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### MR. BOOTH'S ILLNESS.

Explained by a Pipe and a Bottle of Whiskey.

Stories of the intemperate habits of the elder Junius Brutus Booth are not uncommon, and here is a characteristic one:

During an engagement the business and stage managers had to keep an eye on him night and day, and yet he very often succeeded in outwitting them. On one occasion, after an unusually serious and prolonged outbreak, the manager locked Booth up in his dressing room and put the key of the door in his own pocket. The roar of the theatre, like that of almost all theatres, opened on an unfrequented alley, and the great actor's dressing room was on the ground floor. Now, opening directly into this alley was a door, but this door was also locked and the key reposing in the manager's pocket. Booth added to his diseased thirst, however, an almost devilish cunning, and he soon devised a plan by which he could obtain the liquor for which he craved. Listening at the door which opened into the alley-way, he soon heard a passing footstep, and softly rapped on the panel. The footstep lagged and then stopped. "What is it?" said a voice.

Booth knew the voice: It was as he had hoped, a hanger-on about the thea-

tre, the sort of young man we would now call a tough.

"Listen," said the actor. "I will thrust a bank-note under the door, and I want you to go to the tavern at the corner and buy a bottle of whiskey and a long-stemmed clay pipe. When you return I will tell you what I want done."

The young tough departed on his errand and quickly returned. Then he was instructed to thrust the long stem of the pipe through the key-hole of the door, and slowly to pour the whiskey into the bowl.

As a result of this easy stratagem, the bewildered stage manager found the famous actor in a drunken stupor when he came to release him in the evening, and was forced once more to appear before the curtain and say:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I regret to announce that a sudden and serious indisposition will prevent Mr. Booth from appearing on the stage tonight."

Frederick Rosslyn, in  
October New Lippincott.

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### THE CHINESE AS POETS.

In lyrical poetry the most distinguished writers are Li Thai Pe and Tu Su, both of whom flourished at the beginning of the eighth century. A. D. Davis, in his 'On the Poetry of the Chinese,' in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society,' speaks highly of their verses. The romantic poetry of the Chinese, although void of poetic beauty according to the Caucasian standard, is invaluable for the insight it gives into their domestic life. Their dramatic poetry has laws peculiar to itself, and resembles partly the romantic drama of the Germans and partly the Comedia delle Arte of the Italians.

An example of philosophy is found in the following verses from Tai Ya, extracted from a collection of odes written under the first emperors of the Cheu dynasty. During the time of Le Wang, B. C. 850, the affairs of the state were in disorder, and thus Tai Ya complains:

Against that mild and hostile gale  
The panting traveler's strength must fail.  
Willingly would the people bring  
Good words of wisdom to their king;  
But ah! they are compelled to say,  
The time to act is far away.  
It would be better for us now  
To seek the fields and delve the plow;  
Resign state service, and instead  
Toil with the people for our bread.  
To labor in the fields all day,  
It is a heavy price to pay;  
But it were better not to grieve  
And earn by toil wherewith to live.

"The ancient poet Su was evidently a lover of sylvan solitude, and, as a poet born, one whose communion with nature taught to him many philosophies. His reference to the 'gay world' will strike us as a queer note upon the sensibilities of surfeited New York. This is what he says:

To a new and lovely home,  
Seeking quiet I have come,  
Cherishing, while none intrude,  
Thoughts in love and solitude,  
Mountain prospects front my door,  
And the Tung flows on before.  
In its waters deep I see  
Images of house and tree.  
'Neath that thicket of bamboo  
Snow lies all the winter through  
In my darkened cottage home  
Long ere nightfall all is gloom.

"Of the modern Chinese poets, Commissioner Lin, or, as the Emperor dubbed him, Wan Chung Kung, 'the literary and faithful,' was among the most noted. He was born in Fuh-Chow-Foo about 1787, was distinguished as a scholar, and held many high offices under the Government. He was commissioned in 1838 and charged 'to punish the consumers of opium,' wherein the activity and vigor of his policy was the immediate cause of hastening the rupture between England and China and of bringing on the 'opium war.' In consequence of his too faithful discharge of duty he was banished to E-li, a desolate region of the far northwest territories of China, and while on his banishment there these stanzas were written:

Proud towers the frowning wall  
that bounds the west,

Here the tired exile reins  
his steed—to rest.

Turret on turret  
in mid-air suspended  
Till with the distant woods  
of Shen-se blended:  
Tower rears on tower  
upon the Sze-Chuen clouds,  
And mighty mountain  
upon mountain crowds;  
Their craggy peaks up to  
heaven's bound do rise,  
While the waste's vast extension  
dims men's eyes.

"There is a charm of real tenderness in Lin's verses to his wife, expressing the delight he felt at receiving her portrait—assurance in his exile of her unchangeable affection. She is spoken of as a woman of high education, but appears to have suffered from some deformity in her hands, to which he makes allusion in his address. This is only an extract:

Like the wild water-fowls,  
in mutual love  
Each upon each dependent,  
did we move;  
But now—grief stricken—  
a poor, lonely man,  
I roam in desolate exile!  
Still the ban  
Of separation is  
less hard from thee—  
Beloved! than would the horse hide  
cerement be!  
Why should I weep?—  
I breathe the mountain air,  
Although a herdsman's  
humble garb I wear—  
Yet I must weep—  
for my mind's troubled eye  
Sees thee on suffering's  
couch of misery:  
The gay cosmetics  
all neglected—thou  
Dost never need the  
flattering mirror now;  
Yet thy fair characters  
in verse outpoured,  
Have ruptured all my soul—  
mine own adored!  
I see thee—welcome thee—  
in every line,  
Whose every pencil touch,  
dear Wife, is thine!

—Literary Digest.

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