STORY OF A CHINESE CINDERELLA.

[Being a translation of the second tale contained in the *Chin Ku Ch'i Kuan* (今古奇觀). It tells how an orphan girl, the daughter of a Magistrate, was rescued from penury and suitably married by the generosity of his successors in office].

It happened at the time when the Li branch of the Southern Sung dynasty occupied the throne of China, that a certain Shih P'i was Magistrate of the Tê-hua District in the Prefecture of Chiang-chou (the present Kiukiang). His native place was the Lin-chuan District in Fu-chou (a department of Kiangsi), but he had changed his residence to Chien-kang. When he was over forty years of age, he lost his wife. She had born him no son and but only one daughter named Yüeh Hsiang, at that time eight years of age, who with her nurse accompanied him when he took up his appointment. In his official capacity he was pure and upright, not exacting any remuneration for his services from the Tê-hua District; moreover he was gifted with great legal acumen, which enabled him to vindicate the innocent and unravel complicated cases. His ordinances were brief, but the penalties were clearly enunciated, so that peace prevailed among the people, and thieves were extirpated. It was his habit, on his return from office, to take Yüeh Hsiang on his knee and teach her the characters; or else he would tell the nurse to play chess with her, or foot-ball or some other game, while he stood by and instructed her what to do. As she had lost her mother, her father's affection for her was thereby greatly intensified.

One day the nurse was playing football with Yüeh Hsiang in one of the rooms, when the former gave the ball a kick with some force, which made it strike the floor and rebound several times and finally roll into a cavity in the floor some two or 3 feet deep, being, in fact, a place where a jar had been imbedded to hold water. Now the nurse's arm was too short to grasp the ball, and she was just going to jump into the cavity to pick it up, when Shih P'i told her to wait a moment and then asked his daughter, 'Have you any plan for making the ball come out of its own accord?' Yüeh Hsiang after a moment's reflection said that she had, and forthwith told her nurse to go and fetch a pail of water and pour it into the cavity, whereupon the ball floated on the surface of the water. She poured another pail, when the water filled the receptacle and the ball came out with the overflow. Shih Pi's motive was to test his daughter's intelligence, so when he saw the water fetched and the ball come out, he was overjoyed at her exceptional sagacity. But it is needless to dwell on this.

When Shih P'i had occupied his post as Magistrate scarcely two years, his good fortune suddenly failed him, and he fell a prey to an unforeseen catastrophe. It happened one night that the granary caught fire, and though no time was lost in extinguishing it, still over one hundred piculs of Government

rice were burnt. Rice was then very dear, being worth 1,500 cash a picul, and the period being one of civil commotion, grain for the army was of the first importance. There was a law of the Southern T'ang dynasty that any official being a defaulter in the Commissariat Department to the extent of 300 piculs of rice, should be at once beheaded, and the only reasons that induced his superiors to intercede on his behalf and memorialise the Throne for his safety were because Shih P'i was an official of unblemished character and because the conflagration was the act of God and did not involve any malpractice on his part. In spite of this, the wrath of the T'ang Emperor remained unappeased, so Shih P'i was deprived of office and required to make good the loss amounting to over 1,500 Taels. After realising all his private property, the proceeds did not produce half this sum, so he was imprisoned by the Prefect as a first-class misdemeanant, and constant pressure was brought to bear to make him pay. This so rankled in his mind as to produce an illness of which in a few days he died, leaving behind him his daughter and her nurse, who were in such a state of destitution that nothing could save them from falling into the hands of a female broker for sale on Government account. It was indeed a case of 'a leaking roof encountering continuous rain for days, or a ship being overdue meeting with a head wind.'

To continue the story. In the same District lived a man named Chia Chang, who had been maliciously and falsely involved in a charge of murder, and in consequence sentenced to death. Fortunately for him, while he was yet in prison, Shih P'i entered on his duties as Magistrate, and, discovering the injustice of the charge, released him. Chia Chang had thus to thank Shih P'i for protecting his family and saving his life, but, though grateful, he had no means of making any return. Since his release, he had been away from home on business, but happened to return just at the time of Shih Pi's death, so he hastened to pay his last respect to the dead, to join in the mourning, and prepare the grave clothes and coffin. He with all his household put on mourning, and bought a site for a grave. Further, when he learnt that a large quantity of Government rice was still unpaid for, he would very shortly have raised the amount on behalf of the Shih family, were it not, that, dreading implication in a case affecting Government funds, he dared not come into prominence, lest he should bring misfortune upon himself. However, when he heard that the young lady with her nurse had been consigned to a broker for sale on Government account, in great trepidation he took with him some money and proceeded to the house of the broker, a Mrs. Li, and asked her what price she wanted for them. Mrs. Li referred to a Government order countersigned in vermilion, and found that the nurse who was sixteen years old was only put down at Taels thirty, while Yüeh Hsiang, though but ten years of age, was assessed at Taels fifty. The reason of this difference in valuation was because Yüeh Hsiang, though so young, was very graceful and engaging, whilst the nurse was but a common servant girl. Chia Chang was no niggard, so he took out his purse and paid down the eighty Taels sycee in full, which he handed to the broker with a fee of Taels five, and forthwith conducted the two girls to his home. Mrs. Li paid into the Government Treasury the price of the two, and the fact being established that the whole of the Magistrate Shih P'i's property and household had been sold, the higher officials were obliged to make good the deficiency from some other source.

Now Yüeh Hsiang had been weeping without cessation ever since her father's death, and being now ignorant what manner of man Chia Chang, whose property she had now become, was, thought that she would infallibly fall into degradation, and so wept bitterly the whole way to his house. Her nurse said to her, 'My mistress, now you are on your

way to another's house, you are in a very different position from that you enjoyed by your father's side. If you give yourself up to tears, you will only meet with bad language.' To her surprise Chia Chang was actuated by such sentiments of humanity that he conducted her to his home and introduced her to his wife, saying, 'This young lady of the daughter of my benefactor the Magistrate Shih, with whom if I had not formerly met, I should have died in fetters, and the other is a maid who waits upon her. I now regard the young lady as my guardian angel,—you had better get ready a room for *them both to live in; provide them* with good food and tea and pay them every attention, so that in case hereafter any of her family come to inquire about her and I am able to restore her to them, my desire to make some small return will be gratified. Should it happen otherwise, I will then wait till she is grown up and then choose some gentleman of suitable position that they may make a match of it; so that my benefactor's grave may not be left without some of his own stock to visit it.' As for the nurse, he ordered that she was to wait upon the young lady as before, that they were to be allowed to associate together in some employment suitable for ladies, and that they were not to be required to do any outdoor work.

Yüeh Hsiang was naturally quickwitted, so when she saw *Chia Chang giving these* orders to his wife, she lost no time in coming forward and invoking blessings on his head, saying, 'When I was sold and brought here, I expected in the natural course of things to become a slave or a servant. I am beholden to you for raising me from my low state; this is indeed granting me a great lease of life, and I beg you to accept of my homage and to receive me as your adopted daughter.' Having said this, she immediately fell on her knees. Chia Chang, who was in a great flurry, also hastened to kneel down, calling out to his wife to assist the young lady to rise, and saying, 'I was one of your father's subjects and this insignificant life of mine was his gift. I dare not shew any disrespect even to your nurse, how much less to you, *Miss Shih?* How dare I presume to exalt myself merely because you condescend for the moment to put up with my poor abode? We will for the time being treat you as our guest, and if only you will not upbraid us for our shortcomings, my wife and I will be happy.' Yüeh Hsiang was effusive in her thanks. Chia Chang then gave orders to his household to address her as Miss Shih, whilst the young lady addressed him and his wife as Mr. and Mrs. *Chia.*

Now to tell the truth, Chia Chang's wife was neither very virtuous nor very wise. Her first impulse, on finding that Yüeh Hsiang was endowed by nature with both beauty and intelligence, was to receive her as her adopted daughter, and she was highly delighted in consequence, as she herself had neither son nor daughter. But afterwards, when she heard her husband speak of treating her as a guest, she began to feel annoyed. Still she could not obliterate the debt of gratitude owing to Yüeh Hsiang's father the Magistrate Shih [in saving her husband's life], so she constrained herself to echo her husband's words, and to shew her attention. It afterwards became Mr. Chia's practice, when he was away from his home trading, whenever he met with choice silk or gauze, to pick out the best piece and send it to Miss Shih to make a dress for her. Also on his return home his first question would be, whether Miss Shih was well, so that his wife gradually became irritated, and after a little time, allowed the cloven foot to appear. However, as long as Chia Chang was at home, the family meals were served in an orderly manner, and the wife would even make a profession of entertaining high respect for Miss Shih, but the moment Chia *Chang's back was turned, there was neither* tea nor rice worthy of the name, and matters were quite different. The nurse was perpetually being sent out of doors on various errands, and no rest at all was allowed her. Besides this, every day a certain task

of feminine work or embroidery was set to Miss Shih, which she had to finish and give in, and if she were at all backward, Mrs. Chia would rage and storm and use anything but choice language.

> 'The best are *sometimes* in fault.
> Flowers are not always in bloom.'

The nurse could not conceal her indignation. She reported her treatment to her mistress and wanted to speak to Chia Chang about it as soon as ever he returned home. This Yüeh Hsiang firmly opposed, saying, 'I was bought by him originally and really did not expect him to raise me from my degradation, and to-day, though Mrs. Chia has her faults, still they have nothing to do with Mr. Chia, and if you go and denounce her, you will completely quench his predilection for us. You and I are unlucky beings, but all we need is patience.'

It happened one day that Mr. Chia, unexpectedly returning home from his travels, encountered the nurse who was engaged in drawing water outside the house, and noticed that her face was much more weather-beaten and thinner than of yore. Mr. Chia said, 'Nurse, I told you that your sole employment was to wait upon the young lady; who required you to draw water?' The nurse put down the bucket, and feeling aggrieved unconsciously shed a few tears, but when Mr. Chia wished to find out the cause, she wiped them away and ran into the house at full speed. Mr. Chia thought the circumstance suspicious, so he said to his wife when he saw her, 'Is there anything amiss with Miss Shih and her nurse?' To which she answered that there was not.

For the first few days after his return home, he was full of business, so did not pursue the subject any further, but a few days after, it chanced that Mr. Chia, who had been to a neighbour's over the way, did not find his wife in the house on his return, so he went into the kitchen to look for her. On his way he fell in with Miss Shih's nurse who was coming out of the kitchen without a tray, but carrying in her right hand a large bowl of rice, and in her left a large empty basin on the top of which was a saucer of pickled cabbage. Mr. Chia determined to go into hiding and watch. He then saw the nurse go into Yüeh Hsiang's room, but there not being a scrap of meat, he could not make out for whom the food was intended. Instead then of going to the kitchen, he very noiselessly went to the door of Miss Shih's room and peered through the chinks, when he saw it was none other than Miss Shih herself who was making a meal of these pickled cabbage leaves. Highly indignant, he began to rave against his wife. The latter retorted, 'There is plenty of meat, and I don't grudge her having some of it, but if her servant does not fetch it, you don't mean to say that you want me to take it to her room?' Mr. Chia replied, 'Did I not tell you long ago that I had given orders that Miss Shih's nurse was to remain in her room to keep her company? Who makes her leave it to fetch her meals? Some days ago, when I saw her nurse wiping the tears from her eyes as she was drawing water in the street outside, my suspicions were aroused; but as I was busy at the time, I did not investigate the matter, and ascertain the truth. Are you so incapable of gratitude and justice, as even to be wanting in respect to Miss Shih in that, when you are disposing of plenty of meat, you give her nothing but plain rice? If this happens when I am at home, it is pretty certain that, when I am away, they will not even have enough rice to eat. When I returned home this time, I found them quite sunburnt and thin.'

His wife retorted, 'What do you mean by taking such an interest in a girl who does not belong to you? Nurturing her to be fair and plump, do you mean to take her as a secondary wife?' Mr. Chia said, 'Stuff and nonsense! I will not argue with a woman so unreasonable as you. Commencing from to-morrow I will order the cook to buy

every day for their sustenance extra allowances of meat and vegetables, the cost not to be included in the ordinary mess expenses; you will thus not have to deprive yourself of a morcel; this will satisfy you, won't it?' His wife, conscious of being somewhat in fault, mumbled some inarticulate sentence, and nothing further was said. Henceforward Mr. Chia gave orders to the cook to divide the meat and vegetables every day into two portions, and told the kitchen maids to prepare and serve the meats separately. On these occasions the meals were anything but decorous.

'If you persevere in your original behaviour to people, you will not disappoint or irritate them.' Mr. Chia Chang having devoted himself to Miss Shih for more than a year, never leaving his home to follow his trade, and Mrs. Chia to all outward appearance behaving well, they allowed the subject to drop and ceased to refer to it.

Yüeh Hsiang had then been in Mr. Chia's family for five years and had gradually attained to womanhood. The thought occurred to Chia Chang that he ought to look out for some promising young man to marry her, as he would thus cease to have any concern on her account, and would again be able to leave home in pursuit of his trade. As this matter was one to which Mr. Chia attached much importance, he himself began unobtrusively to scheme to carry out his purpose, but knowing the perfidious character of his wife, he did not see the use of taking counsel with her about it. If fortune favoured him, and he succeeded, he would then provide a dowry and see her married,—what could be more creditable to him? He did not reflect that marriage is not a matter of chance, but that there is in it an element of design. However, when a youth of humble birth aspired to her hand, Mr. Chia would withhold his consent, fearing to bring dishonour on the late Magistrate Shih. On the other hand, no one of any social standing would care to form an alliance with a girl belonging to a plebeian family, so that his meritorious work was difficult of attainment. Mr. Chia finding then that his marriage projects made no advance, and that his wife was again courteous in her demeanour, also seeing that some order had been imported into their mess arrangement, could not absent himself from his business any longer, so he was compelled to leave home again to trade. A few days before he left, he took the precaution to repeatedly admonish his wife to take great care of Miss Shih and her nurse. He also requested the young lady to come and see him, when he reassured her again and again, and comforted both her and her nurse with many kind words. He also charged his wife in these words. 'Her constitution is infinitely more precious than yours; you must on no account shew her any want of attention; if you do not obey me, on my return home again, I will no longer own you as my wife.' He also sent for the cook and kitchen maids, and having given them parting injunctions, he left his home.

We must now refer to Mrs. Chia Chang, who constrained by her husband's presence in the house had no option but to appear complaisant, though really at heart far from pleased with Yüeh Hsiang and her nurse. Still she was obliged to tolerate them or else put up with more bad language than she liked. When however her husband had been away three days, she began to wield her authority as mistress of the house, seeking some trifling pretext such as the tea being late or the supper behind time. She first began to make an example of the kitchen maids, slapping their faces and swearing at them, saying, 'You worthless baggage, did I not pay down money for you with my own hand, why then are you so bumptious? Whose influence do you count on for screening you, that you are so negligent in my service? When your master was at home, your carelessness might be condoned, but now he is away you have just got to comform to my ways. Whom

have you to wait upon except me? At meal times let *them* (referring, to Yüeh Hsiang and her nurse) fetch their food for themselves. You need not put yourself out on their account, which will only interfere with your doing your duty by me.' Having rated them soundly, she took advantage of the commotion to send for the cook and tell him to stop the supply of the three rations of meat allotted them by her husband, and to return her the money. The cook dared not but obey. However, I am glad to say, that Yüeh Hsiang was able to put up with poor fare and did not take it much to heart.

Some time afterwards it happened that the nurse was a little late in fetching the water for washing, and finding it cold, lost her temper and grumbled a little. Mrs. Chia, chancing to overhear her, sent for her and attacked her in the following language. 'You neither carried this water from the well, neither did you heat it; all you do is to use it at your sweet will; beforetime when you lived at the agent's house, I should like to know who heated the water for you to wash with.' The nurse, smarting under these jeers, could not control her tongue, and retorted saying, 'Who wants them to fetch water from the well and heat it? Have I not fetched water myself before this? I can just as easily set to work to light a fire and heat it. In future I will both draw the water and boil it myself, and will not trouble the young ladies in the kitchen to exert themselves.' These words recalled to Mrs. Chia's recollection the time when the nurse had formerly carried water from the well. She thereupon denounced her saying, 'You certainly did at one time carry a few buckets of water, and made fuss enough about it, crying so that the matter came to my husband's knowledge, thus causing me to suffer all sorts of abuse. I now want to wipe off old scores with you, so, since you say you can both carry water from the well and also heat it, I will make you answerable for both these duties. I shall require you to carry all the water needed for daily use, and will permit of no shirking or laziness. I shall also require you to light the fires, and though it may inconvenience you a little, I will stand no nonsense. Wait a bit till your affectionate master returns, and then you have only got to cry and blubber before him and all will be well. I don't care if he does divorce me.' Yüeh Hsiang, who was in her room hearing Mrs. Chia's tirade against her maid, came across, and having first saluted her in a respectful manner, apologised for her maid, admitting that she herself was greatly in fault, and asked Mrs Chia not to be angry. The nurse said, 'The truth is, I am solely to blame; all I ask you is, out of regard to the young lady, not to be hard upon me.' Upon this Mrs Chia got into a still greater rage and vociferated, 'What young lady? A young lady is a young lady! None ever came to my house! I belong to a plebeian family, and know not what rank this so-called "young lady" possesses. On every occasion you make use of this title to over-awe me. Although I may not be aristocratic, still I will not be intimidated. So I wish you to understand clearly that from this day forward she is no longer to be styled "young lady." As I spent a large sum of money to obtain her, I am certainly her mistress, and I will no longer be addressed by her as Mrs. Chia.'

Yüeh Hsiang, seeing that her words had missed the mark, went back to her room, with difficulty restraining her tears. The mistress told her kitchen maids that she would not allow them to call her 'young lady,' but that they were to address her by her name 'Yüeh Hsiang.' She also told the nurse that she was to stop in the kitchen and attend to nothing but water-carrying and lighting fires; further that she would not be permitted to enter Yüeh Hsiang's room, and that if Yüeh Hsiang wanted anything to eat, she was not to have it until she had fetched it herself from the kitchen. The same night she ordered the servants to remove the nurse's bedding to her own room. Thus, though

Yüeh Hsiang sat up till midnight, she waited in vain for her nurse to come in, so there was nothing for her to do but to shut the door and go to sleep. Some days later Mrs. Chia called upon Yüeh Hsiang to vacate her room, and ordered the servants to lock the door. So Yüeh Hsiang had no room to live in, and was thus obliged to stand about outside, and at night to sleep with her nurse, and the first thing after she got up in the mornings she was sent first on one errand and then on another, so that she began to be treated as a menial. 'When under a low roof, who would dare not to bend the head?' Yüeh Hsiang had no option but to humble herself and submit. Her mistress, seeing Yüeh Hsiang thus tractable, was secretly rejoiced, and on the sly unlocked the door of her room, and emptied the latter of its contents. She also transferred to her own trunks all the fine silk and satin, whether made up into dresses or not, that had been presented to Yüeh Hsiang at various times by her husband. She also put away her bedding, and would not restore it to her. Yüeh Hsiang on the quiet bewailed her fate, but did not dare to let anyone hear her cry. Suddenly one day a letter arrived from Mr. Chia, and also a large number of presents for Miss Shih. The letter was one commanding his wife to take good care of Miss Shih, and telling her that before long he would be home again. Mrs. Chia put away the presents, saying to herself, 'I have now browbeaten the two Shih girls sufficiently; when my husband comes back, he will be sure to make a scene; but don't imagine that I am so afraid of the old buck as to begin to cultivate her favour again. I do not know how this nurture of these two wretched creatures by the old flirt will end. He said to me just as he was leaving home, "If you don't do as I tell you, you shall no longer be my wife." It seems certain that he has some *arrière pensée*. Yüeh Hsiang has both good address and is good-looking, and is now grown up; perhaps he intends to make her his own, but of that I am not sure. Should that time come, and should I have her for a rival and become a prey to jealousy, it will be too late. If one is not farsighted, one is sure to come to grief before long. If now you do not act, by and by you will have no place. Whatever comes of it, just find a purchaser for them, and when the old flirt comes home, he can only have a fit of temper, and if he does storm and rave, it will soon be over. I hardly think that he will go and buy them back again. What a capital idea!'

A superficial person has no farsightedness.
The perfidious mind loves stratagems.

The mistress then gave orders to the cook to summon before her the broker Mrs. Chang on business, and very shortly she was brought in. Mrs. Chia thereupon sent for both Yüeh Hsiang and the nurse to come and see her, after which she dismissed them. She then said to the broker Chang, 'My family bought these two girls about six years ago. Now the elder has become *passée*, but the younger is young and beautiful; still they are not worth their salt, and I want to part with them. Lose no time in finding a customer for me.' In fact Mrs. Li, who had been employed as agent on the former occasion when they were sold on Government account, was now dead, and Mrs. Chang had been advanced to the top of the tree, whether as negotiator in an official or private transaction. Mrs. Chang said, 'I have a good customer close at hand for the young one, but I am afraid you will refuse your consent.' Mrs. Chia said, 'Why should I withhold my consent?' Mrs. Chang said, 'Well then, the daughter of Mr. Chung Li, Magistrate of this place, is engaged to be married to the eldest son of Mr. Kao, the Magistrate of Têng-an, who, while still discharging his official duties, has sent the betrothal presents, and he now wants to come immediately to get married. Our own Magistrate has completed every arrangement about the trousseau, and there is only one want, and that is a bridesmaid. Yesterday the Magistrate at a personal interview commissioned me to find one, but I was perplexed as to where to look for a

suitable person. Now the young girl at your house would exactly suit. Still as the bridegroom belongs to another village, I am afraid that you would not part with her.' Mrs. Chia said to herself, 'A customer from a distance is exactly the sort I want. She has just come at the right time. Moreover, as it is the Magistrate's son who is in want of her, I do not think my husband, when he comes home, will dare to utter a syllable.' She therefore replied as follows, 'To act as attendant on the bride in an official family, is ever so much better than remaining at my house. Why should I refuse to part with her? The only thing is, I don't want to be a loser by the transaction, and it will then be all right.' The agent inquired, 'What was the original price paid for her when you bought her?' Mrs. Chia said, 'When she was about ten years of age, I obtained her for fifty taels, and up to now I have spent about a similar sum on her keep.'

Mrs. Chia said, 'You cannot charge for her maintenance. As for the fifty taels, I will take upon myself to be answerable for their payment.' Mrs. Chia said, 'Now as regards the old nurse, it would be well if you would find me a customer for her too. The two of them came to me as chums, so if one leaves me I cannot continue to keep the other. Besides she is over twenty years old and at that age she ought to be married. Why should I retain her?' Mrs. Chang asked, 'What price will you take for her?' Mrs. Chia said, 'I bought her originally for thirty taels.' The agent replied, 'A rough specimen like her is not worth so much. If you will reduce the amount by half, I have a nephew thirty years of age living with me, for whom I long ago promised to find a wife; but owing to the insufficiency of my means, I have kept putting the affair off. Here we have a suitable couple to make a match of it.' Mrs. Chia said, 'As he is your nephew, I will make to you a reduction of five taels.' Mrs. Chang replied, 'Add to it my marriage fee for the young lady and make it ten taels.' Mrs. Chia said, 'Well, it is no great matter, but you had better now set to work and obtain the consent of the parties interested.' Mrs. Chang said, 'I will go in the first place and report our proposals to the Magistrate. If I can persuade him to carry them out, I will pay you the money and at the same time claim from you delivery of the property.' Mrs. Chia asked, 'Shall you come back this evening or not?' To which Mrs. Chang replied, 'I have still to talk over the affair with my nephew this evening and cannot be back, but I will come early to-morrow and give you an answer. In all probability both will fall in with our ideas.' With those words she left.

Now the Magistrate Chung Li had occupied his present post for about fifteen months, having succeeded on promotion the former occupant of the post named Ma, who in turn had replaced the Magistrate Shih. He and Kao, Magistrate of Tê-an, were fellow townsmen. Now Kao had two sons, the eldest named Kao Têng being eighteen years old, and the younger Kao Shêng sixteen years. Kao Têng was the one engaged to be married to the daughter of Mr. Chung Li, who had no son, and only the one daughter in question, whose name was Tin Chih, and at this time just seventeen years of age. The fifteenth day of the tenth moon was the day chosen for the wedding, and it was now drawing to the close of the ninth moon, so that the auspicious day was fast approaching. Mr. Chung Li gave orders to the agent Mrs. Chang to lose no time in finding a maid to wait upon the bride, so, when she had this opening offered to her by Mrs. Chia, she at once went to inform the Magistrate. The Magistrate said, 'If the person is suitable, fifty taels is not excessive; come to-morrow and receive the money from the Treasury, and in the evening I shall require her to come to my house.' Mrs. Chang said, 'I will attend to your commands.' The same evening she returned home and consulted her nephew

Chao Erh whether, there being this advantageous union, he would look to her to bring about the marriage for him. Chao Erh was in great glee the whole evening, and the following morning began to arrange about his outfit and make preparations for the wedding. Mrs. Chang's first business was to raise the twenty taels from her own home, and then went to the Magistrate to obtain the money order, which she took to the Treasury and cashed. She then went to Mrs. Chia's house and paid both sums, which were found correct. Mrs. Chia put them both away, and very shortly afterwards two runners and two chair-bearers arrived from the Magistrate, the latter carrying a small sedan-chair, which on reaching Mrs. Chia's door they deposited. Mrs. Chia had given Yüeh Hsiang no notice of their expected arrival, and when the time came for her departure, she did nothing but order her into the chair. Yüeh Hsiang was quite in the dark as to where she was to be taken, so she and her nurse cried to Heaven and Earth for pity, and burst into loud cries, for which Mrs. Chia did not care a jot, but along with Mrs. Chang began pushing her. They had got her through the principal entrance, before Mrs. Chang told her that she had no need to cry, as her mistress had sold her to the Magistrate of the District to act as bridesmaid to the young lady his daughter. She continued, 'When you get there, you will be very well off, but the Magistrate's Yamên is not a place to play the fool in, and as the affair has reached this stage, it is no use crying over spilt milk.' Yüeh Hsiang was thus constrained to stifle her sobs, get into the sedan and be taken away. The chair-bearers carried her to the Inner Hall of the Yamên, where she saw the Magistrate Chung Li. Yüeh Hsiang made him a salutation, but Mrs. Chang who stood by said, 'This is His Honour, you ought to salaam.' Yüeh Hsiang was obliged therefore to kotow, but when she rose from her knees, her face was unconsciously suffused with tears. Mrs. Chang called out to her to dry her eyes, and then conducted her to the private apartment, where she was introduced to the Magistrate's wife and to Tin Chih his daughter. Being asked her name she answered 'Yüeh Hsiang,' which the wife pronounced a very good name and not needing to be altered. She then told her to begin her duties as lady's maid, and Chung Li the Magistrate made Mrs. Chang a substantial present. This we need not dwell on.

'Alas, the tender girl of noble birth,
Has to take temporary service as a lady's maid.'

When Mrs. Chang left the Magistrate's Yamên, it was past 6 o'clock. She then went to Mrs. Chia's house, where she found the nurse in the kitchen bitterly lamenting the loss of Yüeh Hsiang. Mrs. Chia said to her, 'I have to-day arranged for you to marry the nephew of Mrs. Chang; you are very much better off than Yüeh Hsiang, so you have no need to grieve in this way.' Mrs. Chang also lent a hand at comforting her. Chao Erh was in the dressing-room, washing and making himself spruce, putting on a glossy hat and new suit of clothes in anticipation of the wedding. He shortly came himself with a lamp to receive his bride. Mrs. Chang thereupon told the nurse to take leave of Mrs. Chia and supported her, as being a large-footed woman, she proceeded on foot to her house to be married to her nephew.

We must now tell of Yüeh Hsiang's further history. On the very next day after she entered the Yamên of Mr. Chung Li, her mistress ordered the newly-arrived maid to sweep the central hall, so Yüeh Hsiang took up a broom and proceeded to do as she was bid. Mr. Chung Li, having completed his morning toilet preparatory to attendance in office, was walking past the central hall, when his attention was arrested by the sight of the newcomer standing there in an aimless manner holding a broom. Chung Li thought it strange, and went quietly forward to look, and found in fact

that Yüeh Hsiang was standing opposite a hole in the room floor shedding copious tears. He could not make it out, so entering the hall he called to Yüeh Hsiang to ask the reason, which only made her weep the more, but she dared not utter a syllable. Chung Li pressed for an answer, whereupon Yüeh Hsiang stopped crying and said, 'I was taught by my father to play at football in this room, and by an accident the ball rolled into this hole. My father asked me, "Have you any plan for making the ball emerge from the cavity without picking it up?" I said that I had, and at once despatched my nurse to fetch some water to pour into the hole, and when it was full, the ball floated out of its own accord. My father praised me for my intelligence and was highly delighted. Though this happened long ago, I still treasure the remembrance of it, and seeing the spot, I felt much affected and unconsciously began shedding tears. I hope that you will pity me and not visit my fault with the censure that it deserves.' Mr. Chung Li in great amazement said, 'What is your father's name? and tell me precisely how you came here in your childhood.' Yüeh Hsiang replied, 'I am the daughter of Shih P'i, who six years ago was Magistrate at this place. It happened that the granary here caught fire owing to causes beyond his control, and in consequence my father was cashiered by the Government, and being ordered to make good the loss, he became sick and died of a broken heart. The authorities then sold me and my nurse to Mr. Chia of this District. He was the victim of an unjust charge, and was indebted to my father for saving his life, so he has been very kind to us and has provided for us up to the present time. He has now gone away on business, and his wife, not being able to endure our presence, has sold me, and so I came here. This is the truth and I am not deceiving you.'

The way she divulged her innermost feelings would have melted a heart of iron or stone. When Mr Chung Li heard this story, the proverb 'when the hare dies, the fox grieves,' every creature sympathises with its kind, received fresh illustration. He thought, 'I am a Magistrate in every way circumstanced as Shih P'i was, and merely because he was unfortunate enough to meet with a calamity ordained by Heaven, his daughter has descended to this depth of degradation. If I had never seen her or heard of her, the matter would be different; but as she has been directed by Heaven to my residence, if I do not take care of her, how can I preserve my dignity as an official holding the same post as her father? What opinion will the late Magistrate in his grave have of me?' He forthwith asked his wife to come into the hall, and explained clearly to her the details of Yüeh Hsiang's past life. His wife said, 'From your account it appears that she is the daughter of a Magistrate, how can she be treated as a low-born menial? Still, as our daughter's wedding day is now imminent, what arrangement do you propose to make with regard to it? Chung Li replied, 'After to-day I will dispense with Yüeh Hsiang's services, and she and my daughter can style each other sisters. I have proposals of my own to make on the subject.' Forthwith he wrote a letter and despatched a messenger with it to the house of his kinsman the magistrate Kao, who, on opening it, found that in fact it was a request for the postponement of the wedding day.

The letter was as follows:—

'Although to marry their sons and daughters is the wish of their parents, still to make sacrifices for the good of others, is true nobility. Now as my daughter was about to be married, I found it necessary to provide a waiting maid for her, and I was quite struck when I noticed the regular and graceful beauty of Yüeh Hsiang and the correctness of her conduct. On inquiring the particulars of her history, I discovered that she is the daughter of the last Magistrate but one, viz. the incorrupt Mr. Shih who was deprived of his rank owing to the burning of

the Government granary, and afterwards died. His daughter was then sold by order of the Government and was transferred from pillar to post till she came into my family. Now I regard the daughter of a fellow-official as my own. This young lady is now of marriageable age. Not only can I not do her the injustice of making her a menial, but I cannot permit my own daughter to be married first. I will now with all expedition select a son-in-law for this young lady, and will marry her, granting her the dowry I had designed for my daughter. Let your son's wedding be put off a little, and change the auspicious day. I with great respect make this special request and humbly beg that you will give it your best consideration.'

The Magistrate Mr. Kao having perused this, said, 'So that is how the land lies! This is indeed a Quixotic deed. But still how can I allow Mr. Chung Li alone to monopolise such generosity?' So he forthwith replied saying, 'Although there is a fit season for celebrating a marriage, still sympathy must be shewn for one's colleagues in their misfortunes. Since you make the daughter of your predecessor in office your own, how can I do better than adopt your wishes as mine? When I ponder over the contents of your letter, I feel very much grieved, for this young lady is the daughter of an official of unblemished character who would not bring discredit on the noblest family. I now want you to keep the original wedding day and to bestow her upon my son as his wife, and let some other young man of good family be chosen for your daughter. This procedure would perhaps solve both difficulties. Chü Po-yü of old was ashamed of being the only man of virtue. I therefore am desirous of being associated in your deed of generosity. Kao Yüan sends this note with the highest respect.'

This answer was delivered by messenger to Mr. Chung Li, who after perusing it exclaimed, 'Although to marry an orphan girl is a right action on the part of my kinsman Kao, still my daughter's engagement to his son is of long standing, how can it be altered? I must still proceed leisurely, and as soon as Miss Shih is married, then provide another dowry and celebrate my daughter's marriage.' Thereupon he again sent a letter by messenger to Mr. Kao, which the latter on opening found to be as follows:—

'Although to wed a penniless orphan is an act of superlative kindness, still it is not quite the correct thing to change the wedding-day when once fixed on. The marriage horoscope of my daughter with your son was long ago ascertained to be auspicious, and the day has been settled. For your son to put away his fiancée and marry another is a violation of time-honoured custom. If I were to make my daughter give up your son and I even to seek another son-in-law, I could not escape censure. I accordingly beg you to ponder the matter further, when I feel sure you will adhere to our former arrangements.'

Mr. Kao, having perused the above, said with a sigh, 'By acting on the spur of the moment I did not give the matter proper consideration, and now feel ashamed beyond measure on reading these words of Mr. Chung Li. I have now a scheme which will effect both objects. Mr. Chung Li will have the opportunity of attaining the object he has in view; and I also shall enjoy a good name and gain the applause of countless generations.' Forthwith he wrote back as follows: 'Though in offering to accept one young lady in exchange for the other, I showed the sincerity of my love of right, still on the subject of breaking off one engagement and contracting another, you are quite correct in your exposition of etiquette. Now my second son, Kao Shêng, is just turned seventeen years of age, and has not yet contracted any matrimonial alliance. If you were to marry your daughter to my elder son, and Miss Shih to the younger, two fortunate unions would be consummated and exalted relationships formed for life. There is no need to ask

you to provide any further outfit, as both weddings shall be fixed for the same day and hour; neither need you consult the oracle again. Kao Yüan with some diffidence again presents his compliments.'

Mr. Chung Li on receiving this was highly delighted and said, 'By these arrangements a pair of happy events will be brought about. Mr. Kao's notion of what is right truly would not disgrace the worthies of old. I must yield the palm to him.' He forthwith informed his wife, and divided the wedding outfit into two portions, making some slight additions to the dresses and jewellery, treating both girls alike and giving to neither a larger share than the other. On the thirteenth day of the tenth moon Mr. Kao got ready two well-finished ornamental sedan-chairs, and the two brides were greeted with sound of fife and drum (all kinds of music). Mr. Chung Li, after despatching the wedding outfits, sent for both Tin Chih and Yüeh Hsiang and told his wife to give them some advice suited to their new responsibilities. The two girls then took leave and withdrew.

Yüeh Hsiang, deeply sensible of the kindness shewn her by Mr. Chung Li and his wife, found it very hard to leave them and wept as she entered her sedan-chair. The two young ladies then proceeded together on their way, and, in brief, they arrived in due course at the Magistrate's. As good luck would have it, it chanced to be both an auspicious day and hour, and the two young couples looked very gay and handsome as they worshipped together in the Ancestral Hall and joined in the wedding cup. Mr. and Mrs. Kao were delighted beyond measure.

'Their lifelong happiness dates from to-day, two fortunate unions are made in Heaven.'

We must now relate how Mr. Chung Li, three days after the wedding of his daughter, had a vision in the night. He saw in his dream an official standing before him, wearing a cap and with an ivory tablet in his hand, who said, 'I am Yüeh Hsiang's father Shih P'i, who in my lifetime was Magistrate of this District. When the Government granary was burnt down and I had no means of making compensation, the matter so rankled in my mind that I died. The Deity having observed my stainless character has had pity upon me, as I was in no way to blame, and has canonised me as the God of this Municipality. Yüeh Hsiang is my beloved daughter, and your generosity in raising her out of the mire and effecting such an excellent marriage for her is an act of unobtrusive virtue. I have interceded with the Supreme Being for you, and whereas your destiny was to have no offspring, he will as a reward for your virtuous deeds grant you a son who will spread the fame of your family far and wide. As for yourself, you are to attain to high office and to live in tranquillity to an advanced age. The Deity also highly approves the conduct of your neighbouring Magistrate Mr. Kao, who was actuated by the same sentiments as yourself and was willing to marry a penniless girl; so he will grant to his two sons high office, with substantial emoluments, as a recompense for his virtue. You must publish this and give it all publicity, so that the practice of virtue may be spread abroad and people may be deterred from oppressing the weak and helpless, from benefitting themselves to the injury of others. Heaven brings everything to light and the most trifling incident does not escape its observation.' With these words the shade of Shih P'i saluted him. Mr. Chung Li got up and bowed in return when, treading on the skirt of his robe, he stumbled forward and this so startled him, that he awoke and found it was a dream. He at once informed his wife, who was loud in her expressions of surprise. As soon as ever it was daylight, Mr. Chung Li sent for a chair and proceeded to the Municipal Temple to worship and burn incense. He also contributed 100 Taels of his salary, and told the priest to repair the temple buildings and to engrave the occurrence on a tablet for

the information of the public. Besides this he wrote a letter acquainting Mr. Kao with the particulars of his dream, and Mr. Kao handed it to his two sons to read, whereat both were amazed. Though Mrs. Chung Li had passed her 40th year, she suddenly conceived and bore a son, who was named T'ien Tzŭ (granted by Heaven). Afterwards, when Chung Lí had given in his allegiance to the Sungs, he rose to the office of Grand Secretary, and lived to the advanced age of 90 years. His son T'ien Tzŭ became Senior Wrangler, and Kao Têng and Kao Shêng both entered the public service under the Sung Dynasty and rose to be Directors of Imperial Courts. This was the sequel of the events recorded above.

We must further tell how Chia Chang, returning from his travels not long after, found Yüeh Hsiang and her nurse both gone away, and finding out the reason, he rated his wife soundly. Afterwards when he discovered that Mr. Chung Li had treated Yüeh Hsiang as his own daughter, and had married her into a family of position, and that therefore there was no longer any opportunity for him to shew his gratitude to her, he wanted to spend 20 Taels in buying back the nurse and restoring her to Yüeh Hsiang. But Chao Erh being fond of his wife would not submit to the separation, but was willing that both of them should take service together. Mrs. Chang made no objection, so Chia Chang conducted Chao Erh and his wife forthwith to the Tê-an District and told their story to the Magistrate. He made minute inquiry and then went into the Yamên and asked Yüeh Hsiang, his son's wife, as to the truth of their story, and she confirmed it. He thereupon retained in his service Chao Erh and his wife, and made a handsome present of gold and embroidery to Chia Chang, which however was refused. On his return home Chia Chang was very angry with his wife for her faithless conduct, and more he would live with her no longer. He took to wife one of her maids, who bore him two sons. Thus all parties met with their deserts.

R. W. Hurst.

PLACE OF HWANG TI IN EARLY TAUISM.

The Yellow Emperor was constantly present to the minds of all the early Tauists except Lau tsze. Thus we find in Lie tsze that Hwang Ti is supposed to have gone in vision to distant regions and places where the inhabitants are spirited beings who walk on air and lie down on vacancy as if on a bed. They live without fear, pain or sorrow. They do not sink in water or burn in fire. While on this journey, he left his empire uncared for during three months, and proceeded for thousands of miles away to the west beyond Am chen, the city of dark shade, and Tai chow, the elevated city. When he awoke from this dream, he became perfectly himself once more and discoursed on self cultivation and the mode of subduing nature, but failed to acquire the necessary power. He slept again and learned that we are not to be indebted to human kindness for the knowledge of this secret, nor when the secret is discovered is it possible to communicate it in the way of human teaching. During twenty-seven years after this he so governed China that it became just as happy as the fairy land to which he had gone. After this he ascended to the distant land above.

The philosopher Lie tsze introduces Hwang Ti into stories of a fairy life in a land where the inhabitants breathe in air and sip dew in place of substantial food. They also exercise perfect rule over those passions which lead the soul wrong, and perfect virtue and happiness in society. In one passage Hwang Ti and Confucius are