pared with 鞋 shoes, 涸 dry, 佳 good, which have final k.

蝦 shrimp, 遐 distant, 瑕 a red stone, fault in a stone. Probably this is merely a dark line kwa, gak, in the bright clean surface of any precious stone. 喉 throat. Same as 喉 heu which has final k. In 瞎 6, 7 gak we probably have k for p. Same as 歇 high, to rest.

下 6, 7 ge, down, go down, underneath. Traces of the last final, if there was one, are hard to detect. But 氐 ti bottom was certainly tik agreeing with lok, tik to fall from an older tip. Gep may be suspected, for 下, as in 去 k'op to go, to go down, and down pressure with the ribs is gap.

夏 6, 7, he, gep, summer. Root in 熱 je 8 *nit, nip, hot,* 頁 as phonetic is gep, leaf being the same as 葉 yep leaf. (See Medhurst's Hokkeen Dict., yeep.)

韈 3 kak, a rent. The phonetic has final k.

J. EDKINS.

(To be continued.)

ENIGMATIC PARALLELISMS OF THE CANTON DIALECT.

(Continued from p. 284).

XV.—FALSEHOOD, EXAGGERATION, BOMBAST.

179. 冇米粥；臘猪血；臘水泡；箍天篾；燈心灰；一片假.

Congee without rice; jerked pig's blood; pickled bubbles; putting a hoop round the heavens; ashes from a lamp wick; all a flight of fancy.

Usage.—Nothing but bounce; humbug, gammon.

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180. 曹操下江南兵馬圖；正大畫.

A picture of Ts'ó Ts'ó's expedition to Kong Nám; a monster picture.

(See articles 768 and 632, Mayers' Handbook. The expedition referred to was that *against* 孫權. The records of the Three Kingdoms place the strength of Ts'ó Ts'ó's army at 830 thousand. This immense force was defeated at 赤壁 near the modern Kiu Kiang. The name itself 'red wall' is said to record the disaster. All Ts'ó Ts'ó's ships were destroyed by fire, which spreading to the near mountains and forest seemed to set sea and land *in a blaze.* To represent adequately the numbers of men and horses employed in Ts'ó Ts'ó's expedition would require a picture of enormous dimensions.)

Play on words: 正大畫 a large picture; 正大話 a big lie.

Usage.—A monstrous exaggeration. All a lie.

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181. 王生把脈；一片虛.

Dr. Wong feeling the pulse; it is weakness itself.

(Dr. Wong, a famous character in the proverbs of the Canton folk, was in his dotage. Wishing to feel the pulse of a patient whose hand was placed for the purpose on a table at which Dr. Wong was sitting, the doctor grasped *not* the hand of the patient, but the side of the table and shaking his head in his own sage way exclaimed, 'It is weakness itself.')

Play on the words: 虛 weak; 虛 false.

Usage.—Of something trumped up. Entirely a fabrication. A mass of falsehood.

182. 戲棚閂門:假到極.

Bolting a door on the stage; all a pretence.

(When a scene is supposed to take place with closed doors the dumb show of putting up cross bars is gone through. If on entering or leaving the actors omit the proper movements of fastening and unfastening, an audience is not slow to perceive the mistake and express displeasure in a forcible manner.)

Usage.—Of a statement unfounded or fictitious. Wholly counterfeit or false.

183. 雙門底買嚫嘞:空.

Buying ear-probes in Sheung Mun Tai; nothing.

(Sheung Mun Tai, one of the principal thoroughfares of the city of Canton, extends from the Treasurer's Yamen to the Great South gate. The reference is to a well-known story. A countryman had heard much about the cunning and dishonesty of Canton shop-keepers. Acting on the advice of his fellow villagers, the rustic on his visit to the city made it a rule to offer half the price demanded by the shop-keepers for their goods. In Sheung Mun Tai ear-probes are sold for a cash each and the countryman maintained stoutly that half a cash is nothing and that goods sold at a cash each are for those persons who like to take them.)

Play on words: 空 empty, non-existent; 空 empty as talk.

Usage.—Of statements destitute of force or effect. All a tissue of falsehoods not to be heeded for a moment.

184. 食豆腐哽牙:聰混.

Bean-curd sticking in the teeth when eaten; impossible.

Usage.—Absurd, nonsensical, out of the question.

185. 冇牙婆食檳榔:聰混.

A toothless old woman eating betel-nut; labour in vain.

Usage.—Absurd. All stuff and nonsense.

186 磨麪跌錢:聰運.

The miller losing his money; round and round for nothing.

(Native mills are worked frequently by oxen harnessed to the upper mill stone. In Canton and the near neighbourhood the mills are small and human labour is employed, the miller or his man carrying the stone round by means of a long wooden handle.)

Play on words: 聰運 to gain the labour of revolving; 聰混 in vain.

Usage.—Labour in vain.

187. 深山古廟:烟都冇喺.

A temple deep in the mountains; not a puff of smoke arises (from its altar.)

(The temples most frequented are those easily accessible to votaries. Mountain shrines far removed from the busy haunts of men are not likely at ordinary times to attract worshippers.)

Play on two senses of the word: 烟 smoke; 烟 little of a thing.

Usage.—1. Of a man in whom there is not even the shadow (smoke) of truth. False to the core.

2. In a lighter sense:—Of a person who fails in duty from incapacity, idleness or the like. Often of worthless apprentices and servants who are a clear loss to employers, who have not the smallest prospect of gain from their services.

188. 亞聾燒炮:得喺烟.

The deaf man firing a cannon; he only sees the smoke.

Usage.—Only knowing a thing slightly and not thoroughly.

189. 乞兒打瀉酒；乜誰睇見.

A beggar spilling his wine on the ground; who ever saw it done?

(The saying supposes, what is by no means the fact, that Canton beggars never have wine to spill.)

Usage.—1. Of a person full of bounce and flourish, or like Munchhausen, given to telling marvellous adventures.

2. Generally, when a person's statements seem to be mere flights of fancy.

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190. 清明插桃葉；假柳.

(When a man says) he puts in peach branches as decorations at the tomb festival; it is false; (he puts in) weeping willow.

(This custom prevails throughout Canton. A day or two before the tomb festival, branches of weeping willow are inserted at the top of the half doors of the houses and in front of the household shrines. By this means the spirits of deceased ancestors are invited to return and enter the doors. The bowing motion of the willow leaves, moved by each passing breath of wind, is as if the living representatives of the family stood in the doorway to invite home the souls of the departed. Nobody uses peach branches. If a person says he does so, it is untrue.)

Play on words: 假柳 false willow; 假柳 false statement.

Usage.—1. Of an imposture or deception.

2. Of language entirely false and not to be credited for a moment.

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191. 杉木錨；一片浮.

A pine anchor; a floating piece (of wood.)

Play on words: 一片浮 a floating piece; 一片浮 all false.

Usage.—As above, of speech in which there is not a grain of truth. Conduct wholly insincere and misleading.

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192. 十三點鐘；聲多冇準.

Thirteen o'clock; too much sound beside being all wrong.

Usage.—A man whose words are as many as the truth of them is rare.

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193. 冇脷根；說話唔妥當.

Without roots to his tongue; unreliable in speech.

Usage.—A person on whom none can rely; who breaks his promises and speaks ill of others.

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194. 大嚟嘺；唔入耳.

A large ear probe; will not enter the ear.

Play on two senses of the word: 唔入耳 cannot be inserted as a probe; 唔入耳 cannot be believed, as a narrative.

Usage.—1. Exaggeration, hyberbole, bombast. A person who deals in the marvellous. A cock and bull story.

2. Of impurity, or indelicacy in conversation; smuttiness or obscenity too disgusting for modest ears.

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195. 畫蛇添足；加多冇用.

To draw a snake and add feet; tacking on more uselessly.

Usage.—A representation of things beyond the truth. Of a person who amplifies his knowledge by drawing on his imagination. The Cantonese have the following saying to describe persons of this class; 聞風捉影 they hear the wind and grasp at the shadow, as if they heard a man's voice and saw his shadow approaching i.e. the slightest breath of rumour serves to excite their imaginations.

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196. 錢四領分三；冇一成.

Twenty cents worth of silver reduced (in the crucible) to one and three quarter cents; not a tenth part remaining.

Usage.—Of a person in whose statements there is not a tenth of truth.

197. 街上釐戥大；唔够一話十.

The big steel-yard (for weighing money) used in the streets and shops; which makes out one to be ten.

(In actual fact false balances, though common enough, vary very slightly from the true. Some of the shops are said to have two sets of balance weights, one for weighing in and the other for weighing out money. But this is looked upon as a dangerous practice and the Chinese say as we do that 'cheats never prosper.')

Usage.—1. Of stories told in the streets and shops where—seeing that newspaper readers are few—the news of the day is circulated. Such popular versions of passing events are sure to be greatly exaggerated. One part in ten is to be believed.

2. In a special sense of popular rumours concerning a person's WEALTH. The figurative steel-yard of the shops and streets makes a man's fortune or capital to be ten times greater than the real amount.

198. 芒果花；虛多實少.

Mango flowers; the false are many, the true are few.

(The native mango tree flowers regularly but bears fruit seldom, a circumstance which accounts for the high price of the fruit in the market.)

Usage.—Much fiction and little fact. More false than real.

XVI.—ILLUSIVE, DECEPTIVE, BEGUILING.

199. 亞婆燈；咁輕.

The lamp of the goddess of childbirth; so light.

(Under the bed, in every house where there are young children, is a shrine of the goddess of childbirth. The lamp of this shrine is home-made. Its materials are red and yellow paper rolled into cylindrical shape and gummed together, five or six pieces to one lamp. Although never lighted, the old lamp is replaced each new year by a new lamp, in token that the favour and protecting care of the goddess are confided in from year to year).

Play on the words, 輕 light as an object. 輕 light as words lightly used.

Usage.—1. Of promises easily made or undertakings entered into without forethought.

2. In a general sense. Spoken with levity; without heed or care.

200. 蘇東波食蘇餈；講夢話.

Sŏ Tung Po eating sesamum cakes; telling his dream.

(When Sŏ Tung Po, the illustrious statesman, poet and commentator, A.D. 1036 to 1101 (v. Mayers Hand-book 623), in disgrace at head quarters and degraded, was on his way to Canton to take up his duties as a subordinate official, the boat in which he travelled anchored at the famous Kam Shán Monastery near Kun Iu, twenty miles north-west of the provincial city. Whilst taking a siesta shortly after midday on board his boat, the poet dreamed that the inmates of the monastery invited him to partake of a repast of sesamum cakes. In the evening he visited the monks and in the course of conversation told his dream. What was his astonishment and theirs at finding in Sŏ Tung Po an abbot of credit and renown whose name in life was Tak Wan (得雲) and who is said by some to have founded the cloister. That day happened to be the anniversary of Tak Wan's death and at the time when the visitor to the monastery was dreaming in his boats, the monks, in affectionate memory of the departed abbot, were preparing for the latter his favorite food, sesamum cakes, and inviting him to return to earth and partake of them.)

Usage.—Of those who are prone to take the shadow for the substance. Their promises are illusive, their schemes chimerical and visionary.

201. 畫餅充饑；點得飽.

Painting pictures of cakes to appease hunger; how can a man satisfy himself.

Usage.—Unsubstantial; unreal; unable to fill the mind or the desires.

Of empty promises. Hopes excited only to be disappointed.

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202. 豉油撈飯；整色水.

Soy mixed with rice; gives a colour (to the food).

Play on words: 整色水 give a colour (to the rice). 整色水 give a colour (to the statement).

Usage.—A specious appearance made to conceal the true intent and purpose.

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203. 整大白欖；整色水.

Making a big olive; it is all in the colouring.

(One of the many ingenious methods of attracting customers, once practised by sweet-vendors in Canton, was to carry their goods in a box shaped like an enormous olive and so coloured as to perfectly resemble that fruit. Tihs custom gave rise to a proverb.)

Usage.—External appearance, false show. When a person is inclined to give a false colouring to his statements, the Cantonese often say 咪整大白欖 do not make a big olive.

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204. 紙札舖糨糊；整鬼整馬.

The paste at the shops where paper figures are manufactured; is used in making figures of spirits and horses.

(The reference is to figures burned on behalf of the dead. Paper spirits (鬼) represent deceased relatives and their attendants in the nether world. Horses, besides being made for the dead to ride on the spirit roads, play a second and in the eyes of Taoist exorcisers an important part. At the all souls festival, paper horses are burned that the Mercury of the shades (走報神) may carry to the King of Heaven (玉皇) messages from the exorcisers and their invitation to be present at the festival).

Play on words: 鬼馬 spirits and horses. 詭馬 deceitful.

Usage.—An artifice which serves to give an appearance of right to wrong-doing.

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205. 較染紙顏料師傅；整色整水.

An expert mixing dyes; makes the colouring liquor.

Usage.—Making the wrong appear right; putting on a false gloss; giving a colouring to statements.

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206. 三脚猪𠯿；畀口蹬.

A three-legged sow; uses her snout as a support (in walking).

Play on words: 畀口蹬 support with the snout. 畀口蹬 aid a bad cause by fair words.

Usage.—Trying to make up for deficiency in duty by pleasant speeches and promises.

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207. 猪𠯿嚼螺殼；貪口爽.

A sow munching snail shells; she likes to hear the crunching sound.

Usage.—1. Of a person who speaks to please and will promise little or much with no intention to perform.

2. In a lighter sense of a person who likes to hear the sound of his own voice.

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208. 市橋蠟燭；假細心.

The candles made at Shi K'iu; not true small wicks.

(Shi K'iu, Market Bridge, is a large town in the Sha Wán division of the P'ún Ü district and is about twenty miles from Canton. Candles are made there with wicks thin and pointed at the end to make the candles appear of superior quality.)

Play on the words: 假細心 false small wicks; 假細心 false punctiliousness or zeal.

Usage.—1. Of speech. When a smooth-

tongued person observes closely the proprieties, but is hollow and insincere in his speech and professions of friendship.

2. Of action. Eye service, as when a servant puts on a great show of zeal and diligence in the presence of his master.

209. 倒吊臘鴨；一嘴油.

A dry duck hung up by the tail; it's beak full of oil.

(When ducks, after being salted and skewered, are hung to dry in the sun, the fat soon turns into oil and may be seen dripping from the birds as they hang in rows at the poulterer's.)

Usage.—Of insincerity, cant, or humbug. Of a person who, as the Cantonese say, can 'cajole a bird into coming down from the tree.' An Uriah Heep.

210. 油籮蟮；滑極.

An eel in an oil basket; most slippery.

(Native oil jars are fitted into wicker baskets. These latter, from the constant spilling of the contents of the jars, become in course of time smooth as glass and slippery to the touch.)

Usage.—Of a man who speaks fair but is utterly unworthy of confidence. Glib in speech and talk, slippery in promises.

211. 貓喊老鼠；假慈悲.

The cat mourning for the rat; false pity.

Usage.—Hypocritical sorrow. Crocodile's tears. As the mournful crocodile.

'With sorrow snares relenting passengers.' Shakspeare, Henry VI. 3.1.

212. 雨洒觀音；假慈悲.

The image of the goddess of mercy wet with rain; false pity.

(As if the goddess wept with pity over the sorrows of men and the crimes and miseries of the age, as certain figures of the Virgin Mary are said to have done in days before the devices of priest-craft were exposed and denounced).

Usage.—Hypocritical sorrow. An appearance of sympathy accompanied by false tears.

213. 入聖帽；笠死人.

A cap to be buried in; for the covering of the head of dead man.

Play on two senses of the words: 笠死人 to cover a dead man's head; 笠死人 to overpower with flattery, 'to lay on the butter thickly.'

Usage.—To curry favour with, to lick-spittle a person. The worst kind of flattery, flunkeyism or toadyism.

214. 泥線香；瞞神騙佛.

Mud incense sticks which are used in worship; deceive the spirits and impose on Buddha himself.

Usage.—1. A clever impostor.

2. An artful dodge to hood-wink and overreach others.

215. 剃頭唔剃鬚；整老.

Shave the head and not the beard; make oneself out to be old.

Play on words: 老 old; 老 for 老實 honest.

Usage.—A false appearance put on to deceive; selfish purposes served by a show of candour and honesty.

216. 穿山甲；詐騃.

A pangolin; sham foolishness.

(The pangolin is a reptile having a body covered with scales. On the first approach of danger it rolls itself into a kind of ball, and when thus on its guard against foes, the animal looks as if bereft of all sagacity. But the pangolin, so the Chinese say, has wonderful instinct, can bore through a mountain! and is never more wise than when seeming to be least so.)

Usage.—Assumed ignorance. To put on

the cloak of foolishness in order to hide a cunning disposition.

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217. 一頭神花；整顛整戇.

His head stuck full of spirit flowers; making himself out to be a fool.

(神花 are the artificial flowers kept on the altars of the deities in native temples. Altar fittings are the same everywhere in temples and houses; in the centre an incense burner, on either side of the burner a candlestick, and on the outer side of each candlestick a stand for artificial flowers. It is said that a certain cunning offender, anxious to escape the consequences of his wrong-doing, ran into a temple and began breaking off the artificial flowers and sticking them in his hair, a device intended to prove to his pursuers that he was unmistakably mad.)

Usage.—Of a person who pretends to stupidity. Feigned folly.

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218. 陳大年報進士；越夜越凍.

Ch'an T'ai-nin hearing news of his success in the examination for doctor's degree; the longer he waited, the more hopeless he became of having the intelligence confirmed.

Usage.—When a man's hopes and expectations are doomed to disappointment.

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219. 苦瓜核；聴悶.

The bitter gourd seeds; all one gains from eating them is a feeling of sickness.

Play on the words 悶 worry 悶 nausea.

Usage.—Of some impracticable plan or scheme which a man desires earnestly to carry out but which ends in bringing him nothing but worry. To worry about the matter is to eat the seeds of the bitter gourd, which turn a person sick and faint.

XVII.—MEDDLESOME, INTRUSIVE, ILLTIMED.

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220. 曹操鬧許褚；多事.

Ts'ó Ts'ó scolding his officer Hü Ch'ü; meddlesome.

(Ts'ó Ts'ó, 'the most prominent character in the great drama of history forming the epoch of the three kingdoms, died in A.D. 220.' Among his subordinate officers was a certain Hü Ch'ü, distinguished for simplicity of mind and singleness of aim. These qualities did not always meet the approval of his commander, who blamed Hü Ch'ü's want of artifice and secrecy and moreover charged him with intruding by his meddlesome staightforwardness into affairs that did not concern him).

Usage.—Officiously intrusive, meddlesome, a busy-body.

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221 四方帽；假軍師.

The square hat; a false military adviser.

(In the times of the Han dynasty, among the officers of State, was one who acted as the adviser of the Emperor in matters of warfare. The policy recommended by this secretary for war was usually followed: his office was therefore of the highest importance. In the modern drama the character is parodied, the military adviser of the theatres being a personage who never accomplishes what he promises and whose counsel is crafty and dangerous. The distinguishing feature of this actor's dress is a square hat and the phrase means a crafty, subtle meddler).

Usage.—1. Meddling with the concerns of others to their harm and loss.

2. In a general sense, not to be relied on; false and dangerous.

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222. 保長今年輪到你咩；做乜咁管閒事呢.

Is it your turn to be headman this year? Why do you meddle with what doesn't concern you?

(The 保長 is the head-borough or tithing man responsible for the good conduct and well-being of the people in his ward. In former times this functionary was elected by the people from among themselves as being a person of standing and reputation. The head-borough is now appointed by the police master and gaol warder, a subordinate of the district magistrate, who receives a sum of money deemed a fair equivalent for the advantages accruing to the position. The period during which a headman continues in office is two years, at the expiry of which time he must be re-appointed).

Usage.—In the way of advice, mind your own business.

223. 狗拉老鼠；多管閒事.

A dog catching a rat; always interfering with another's concerns.

(In China to catch rats is considered the province of the cat).

Usage.—Meddlesome, a busy-body.

224. 買脚魚；唔要龜搭.

Buying turtles; (the purchaser) objects to have a tortoise thrown in.

(The resemblance between a small turtle and a tortoise might tempt the seller to try to palm off on his customer a tortoise for a turtle).

Play on the words: 龜搭 throw in a tortoise; 龜搭 an abusive phrase.

Usage.—In scolding a person who interferes, or meddles with what does not concern him.

225. 泮塘佬賣藕；旁邊插入.

The Pun T'ong man selling water-lily roots; (inferior roots) stuck on at the sides.

(Pún T'ong, a district in the north-west suburbs of Canton, is famous for its trade in edible water-lily roots. Good and bad roots are disposed of together and this practice of the market necessitates some sorting and preparation. Small pieces of bamboo are used as attachments and the inferior roots are stuck on to those of better quality).

Play on the words: 插入 stuck in; 插入 thrown in (as in conversation).

Usage.—1. Meddling with a matter that has nothing to do with one. Putting in one's oar.

2. Of irrelevant remarks which do not grow out of the subject of discourse but are as it were stuck in—generally with a sinister purpose.

226. 鯇魚尾；搭嘴.

The sale of a tench; throw in (a piece of) the head.

(As the practice of Canton fishmongers is, when selling tench. The bony head of the tench is cut up and a piece of it sold with each fleshy and better portion of the fish).

Play on two senses of the words 搭嘴: add the head; thrust in one's head or as we say 'dip in the beak.'

Usage.—Meddling with or prying into the affairs of others; putting in one's oar.

227. 打爛沙盤問到尼；眞贅.

Even a broken earthen pot he will ask all about; truly inquisitive.

Usage.—Of a person whose habit it is to catechise and cross-question others. A Paul Pry.

228. 三元答華仔；冇你咁好戲.

Sam Ün (an actor, answering Wa Tsai (his rival); I am not so good at acting as you.

Play on the words: 戲 acting; 氣 talking.

(These two famous actors have already figured in the Enigmatic Parallelisms. When Wa Tsai declared that Sam Ün's performance did not deserve the name of acting, the latter, unwilling to waste words, and seizing his opportunity retorted by a pun. 'Quite so, I'm not your equal in talking' i.e. I can't spend breath in meeting poor criticisms).

Usage.—1. In replying to a person who is a busy-body.

2. Refusing to waste one's breath.

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229. 銀印; 打撻頭爲把口.

A money stamp; for the sake of the face (metal part), the top (of the handle) is frayed with frequent striking.

(The practice of stamping silver dollars prevails everywhere as the best safe-guard against counterfeits. Every bank, shop, or place of business has its own stamp. The native banks frequently change their money stamps in order to render more difficult fraudulent imitations. The head of the stamp is the top of the handle, the mouth is the metal part on which the characters are engraved.)

Play on the words 頭口 head and mouth.

Usage.—Of a person who receives severe beatings for impertinence, lying, or other offences of the tongue, e.g. when a saucy apprentice is made to feel the heavy hand of an indignant master or an incorrigibly worthless servant is corrected within an inch of his life.

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230. 石地種蓮; 唔插得入.

Planting lotus in stony ground; it cannot be stuck in.

Usage.—When an outsider tries and fails to put in his word with others; or when, after moving heaven and earth to thrust himself forward with a view to a share in some scheme, or concern, his endeavours end in failure.

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231. 茶煲煲飯; 旁便出氣.

Using the tea kettle to boil rice; steam escapes at the side.

(There is a short spout at the side of the earthenware tea-kettle which is wanting in the rice-cooking pot).

Play on the words: 旁便出氣 steam escapes at the side; 旁便出氣 an outsider angry.

Usage.—1. Of a person who cannot bear to see injustice done, and is driven to speak his mind freely and with a show of temper to the person acting unjustly.

2. Of retribution for misdeeds reaching and overtaking a man from the outside. When the purpose of heaven in the man's punishment is brought about by an unlooked for train of circumstances.

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232. 亞帝賀壽; 亂咁吸.

A Tai (an actor) congratuating the Western Royal Mother on her birthday; confused sounds (Anglice, a 'Dutch concert.')

(For an account of the Western Royal Mother see Mayer's Manual, Art. 572. Later Taoist writers represent the Western Royal Mother and her consort, the Eastern Royal Father, as 'the first created and creature results of the powers of nature.'

At the theatres the first stage of the introductory business begins when the eight immortals come on to congratulate the Western Royal Mother. The congratulating is in a pæan of praise chanted by the eight immortals. A Tai, one of the eight on a particular occasion, was a novice and inexperienced in the ways of the stage. He knew neither song nor music and was 'all out' in his part.)

Usage.—1. Mal-à-propos, ill-timed, not chiming in, as a remark in conversation.

2. Absentminded:—as a messenger who, forgetting his errand, confuses the instructions he received and when arrived at his destination is found to be unintelligible.

3. Of a person chanting a number of meaningless sounds to a sort of tune, as the Chinese boatmen do frequently when at work.

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233. 亞昆賣大頭魚; 好吸唔吸.

A Kwan selling the bigheaded fish; when you ought to have moved your gills, you would not.

(A Kwan, the fishmonger, lost a customer who came to purchase the bigheaded fish

because at the moment when buyer and seller stood watching, the fish gave no signs of life. No sooner had the customer left than the fish began to move its gills.)

Usage.—Mal-à-propos, ill-timed, unseasonable. Of a person who, when he does not say or do the wrong thing, says or does the right thing at the wrong moment.

T. W. PEARCE.
J. H. STEWART LOCKHART.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

NOTES.

NANKING IN THE SIXTH CENTURY.—At the beginning of this century, the Ch'i dynasty was changed for that of Liang and a scion of the Siau family 蕭衍 succeeded to the *southern empire, his capital being* Nanking. The Liang dynasty kept the imperial power from 502 to 557, and this was a flourishing time for Buddhism.

Sun chiuen had reigned chiefly at Nanking from A.D. 222 to 252, and his successor had been deposed in 280 by the victorious Tsin dynasty which made Lohyang the capital, as it had been under the Han from the year A.D. 25. In the year 502, if we throw a glance back over the period that had elapsed, in order to have a clear idea of China's capitals at that time, we observe that through Wang Mang's usurpation Chang an had been abandoned and Lohyang preferred and that Lohyang was the metropolis from 25 to 220 for all China. It continued to be the capital of North China during the Wei dynasty of Tsau tsau, from 220 to 265, when the Tsin dynasty ruled in North China under Sz ma Yen. Then for fifteen years Lohyang was the Tsin capital and Nanking the Woo capital. When Sz ma Yen conquered the Woo country in 280, Nanking was shorn of its honours for thirty-seven years, during which the Tsin dynasty ruled all China from Lohyang, at that time Cochin-China and Cambodia being part of the empire. In 317 a new partition of China took place, through the entrance of Tartar princes who seized the northern provinces. The Tsin emperor took refuge at Nanking and ruled his diminished territories from that city. From that date Nanking remained the capital of South China *till 589, when the Sui dynasty succeeded to* the entire empire.

The short-lived attempt of the Ming dynasty to establish Nanking as the seat of government, is evidence of the fact that China's natural metropolis is in the northern provinces, because the strength of the imperial army has always been in its cavalry and the Tartar tribes are better kept under control when the capital is in the North. In other words, the source of the military power of China as an empire is in the country which produces an indefinite number of horsemen. The natural centre of the government, when the country is not divided into kingdoms, is therefore in North China. South China, when it is not autonomous, has always to be in subjection to North China on this account.

The China of the time of Buddhist supremacy cannot be fully known until we add what we can glean from the reading of Buddhist literature to the works of the Confucian historians. The narrowness of the Confucian historical spirit is shewn in its neglect of that literature and no foreign student of Chinese history should imitate this fault. The work of the historian is to make a complete picture. As China is tripartite in its religions, the historical canvas