passing elsewhere,
How shall I forget the melancholy of my own home?
Thus dull and mournful through life's whole course,
My sorrows and pains can never have an end."

披衣起待月
待月月偏遲
儻忽峰坳出
先來樹杪時
金波何蕩漾
銀漢漸參差
直到參橫後
猶然去夢思

"On getting up to see the Moon rise."

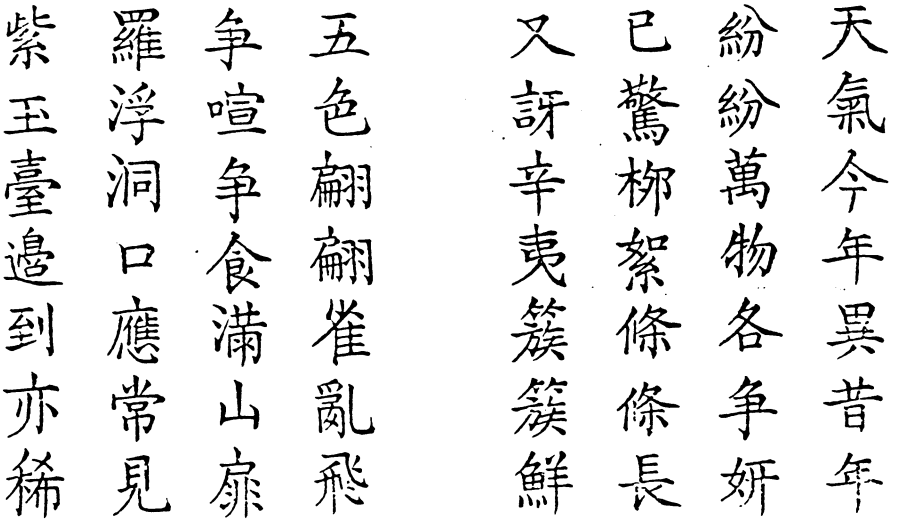
"I throw on my clothes, and wait for the Moon,
—I wait for the Moon, which rises late:
She breaks at length from behind yon hilly summit,
And first illumines the tops of the trees:
How ruffled is the surface of yon golden waves!
The silver stream of the sky* displays a vague and unequal light:
Thus lingering until the stars of Orion (*Tsan*) have set,
I return to sleep, and dream all over again."

長老峰前青帝歸
長老峰下雨聲稀
桃花李花歷亂發
白鳥黃鳥參差飛
忽憶去年臨海寺
正當此日弄春暉
大兄小弟無消息
獨坐空山心緒微

* The milky way.

"Written at the Commencement of Spring."

"To the front of yon old peaked hill, the sovereign of verdure (Spring) returns;
At the base of yon old peaked hill the rain is gently falling:
The peach and pear blossoms successively open and blend their hues,
The white and the yellow bird fly hither and thither:
I recollect how last year, at the monastery that overlooks the sea,
On this very day I watched the spring displaying its brightness.
No tidings have since reached me of my distant brethren,
I sit solitary in this lonely mountain, and brood over my thoughts."



"At the New Year." (February.)

1. "The climate this season excels all seasons past;
With gaily blended hues, all things in nature vie for beauty.
Already surprised by the early progress of the pendent willow sprigs,
I next admire the fresh luxuriance of the purple Magnolias.

2. Birds of every colour fly about in mingled confusion,
And with the noise of their contentious repasts fill my hilly dwelling:
The ravines of this *Lofow* mountain are their constant haunts,
They visit not in such numbers the lofty levels of *Tszeyu*.

村村門户向山開
吉日都從此地來
山上笑聲山下應
紛紛聚鬻總如雷

一時鐘板故相喧
總是清齋食客繁
安得皇天能雨粟
與君日日共盤飧

3. The doors of every village are opened towards the hills,
And crowds on this festive day flock thence hither;
The notes of merriment on high are answered by like notes below,
The mingled tumult of sounds is like the distant thunder.

4. Why do the bells and wooden instruments mingle their clamour?
—The crowded guests are assembled to partake of the lenten feast:
But sovereign heaven no longer sends its showers of grain
To replenish, worthy friends, your diurnal repasts!"*

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* The priests of Budh are assembled by the ringing of bells, &c. to their entertainments of herbs, fruits, and sweetmeats, being forbidden the use of flesh and wine. Their monasteries are in the recesses of hills, wherever hills prevail, and always in the most romantic spots. The two last lines allude to the following tradition. When *Yoonglŏ*, of the family called *Ming*, usurped the whole empire (A.D. 1400), one of his nephews, the proper heir, shaved his head, and assuming the habit of a priest, retired to the depths of the mountains The living rock there opened, and poured out a constant supply of grain for the support of the royal refugee. After his death, the miracle still went on, until a covetous priest, not satisfied with the quantity of grain thus obtained, enlarged the hole or fissure in the stone through which it flowed,—when the supply immediately stopped altogether, as the proper reward of his cupidity.