

MISZELLEN — MISCELLANIES

VORANZEIGE

Mrs. Florence Ayscough hat im Jahre 1929 den ersten Band ihrer Tu Fu-Übersetzungen erscheinen lassen. Nunmehr wird im Juli d. J. der zweite Band unter dem Titel: *Travels of a Chinese Poet: Tu Fu Guest of Rivers and Lakes* bei Jonathan Cape, London, folgen. Uns interessierte besonders das lange Gedicht, das Dr. Ritter von Zach in dieser Zeitschrift im Jahre 1925 wiedergegeben hat und das die Autorin in einem Vortrag vor der *China Society* am 27. Februar 1934 in extenso zitiert hat. Ohne uns mit der Wiedergabe in allen Einzelheiten zu identifizieren, möchten wir doch auf die Wiedergabe in einer anderen europäischen Sprache aufmerksam machen.

TU FU'S LONGEST POEM

This famous production, in two hundred lines and a thousand characters, is not only the longest poem from Tu Fu's writing brush but is also the longest poem in Chinese literature. Legge quotes the text in his Prolegomena to the *Shih Ching, Classic of Poetry*, but does not translate it into English. In fact, as far as I am aware, the only rendering in any European tongue is the German version by Herr Dr. Ritter von Zach, which appeared in *Asia Major*, 1925. Although, in certain particulars, my reading of the poem differs from his, I have found the studious analysis by Dr. von Zach most helpful and suggestive.

The two individuals to whom the poem is addressed have both held high office. Chêng Shên, now retired, is living in Chiang Ling below the Gorges, while Li Chih-fang, a member of the Imperial Clan to whom Tu Fu addresses various other poems, is now at I Ling, the Ichang of to-day. In A. D. 763 he had served as Ambassador to Tibet and had there endured two years imprisonment. Upon his return the Emperor received him with every mark of high favour.

In the interest of clarity I have sub-divided the poem and have inserted titles which I hope may serve as sign-posts to the understanding. Of course, it would be possible to add one hundred Notes! I refrain. The translation is difficult; it seems as if Tu Fu has searched the corners of his brain for complicated ideographs and unusual combi-

nations; but the poem is well sustained and throws much light on the events of Tu Fu's life.

In Part I we read that 'thirst disease', diabetes, has been with him for three years. Part III reveals that he still owns land in the ancestral home, later referred to as Tu Ch'ü village. We learn, too, that he attends a banquet, evidently given by the Provincial Governor, and listens sadly to melodies written in the K'ai Yüan era when Ming Huang, Bright Emperor, was at the height of his glory.

Part IV. is reminiscent of Su Tsung's days and by means of allusion Tu Fu compares Li Kuang-pi and Kuo Tzü-i, saviours of the Empire, to heroes of ancient days.

In Part VI the mention of a 'bamboo crab-creel' is an allusion to a saying by Chuang Tzü who declares that when a fish is caught men forget the creel which has served them; that when a hare is safely in hand men ignore the trap which has caught it. Tu Fu means that the highly original expressions of Chêng and Li have passed into current speech, that men use them but do not recollect their origin.

In the same part he speaks of horses which 'sweat blood'; such are supposed to be the finest steeds, as the cranes from Chêkiang Province, referred to in the next line, are considered to be the finest cranes.

Part VIII opens with a curious expression: a 'carver of worms' is one who devotes his life to literature. Tu Fu then describes his surroundings and the little house of eight or nine roof trusses where he lives and declares that the rest in Lan Hsi has helped him; he feels stronger. The well-spring of his energy fills once more and he longs to be off.

Part XI Buddhism — the Faith of Chia, or Śākyamuni — has always interested Tu Fu deeply, he now suggests that he may retire to a monastery and devote himself solely to the study of Buddhist books. He will no longer fill his mind with 'fairy-lore'. Wu Ch'üan, so the *Lieh Hsien Ch'uan* relates, is a being able to fly who plucked herbs upon the hills and ate the fruit of pine trees. This he is supposed to have offered to the Emperor Yao, who refused it coldly. Members of the great man's suite were, however, more responsive; they took and ate and in consequence lived for three hundred years.

Tu Fu reflects that the famous painter Ku K'ai-chih devoted himself to Buddhist subjects, and then declares that he will emulate Ting Ling-wei who returned from the East in the shape of a crane and Ma Yüan who in the Far South, the present day Annam, saw a kite drop deep into the waves. In other words he proposes to visit far-off Buddhist shrines as did both these worthy men. The poem

ends, however, on a note of uncertainty. Tu Fu asks will he, in the long last, be able to tear himself from the World and its 'mirrored forms of actuality'?

On an Autumn Day in K'uei Prefecture chanting Thoughts.
Poem offered up, sent to Chêng Shên, Sub-Director of Secret Archives, and Li Chih-fang, Master of Ceremonies to the Heir Apparent. One hundred Rhymes.

Part I. My Life in K'uei Fu.

At severed frontier, North of Black Barbarians,
In lonely city, beside White Emperor's Burgh.
Blown like fine rain I wander still within these one hundred li;
Alay thirst illness has three years been with me.
Sharp two-edged sword rings in its opened case — thus my
 keen brain;
Swarm of my writings fills to brim moored vessel — shall
 soon leave Shu.
Confusion; separation; thoughts cannot relax;
 Failing; strength lessening; days most unquiet.
Wife, children, ask anxiously of my sinews, my strength;
 Years, months, of leek-flower splendour pass away.
Have climbed up, looked down, on all things exquisite in
 colour;
Am burnt in potter's kiln of experience, result is manifest
 in poems written on bamboo tallies.

Part II. The Essence of the Land.

Chasm narrows; vast river rises;
 Cliffs crack; old trees form round tops.
Old trees brush clouds, darken air of Ch'u;
 Stream rushes to sea, kicks sky of Wu.
Well-water is boiled men haste to make salt;
 Fields are burned; men include near-by waste-land.

At times sheer cliffs redoubled terrify;
 Where seek level ground? where do streams flow?
 Bright, high-tailed water-birds, in pairs, in pairs, posture;
 Monkeys, she-monkeys, in heaps, in heaps, hang.
 Long jade-green creepers resemble girdles;
 Small brocade-bright pebbles simulate coins.
 Spring grass; why already sere?
 Chilled flowers; also to be pitied.
 Men who hunt, fan frontier fires;
 To wasteland inns, hill streams lead in pipes.

Part III. My Own Condition.

Hailed; I rise hurriedly, scratch my head;
 Pacing, supported by staff, have bored through many
 pairs of shoes.
 In Two Capitals, still have neglected land;
 Within Four Seas, am cut from friendly shoulders.
 In Military Headquarters was first appointed minor official;
 Had then good fortune to be made Yüan-wai-lang.
 In Melon Time of dismissal travelled, as before, a transient;
 Though I am floating duckweed t'would be too bitter
 to bribe for office.
 Medicine cakes are useless; they but injure, destroy;
 Autumn wind brings relaxation, peace.
 Open lapel of coat, wind drives out poison of malaria,
 My eyes see; it sweeps away clouds, mist.
 At high banquet, full ceremonial of Feudal Lords;
 My beloved friends precede all noble guests.
 Wailing twelve-stringed harpsichord wounds the old law-
 givers;
 Exquisite banquet-hall fascinates spirits, immortals.
 In Southern Enclosure airs of K'ai Yüan Period
 Were then made known by Pear Garden Pupils.

Sounds of song now pour forth, harmonize, resolve;
 Tears of those who fill hall to its brim, flow a mur-
 muring current.

Part IV. I record the History of the State during
 the days when I lived at Ch'ang An.

My pitiful shadow is straitened in K'uei Prefecture;
 My stomach longs for fried fat of Tu Ch'ü village.
 Until this moment Lung Chiu waters
 Have not carried rank odour of Dog Barbarians.
 Men like Kêng and Chia supported Imperial house;
 Those like Hsiao and Ts'ao did reverence to Ruler's
 grass-sitting-mat;
 Imposing stern authority, destroyed by fire hornets, wasps;
 Exerting strength, imitated kestrels, hawks.
 All ancient things, abundant as a thick grown forest, re-
 mained still;
 But evil brigands in their wickedness altered not.
 State should have undertaken battle to chastise rebels;
 Yet men believed that gongs of war should sound the
 halt.
 How should they know the rites? Slaves! Bond-servants!
 In error, He of Grace and Glory gave them power.
 Star of Hu Barbarians suddenly a shooting comet;
 Black-headed People were then repressed, bound.
 Part V. How my Two Friends met their Opportunity.
 Sad, self-reproachful, silken threads of Royal Edicts pressed
 one on the next;
 Laws, Ordinances, which annoyed and tried the people
 were repealed.
 His consolidated Patrimony was laid before First Ruler;
 The 'Omen of Good Fortune' appeared at a hunt.

In Palace Forbidden-enclosure silken Edicts of high principle plied;

Around glorious steps ascending to throne bright ones who upheld honour were abundant.

Bears, spotted bears, praised the Hope of Lü;
Wild-geese, swans, esteemed King Hsüan of Chou.

Part VI. I describe my Two Friends, their poetic talent, their friendship, the course of their lives.

Reverently bent you listened to Ruler then in heart of his glorious restoration;

You heaved long sighs for noble ones not of this world.

Many writings, harmonious as cord of three strands, come from Chêng Pillar of Support;

At Hsiao Lao, one thousand *li* from him, lives Li.

Oh Chêng! Oh Li! your discussions illuminate the times;
Your essays as melody resolved, or colours perfectly blended are on a level with and far before my own.

You equal Yin and Ho in purity and terseness;
Suddenly as a blown flame dead Shên and Sung hover here together.

Your stanzas according to law compare in tone with bamboo flutes from K'un Lun;

Your harmonious melodies speak of those strings dried by fire and those wet by water.

All rejoice in, value your talents which flow as water blow as wind;

For a long time past, in their zest, all have 'forgotten the bamboo crab-creel'.

You Chêng are like that other Chêng in your friendship as you travel;

You Li resemble that other Li whose pupils were climbing dragons.

Although it might be said I am denied Rites and Ceremonies;
I dare not lower the waving flag of friendship.

Looking high you garner pattern men;
With open heart you flavour Way of Truth.

Horses of those who come all sweat blood;
Cranes which screech about you must be from Ch'ing T'ien Hills.

Oh Li! your feathers, wings, rose from hills of Shang;
Oh Chêng! you didst dwell in P'êng Lai near Pavilions of Han.

Like Kuan Ning of the silk-gauze cap, did you Chêng seek purity alone;

The brocade robe from Chiang Ling has newly fallen on Li.

In Eastern Province at times you, oh Li write themes on the wall;

By Southern Lakes Chêng daily taps the gunwale.

To districts cut off, as a knife cuts silk threads, you wander far-away, climb high;

And on flowered tablets are your exquisite phrases supported.

Part VII. I am lonely and would gladly visit my Two Friends.

Each time when I desire to flee my loneliness, to drop, a bird to earth,

It is futile; one hundred tiger thoughts hold me bound.

Idle, deserted, am already on precipice of life;
Moreover development of country is obstructed, hindered.

My old home, its coverlet and pillow, are buried in a growth of weeds;

Places where I walked, by pools and ponds, are neglected, abandoned.

Cut apart, separated from brethren, my grief piteous, piteous;

At Summer rites, at Winter sacrifice to forefathers my tears rippling water, rippling water.

At West Capital chrysanthemums dew bespangled, cluster,
many coloured;

In East Capital vegetables of Autumn, cast shadows
by rivers Chien and Ch'an.

With whom utter thoughtful words on past events?

In many places new-made roads lead to burial grounds.

The prosperous, the high-born, no longer turn heads to-
wards me;

Clamour, struggle for life! I am too languid to swing
the whip.

Dust from soldiers with spears obscures, obscures;

Moon above Chiang and Han exquisite, exquisite.

Coiled, constrained, I gaze at Autumn swallows;

Lonely, heedless, I hear evening cicadas.

Part VIII. My Poverty and Resignation.

I, carver of worms, am grateful for your mindful thoughts;

Your carp letters ask how I am: I am dull as faded,
colour, weak as floss silk.

I long for staff of peace Lord Yen gained by divination;

Would preserve green felt rug. Philosopher Wang re-
ceived from robbers.

Hard-bottomed bag empty! sell broad carved hair-pins,
gold wristlets;

Rice finished! snap flowers from inlaid filigree head-
dresses.

Sweet oranges hang in shade of cool leaves,

Thatched roof has but eight or nine trusses.

Battle-array Plan on sand of North bank;

Market mooring-place at apex of West channel.

A wayfarer restrained by Fate, heart is often snapped;

Roosting, idle, illness is now improved.

Purple the 'squatting owl tubers', gathered on Min range;

White the lotus, planted in pool on high mound.

Pears, tinted, exquisite, triumph over rosy cheeks;

Dates luxuriant, plentiful, grow larger than my fist.

I supervise kitchen with meticulous care — still but one
flavour;

To attain repletion need three sturgeon a day!

Sons rush out to see conical bamboo fish-traps;

Friends come; must sit on saddle-cloth of my horse.

Gate of plaited branches is narrow, narrow;

Led in spliced bamboos water current murmurs, murmurs.

My boundary ditch marches with angle of government fields;

The village clusters against outer wall of temple in
wasteland.

Broken bamboo-fence is patched with thorns;

Corded creepers are pressed down by stones.

Part IX. Contrasting their Lot with mine, I beg my
Two Friends to devote themselves to Business of
State.

Do you ask why he who always attended dawn-audience
Now lies abed as though sleeping after wine?

Who says: "he cannot go far"?

He, himself feels that by rest he gains strength.

Dew, rain, have dimmed official robe of silver brocade;
How delicious sweet incense floating from powdered
tribunal!

You, Purple Birds of Fable, recognize no farness, no nearness;

I, the Yellow Finch, must be content to flutter, make
short flights.

Perverse because of my learning, to all am now subordinate;

Bright Lords, must strive each to fly silken banners of
high office.

Flowered music of your fame penetrates Above Lord's
inmost Hall;

At dawn, at dusk, reaches orbit of the stars.

Your requests, exhortations, surpass those of K'uang Ting;
You lead all scholars as did Fu Ch'ien.

If you do nothing but offer fish-bone of sharp criticism;
Yet, as in potter's furnace, Government may be shaped.

Anxious labour of Above Lord revolves at dusk, and through
dark night;

Bitterness, suffering of Black-haired People press forward
— a span of horses.

On last day your portraits will hang in Cloud Terrace;
By whom else shall Green tablets, — the history of our
times — be tied together?

Part X. I intend to leave K'uei Prefecture, to seek
a Buddhist Retreat, and on the way to meet my Two
Friends.

Dangers on road of travel, what are they?
Joy of seeking you, responding to your beckoning,
already quickens.

Even now flying oars are ready;
In brief I purpose to hold in reserve the whining bow-
string.

Will dedicate my person at temple of Twin Peaks;
Before Great Gate will pray enlightenment as to medi-
tation of Seven Forerunners.

When sail is dropped will look back on former happenings;
Clad in robes of coarse cotton will study unfolding
of the Truth.

Ah Chêng! your fame equals in height that of An Shih in
Ch'in;

Ah Li! your guests hurry as did those of Chao Wang
in Yen.

You Chêng, do not grieve upon the road as did Yüan Chi,
You Li, came floating on a raft as did Chang Ch'ien.

Dividing clouds to be broken through where are they?

Detaining circumstance which delays me here will not
last long!

Tarrying wind will finally cause my boat to shatter waves,
Water demons dare not make froth fly!

On that day will pass Terrace of Fairy Lady;
Spring wounds! I dread coming night-jar.

Even in tranquil friendship are meetings, partings;
In this country-of-many-rivers can achieve frequent
comings together.

Part XI. I will visit Buddhist States and study
earnestly Buddhist Teaching; fear, nevertheless,
that I shall not be able to tear myself from the
World's Dust.

Henceforth will lean on Faith of Chia — the Solitary One;
Of what avail to study fairy-lore of Wu Ch'üan?

Incense-burner Peak will appear, loom in my sight;
Orange Well is also on that high range.

I will go East, to seek home-coming crane;
I will pace South, to that far place where dropped the kite.

Late have I heard many beauteous tenets;
With dying steps will repair early errors.

The Painter Ku K'ai made records, vermilion, green;
At Temple To T'ao are carvings on jade, on gems.

Incense smoke fragrant, dark, black, black;
Fields of After-world bright, green, green.

Fearless, strong by reason of heart's wide horizon;
Timid, feeble because of body's weakness.

Useless, with a golden comb, to scrape film from my eyes;
I cannot yet separate, value aright, the mirrored forms
of actuality.

Florence Ayscough.