68. 俾蟹拜婆娘咩；乜咁多手.

Worshipping with an offering of crabs the goddess protector of children; many hands.

(The guardian of children is placed under the bed and is found in every house where there are young children in the family. If she is worshipped with crabs, the children over whose destiny she presides will have as many hands as the crab has claws).

Usage.—1. Restless, uneasy. A busy-body.

T. W. PEARCE.

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FOLK-LORE OF CHINA.

A CHINESE PROVERB ON POCKMARKS.

Yat nap tau p'i sám fan kwai
Mo nap taú p'i ts'in kwo nai

一粒痘皮三分貴
無粒痘皮賤過堀

A pockmarked face is thrice esteemed,
That with no trace like dirt is deemed.

MAI SIN 迷仙 MESMERIZING.

From the 1st to the 20th of their eighth month the Chinese in the Kwong-tung province have a custom of putting lads into a mesmeric or clairvoyant state in which they perform feats of skill with swords, spears, iron bars, and shields in mimic fight, while supposed to be possessed by the spirits of long-deceased famous fencing-masters.

On these occasions several big lads lie on the ground in a row, either in-doors or out, and men wave lighted incense sticks over them, while they repeatedly chant the following incantation accompanied by the beating of gongs.

K'am ch'ü tsai, k'am ch'ü wong,
Iú iú pái pái lok leung fong,
Lok to leung fong kung kung shau,
Fá shau lok leung fong

蟾蜍仔蟾蜍王
搖搖擺擺入凉房
入到凉房拱拱手
化手入凉房

Ye little toads* and king of toads,
Descend, ye proud, to cool abodes!
Arrived at our cool rooms we bow,
Change hands and enter cool rooms now!

As the lads become or pretend to become possessed, they rise and are assisted to seats, where they are asked then, the *sze fu's* lofty surnames and honoured names, whence they come, how many there are, and if they will please take a drink of tea. They give the names of renowned performers of the past and say they come from Canton, or some distant place. When they are as many in a state of clairvoyance as each says had left, they are put to perform with swords, etc., to the amusement and wonder of the numerous on-lookers, who all seem to believe the lads are really the mediums of supernatural agents, or else, they say, they could not perform as they do, as they have never been taught.

* In Chinese legends the toad k'am ch'ü, or shim ch'ü is reckoned one of the animals that inhabit the moon; as this performance takes place during the time of the bright mid-autumn moon it is only natural it should be appealed to for assistance at the ceremony.

INVITING THE THREE LADIES 請三姑姐 TS'ING SAM KU TSE.

At the same time of the year as last mentioned, Chinese females have a custom called 'Inviting the Three Ladies,' which resembles the manner witches (覡婆 Sheng

p'o's) act when consulted. Several women who desire to become the mediums in the performance sit around a table with their heads resting on their arms and hands, in such a manner that their faces are hidden, while other women wave incense sticks over them and chant the following invocation.

Sám ku tse, sze fu yan,
Yan ch'ün sám tsé hò ming shing,
Chü ná shau hang keuk pái mi,
Lok yam-sze,
Lok tò yam-sz ti-fu ts'in t'iu lò,
Pin t'iu sin lò hü ts'am wan?
Ts'am tò ts'an yan tui ts'an kong;
Kong ün shütwá chün wán yeung
Yau ts'an yau ts'ik ts'am ts'an ts'ik,
Mò ts'an mò ts'ik shüt fá man.
Hang hang kong, hang hang loi!
T'ung kwan tsz mui lok sheung t'oi,
Yau lò sám tse tái k'ü hü
Yau lò sze kú tai k'ü úi

三姑姐四夫人
人傳三姐好名聲
猪螞手行脚擺尾
落陰司
落到陰司地府千條路
邊條仙路去尋魂
尋到親人對親講
講完說話轉還陽
有親有戚尋親戚
無親無戚說花文
肯肯講肯肯來
同羣姊妹落雙胎去
有勞三姐帶佢回
有勞四姑帶佢回

Young ladies three, old ladies four,
Ladies of fame whom all adore,
We creeping sows our tails do shake,
Our way to Hades now we take.
In Hades are a thousand roads
Where shall we seek for souls' abodes?
We'd find our kin and to them speak;
When done, our way to earth will seek;
Kindred we seek if there they dwell.
No kindred of our flowers pray tell,
Come, quickly come! say quickly say!
Enter our wombs, ye sisters, pray!
Young ladies three conduct us hence,
Old ladies four conduct us thence.

While under the spell they sing of the sights they see and the friends they meet in the lower world. If they are not fortunate enough to meet with friends, they roam through the garden guided by the goddess Fá P'o 花婆, or her assistants, and foretell future events examining the plants.

THE GARDEN IN HADES.

Chinese believe there is a garden in the nether world in which every living person has a representative plant with his name written on the pot in which it grows. If a plant flourishes, the person it represents prospers, if it dies the person typified dies also. When these plants blossom, white is emblematic of sons and red of daughters.

The garden is under the control of the god Fá Kung 花公 and his wife the goddess Fá P'o 花婆 who hold their appointments from Imlo 閻羅 King of Hades. Fá Kung is assisted by Flower Youths, Fá T'ung Tsz 花童子, and Fá P'o is assisted by twelve fairies, Flower Wet Nurses, Fá Nai Neung 花奶娘, and the same number of Flower Dry Nurses, Fá Pò Tse 花抱姐. There is a god of the soil called Fá Un T'o-ti 花園土地.

In mundane affairs Fá Kung is addressed as Li Sz Pak, the Flower God of the Head of the Bed, Ch'ong T'au Fa Kung Li Su Pak 床頭花公李師伯, and Fá P'o as Our Lady Tang, the Flower Goddess of the Foot of the Bed, Ch'ong Mi Fá P'o, Tang Fu Yan 床尾花婆鄧夫人. These are the god and goddess, or the fairy grandfather and fairy grandmother of children. The Goddess personally, or through her assistants, acts as guardian to every child from the time the Goddess of Childbirth, Kam Fá P'ò Chi, Wai Fuk Fu Yan 金花普主惠福夫人 leaves it, until it attains its majority and the parting ceremony Li A P'o 離阿婆 or T'üt Hot 脫褐, is performed as on the night before marriage.

On the marriage night, after incense has been burnt and libations poured out to the various gods and goddesses and their aid and protection invoked, a married couple

who have had several sons born to them, and hence are called a Fortunate Husband and Wife, Hò Ming Kung P'o 好命公婆 make the nuptial bed, at the making of which they recite the following verses.

點　燭

輝光甚到點燭送公婆
嚟貫門富羅在子堂滿發花
幛結子稱
花花花花

Flower goddess, for thee our candles burn bright,
Flower god, pray send sons this home to delight,
Flowers filling with wealth and honor the hall,
Flowers bearing much fruit on this bed to fall.

明應本拜禮燭香
庭領天鑑結詩烟香
成聯神詠房香
達蒼奉
上透上

Our incense should blaze as in prayer we bend;
Our sweet-scented smoke should to Heaven ascend;
Our offering ye spirits take, we intreat,
And this room shall be with linked songs replete.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN INCANTATION USED BY WITCHES SHENG P'OS 魂婆, AND IS SOMETIMES USED IN INVITING SAM KU TSE.

陀彌阿疎無南
魔邪落姑娘三
場娘姑落姐四姑三
到姐心請請神多多
來仙請動經

推妹來開人事魂食行
相姊誰機親乜還菓路
莫七耐手司尋來就仙照搖橋振圳
妹去妹行陰司人話好桃燈又河又河
來就姊推姊有去陰親說仙仙明脚奈脚奈
來羣來齊姐尔到倒開落有有搖了振過
同推咁仙耐去尋請就又手過手又

I humbly pray to Aneito,
Young ladies three, lead me below;
Young ladies three, old ladies four,
Sám Kú calls you her shrine before.
She earnestly bids you draw near.
Trembling she calls ye fairies here.
  Come, now come!
Ye band of sisters don't refuse,
Nor each to other make excuse,
Attend, ye sisters, her who sues,
Troubles she, sisters, can diffuse.
Let me to Hades go with you
To Hades for my kin to seek;
When found I'll learn what will ensue,
All learnt my way to earth I'll take.
  Pray come soon!
Now I'll have fairy fruit to eat,
And have bright lamps to light my feet,
My arms move fast, feet too, at last,
Now Noi-ho* bridge is past,
My arms shiver, my feet quiver,
Now crossed is Noi-ho river!

W. STANTON.

* Noi-ho is the river that separates the living from the dead.