skeletons, and fled in dismay, their superstitious fears being proof, even, against the almighty dollar.

Human bones have from time to time been uncovered by others, and in all probability the green mound already referred to is an immense grave. Whether the great mortality was a result of continued and deadly hostilities with the aborigines, or the effect of some pestilence, must be left to conjecture.

It is worthy of note that a plant grows on the hill which has the curious faculty of causing blindness in buffaloes eating it. Those animals are therefore carefully kept away from the place. None of the natives could pick out the particular plant, and the writer is no botanist; perhaps some reader of the *China Review* will elucidate the matter. The pepper plant is also found here, although unknown in the surrounding districts.

It was at the bottom of this hill that the Japanese expeditionary force was encamped. The site is covered with broken beer bottles, which may perhaps have been imported for target purposes, with a view to developing that fine aim so necessary for bush fighting.

A large extent of the great Liang Kiau plain was under cultivation by the aborigines before the advent of Chinese. Only barley was the cereal grown, not rice. The interesting question presents itself: why in those days the creek did not fill up as at present. The most plausible explanation would be, that although a certain filling up did take place in the dry months, the force of water during the rainy season was sufficient to clear out the silt, while the numerous dams and other impediments raised by the Chinese in connection with the system of irrigation necessary for rice cultivation, obstructs and diverts that direct rush of water which in former days swept uninterruptedly through the valley.

G. Taylor.

Population of China.—In the abstract of the Peking Gazette, of 23 February, 1887, (see *N. C. Daily News*, of 16th March) the Governor of Chêkiang reports the population of that province at 11,691,255 men, women, and children. This is an enormous decrease as compared with the population of 1812 which is put down at 26,256,784. (Williams, Middle Kingdom. Vol. I. pag. 208, Old edition). According to the Census return of that year, Chêkiang, though the smallest province, was one of the most densely populated, only two others, Ngan-wei and Kiang-su, showing a higher average per square mile. If the inhabitants of other provinces have increased proportionately, the population of China must be very much under what it is generally supposed to be.

H. K.

Short Stories.—A young tiger met an old one and said, 'I got hold of a man to-day whose upper parts were so tasteless and his nether parts so sour, that, hungry as I was, I left him in disgust. I wonder what sort of man this could be?' 'A student who has had to buy his degree,' was the reply.

The Lord of Hades considered a certain spirit to have been a great sinner indeed, so he adjudged that he should re-enter the world to become a poor scholar with five children. 'Is not that a rather light punishment,' remonstrated an angel. 'No,' said His Eminence. 'The five hungry children will soon drive him mad.'

Chang and Chung mutually agreed to start a brewery. Said Chang to Chung, 'You supply the rice and I will furnish the water.' 'But,' queried Chung, 'if the profits are divided according to the capital embarked, I am afraid it will be difficult to apportion your share.' 'Oh I'm not afraid,' said Chang; 'when the brew is over, give me the water, you can have the remainder.'

A man was seized by a tiger. The victim's son took his bow and pursued. 'Hit him in the leg,' cried the father, 'else you'll spoil the market value of the skin.'

A bibulous individual, on entering a restaurant, noticed that the wine cups were small. After seating himself, he gave vent to a most demoniacal series of howls and groans. 'What is the matter,' asked the startled landlord. 'Ah,' answered the man, 'my father, a hale hearty man, met his death at a friend's table by accidentally swallowing a small wine cup, so whenever I see similar ones, the memory of the sad event overcomes me.' It is needless to add that the cup was replaced by a larger one.

A hard drinker dreamed that he had become possessed of a bottle of genuine stuff, but, determined to enjoy it thoroughly, he had begun to heat it. During the heating process he awoke. 'Hoo, hoo,' he groaned. 'If I had known this was to happen, I would have drunk it cold.'

A servant did not fill a guest's cup to the brim. The latter, holding it up, remarked, this cup is too deep, and broke a piece off. 'How is that?' cried the Host. 'If the upper part can't hold liquor, of what use is it?' was the smart retort.

G. TAYLOR.

CANTON AND PEKING PLANTS.—The following notes may possibly interest such readers of the *China Review* as have studied Mr. Playfair's remarks on "Mr. Parker's Canton plants" in the last Number of the *China Review*.

The figures given below represent the numbers in Mr. Parker's lists.

40. 馬齒莧 is the name by which I have found Chinese in Peking call purslane. The first man that I heard use the term pointed out to me that the leaves resembled a horse's teeth.

43. The castor oil plant is also known at Peking as 大蓖.

79. A list compiled by Dr. Bretschneider gives 草茉莉 for *Mirabilis dichotoma*; and I find my gardener uses the same words. 鬼子茉莉 have very much the air of being merely a rough way of saying 'foreign *mo-li*.'

90. & 160. *Scirpus tuberosus*, Roxb., is certainly a member of the genus to which the English bull-rush belongs; but it has an edible root known to the Chinese as 荸薺, and either is the same as, or is very nearly related to *Eleocharis tuberosa*, R. & S. The root of this *Scirpus* is very commonly called *water chestnut* in China, though *Trapa bicornis* appears to have a better claim to the name.

99. It appears that Bunge was wrong in identifying the *hua chiao* (花椒) with *Xanthoxylon nitidum*, D.C. The *hua chiao* was afterwards determined by Planchon and named *Xanthoxylon Bungei*.

125 & 145. *Excœcaria sebifera* and *Stillingia sebifera* are two names for the same tree, which is called in some botanical works wax tree, but in others tallow tree. It is generally known by the latter name to foreigners in China. It produces the vegetable *tallow of commerce*.

150. 酸棗 and 紅棗 are both Peking names for *Zizyphus vulgaris*. But the first name is given to the uncultivated and the second to the cultivated variety.

177. The *Nerium odorum*, or oleander, is a common garden plant in Peking, and according to my experience is invariably called there, as well as in the rest of China, 夾竹桃. I feel confident that the application of the name *chia-chu-t'ao* to a species of rhododendron must be erroneous.

212. The capsicum is called at Peking, as doubtless Mr. Playfair wrote, 秦椒, not 奏椒.

238. The species of spiræa here referred to (珍珠花), is, I believe, the *Spiræa Kirilowii*, Rgl.

If Mr. Parker will continue his researches into the Chinese names of plants in other districts with the same painstaking care and thoroughness that he has shown in Canton, he will earn the gratitude of everyone who takes an interest in Chinese botany. The ignorance ordinarily exhibited by Chinese with regard to the plants of their country is