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ARTICLE I.

NOTES ON CHINESE COMPOSITION.*

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THE Figures of Rhetoric have been scientifically classified as follows:—

I.—Figures of Similarity.

- 1.—Simile.
- 2.—Metaphor.
- 3.—Personification.
- 4.—Allegory.

II.—Figures of Contiguity.

- 1.—Metonymy.
- 2.—Synecdoche.

III.—Figures of Contrast.

- 1.—Antithesis.
- 2.—Epigram.
- 3.—Hyperbole.
- 4.—Climax.
- 5.—Interrogation.

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- 6.—Exclamation.
- 7.—Apostrophe.
- 8.—Innuendo.
- 9.—Irony.

and it is in accordance with these divisions and sub-divisions that the following *Notes* have been prepared.

This subject has been treated more or less at length by several writers on Chinese composition; notably, by Prémare in his *Notitia Linguae Sinicae*, by Gonçalves in his *Arte China*, and by Watters in his *Essays on the Chinese Language*. Neither, however, of the above-mentioned three authors have attempted anything like classification; Prémare and Gonçalves having mixed up Figures of Rhetoric with Figures of Syntax, indiscriminately, while Watters in his otherwise scholarly and valuable *Essays* seems to have included all figures of similarity and contiguity under the one head of metaphor. For instance, Gonçalves gives under *Syntaxe Figurada* (p. 179) Climax, Metaphor, and Metonymy, as well as a whole host of such figures as Polysyndeton, Epanadiplosis, Antanaclasis, etc., etc., legacies from the schoolmen of ancient Greece, who by their pedantic refinements would have reduced the art of rhetoric to the level of a mechanical toy. And Watters (*China Review*, V., p. 215) speaks of "that kind of metaphor by which the part is made to represent the whole or the individual the species," this being of course the separate figure of synecdoche; while of the three illustrations adduced, namely, 名 for person or individual, 門 for sect or school of philosophy, and 肉 for pork, only the last one falls under the head of synecdoche, the two first being excellent examples of metonymy.

CLASS I.

1. *Simile*.—This figure consists simply in likening one thing to another. The things compared must, however, be different in kind; and the comparison must not be pushed to excess, or it degenerates into hyperbole (*q. v.*).

The choice of similes by Chinese writers presents but few points of special interest, being in fact, with due allowance for difference of environment, almost identical with that dictated by the canons of western literary taste. Life is compared with a dream, death with sleep, rosy cheeks with peach-blossoms, etc., etc.

E. G. 瞳人如漆: eyes as black as lacquer.

輻輳如雲: spokes and axles like clouds (in number); *sc.* many chariots. See *synecdoche*.

嘴似刀: a mouth like a knife; *sc.* cutting in speech.

淚如雨下: her tears fell like rain.

A tipsy man is said to be 醉如泥 "as drunk as mud," in reference to a certain marine creature which when taken out of the water lies like a lump of mud, thus affording an instance of a simile within a simile.

The poet Li T'ai-poh likened man in his mortal state to the dust on the high road, blown hither and thither at the caprice of every changing wind:—

人生無根蒂
飄如陌上塵

He likened the moon-beams playing on the floor round his bed to hoar-frost lying on the ground:—

床前月明光
疑是地上霜

He also compared the human face with the flowers of the garden, and found that neither yielded in beauty or expression to the other:—

花面不相饒

So, too, we read in the *Hung-lou-méng* (ch. VI.) of P'ing-'rh, that 花容月貌 she was as beautiful as a flower and as bright-looking as the moon.

2. *Metaphor*.—Some readers may possibly be glad to be reminded that a metaphor is simply a simile in a word, the

metaphorical application of the word being altogether foreign to that in which it is commonly employed.

Of all figures of speech this is the one most constantly to be met with in Chinese literature, a fact to be ascribed in a great measure to the peculiar nature of the written language. For instance, the Chinese say 鐵證 "iron proofs" for the more expanded "proofs as irresistible as iron," reducing the simile to a metaphor by a process of condensation which is the alpha of success in every department of Chinese composition. Thus we have

柳腰: a willow waist.

櫻唇: cherry lips.

雞肋人: a "fowl's sinew" man; *sc.* a very thin man.

蠅頭事: a "fly's head" affair; *sc.* tiny, much as we say "pin's head."

山脚: the *foot* of the hill.

事乃寢: and so the matter *slept*; *sc.* dropped.

父母官: "father and mother officials"; *sc.* magistrates who are entrusted with the more immediate welfare of the people at large.

偶有所欲意一萌而婢已致之: whenever he wanted anything, the thought would hardly *sprout* before the maid had brought it to him.

免貽笑柄: so as to leave no *handle* for ridicule.

沐雨櫛風: washed by the rain and combed by the wind (said of the hardships of travel).

斗室: "a bushel room"; *sc.* a small room, no bigger than a bushel measure.

斗字: "bushel characters"; *sc.* enormous characters, as big as a bushel measure.

Mixed metaphors are to be found in Chinese as in other languages, occurring sometimes in the works of the best authors. The following example is taken from the writings of Lan Lu-chow:—

平地與無風之波: to stir up windless *waves* upon a level *ground*; *sc.* to make needless trouble.

3. *Personification*.—This figure is also known as *prosopopœia*. It consists in attributing life and mind to inanimate things. Thus, 天 “heaven,” which was originally nothing more than the blue æther overhead (*cf.* the Taoist form 靄), has become endowed under the influence of superstition with the form and attributes of a human being. The people speak of 老天爺 “the old gentleman of the sky,” and Han Wên-kung in the most famous of all his polished essays writes

上天鑒臨: I call God to witness.

And à propos of a story in the *Liao Chai* narrating the total destruction by thunder of a virtuous family, the commentator remarks that he thought it was only wicked people who were thus visited, adding “Truly the muddles of God Almighty are many indeed!” 天公之憤憤不已多乎. In another passage, however, referring to the preservation of a notably filial son out of the wreck of seventeen or eighteen entire cities destroyed by an earthquake, the same writer says “After this who will say that God Almighty does not know black from white?” 誰謂天公無皂白耶.

Earth is not unfrequently personified in a similar manner; *e. g.* 終日被人欺神明天地知 “and if after all men do oppress you, the spirits will see it and Heaven and Earth will know it.” Hence too such phrases as 后地 “queen Earth,” to which may be added 雹神 the “God of Hail,” 瘟神 or 瘡鬼 the “Angel of Pestilence,” and 海龍王 “Neptune” (*sc.* the sea) also used in the slang sense of “Davy Jones’ locker.”

4. *Allegory*.—An allegory is simply a metaphor expanded and sustained through all its parts. It is impossible here to do more than indicate where specimens of Chinese allegories may be found in translation. The 馬說 of Han Wên-kung appeared in the *Shanghai Courier* of 12th July, 1879; “Sleep-

land," 睡鄉記, by Su Tung-p'ò, and "Hunger-land," 餓鄉記, by Lan Lu-chou, were given in vol. VI., No. 6, of the *China Review*, and several good examples will be found in the *Liao Chai*, notably "The Wolf Dream," 夢痕. It may not be uninteresting, however, to note here the Chinese equivalents of "metaphor," "allegory," etc.; more especially as considerable confusion has prevailed hitherto among sinologues as to the proper employment even of their own native terminology. For instance, Dr. Williams in his *Syllabic Dictionary*, p. 1128, translates 寓言 "metaphorical, by metonymy," thus attributing to a single term the meanings of two quite distinct rhetorical figures. On pp. 973 and 1129 he further renders 借意 "metaphorically, in a figure," and 喻言 "a metaphor etc.," respectively.

As regards 借意, *lit.* "to borrow the sense," there can be but little doubt that it is in every way a most apt analogue of "metaphor," to which figure its use would seem to be exclusively confined, and it matters little that I have no quotations ready to hand in support of this statement.

As regards 喻, abundant proofs are to be found showing that when employed by competent writers it has invariably the sense of "illustration."

E. G.: 請以戰喻 "Let me take an illustration from war" (Mencius).

以蠡測海喻人之小見 "To measure the sea with a gourd is a phrase illustrative of persons with small mental capacity"; *sc.* those who would attempt the impossible. See the 幼學.

此言雖小可以喻大矣 "This proverb, although trivial in itself, may be used in illustration of important matters." See T'ang Mêng-lai's preface to the *Liao Chai*.

特假此以喻大道耳 "specially availed of in order to illustrate the Great Doctrine." See

preface to the 西域記, with reference to Hsüan Chuang and his travels.

厄之喻曰魚遊釜中: a state of danger is illustrated by the phrase "a fish in a frying-pan."

思慕喻曰一日三秋: a state of longing is illustrated by the phrase "one day like three autumns."

急之喻曰捧漏沃蕉: a state of haste is illustrated by the phrase "carry a colander to water bananas."

To these examples may be added the use of 意拾喻言 as a translation of "Æsop's Fables," by the learned Mun Mong. Scientifically speaking, a fable is a short allegory; but the Chinese have never classified so accurately as that, and are content to regard fables simply as anecdotes of fiction, without reference to their strictly allegorical character.

As regards 寓, we may safely write it off as the correct translation of "allegory," as witness the following instances:—

南花多寓言之蘊: the *Nan-hua* (by Chuang-tzū) is full of abstruse allegories. See preface to the 西域記.

考城隍寓言也: the story of *K'ao Ch'eng-huang* is allegorical. See comment on story No. 1 of the *Liao Chai*,

and a final example in which both 喻 and 寓 occur in the same sentence:—

鯤鵬之喻托物寓言: in the illustration of the leviathan changed into a roc, these creatures are employed allegorically. See commentary to the *Nan-hua-ching* (ad init.).

CLASS II.

1. *Metonymy*.—By this figure one word is put for another; the word substituted being, in general terms, an understood accompaniment of the other, or having some existing connection with it.

E. G.: 光陰 “light and shade”; *sc.* time.

蟒袍 “dragon robes”; *sc.* the office of State to which the right of wearing such robes belongs.

白首 “white head”; *sc.* an old man. *Cf.* “gray-beard.”

鍋開 “the pot boils”; *i. e.* the water in it boils.

於是履屨交錯 “thereupon ensued a great hurrying to and fro of shoes and slippers”; *sc.* “of persons.”

白粲 “the white food”; *sc.* rice.

孔方 “the round and square”; *sc.* the cash, which is round, with a square hole in the middle.

春鋤 “the pound and hoe”; *sc.* the paddy-bird, so called from the peculiar movements of its head and neck when searching for food in the fields.

黑甜 “the dark and sweet”; *sc.* sleep.

The following is an example of the matter put by metonymy for the materiate:—

無半寸防身之鐵 “without half an inch of iron to defend ourselves with”; precisely as in English we often speak of the steel, meaning of course weapons made of that metal.

Euphemism, which consists in veiling offensive subjects with polite phraseology, is a sub-head of metonymy; and so also is that nameless figure by which words are employed in a sense only to be understood by reference to some historical fact, some quotation either in poetry or in prose, or other similar key. Of the latter, the following are examples:—

大夫 “great officer”; *sc.* the pine-tree, so called because the First Universal Emperor (B. C. 221) once sheltered himself from a storm under a group of five pines, and in recognition of their services conferred upon them the title of the “five great officers.”

此君 “this prince” or “this gentleman”; *sc.* the bamboo, so called because when an ancient worthy was asked why he planted so many bamboos around his dwelling, he replied 何可一日無此君 “How can one be a single day without this gentleman?” in allusion to the extended use of the bamboo in almost every department of Chinese every day life.

以臥龍自任 “offered himself for the post of sleeping dragon”; *sc.* as commander-in-chief, the famous general Chu-ko Liang having lived in his youth at a place called Sleeping Dragon Hill.

Of euphemism, instances occur most frequently in connection with death and burial. Thus “to die” is 謝世 *to excuse oneself from the world*, or 決疣 *to burst the tumour*; “grave-clothes” are 壽衣 *clothes of old age*; “the grave” is 夜臺 *the terrace of night* on 佳城 *the beautiful city*, etc., etc. Of the same class are 大辟 and 正法 for capital punishment, and such others as 溫柔鄉, 破瓜, 相公, 大便, 小便,* 出恭, 行房, 敦倫, † 櫻梅釘, 子孫堂, 子孫堂, etc., etc., the name of which is legion.

* Hence, a petty official is never spoken of as 小弁, from the awkward identity of sound.

† I have once before drawn attention to the unfortunate selection of these two characters to express the sounds *Lon-don* in the Chinese designation of the London Missionary Society.

2. *Synecdoche*.—This figure appears under various forms and in various disguises of language. Generally speaking, it may be defined as a rhetorical trope by which the part is put for the whole, or the species for the genus, and *vice versâ*.

E. G.: 無一椽一人 “not a rafter (*sc.* house) nor a man left.” Said of a deserted site.

食指日千計 “a thousand fingers (*i. e.* one hundred persons) eating daily [at his table].”
Cf. “so many *mouthis* to feed.”

馬千蹄美人百袂 “a thousand hoofs of horses and a hundred sleeves of girls”; *sc.* 250 horses and 50 young ladies. *Cf.* “so many *head* of cattle.”

池鱗皆龍族 “the scales (*sc.* fish) in that pond were all of the dragon family.”

毛羽同類 “same species as hair or feathers,” *i. e.* an animal or a bird—a brute beast.

百姓 “the hundred names”; *sc.* the people.

瓜斯以待 “wait until next melon season”; *sc.* next year.

三秋 “three autumns”; *sc.* three years. *Cf.* “a youth of twenty summers.”

十六寒暑 “sixteen colds and hot,” *i. e.* winters and summers; *sc.* sixteen years.

It is by *synecdoche* that we apply numbers to things in themselves “not estimable with numerical precision.”

E. G.: 七兮喜三兮不 “seven parts glad, three parts not”; *sc.* more glad than sorry.

By *synecdoche*, too, the names of celebrated personages are often substituted for the particular qualities by which they acquired their reputation. Thus, the names of 毛嬙 *Mao Ch'iang* and 西子 *Hsi Tzū*, two famous beauties of antiquity, are frequently put for loveliness in the abstract.

The following sentence aptly exhibits the facility with which

in the Chinese language a number of figures may be crowded into a small space:—

風鬃雲轡

Here we have two distinct metaphors and two examples of synecdoche, all within the compass of four words. These characters mean literally “wind manes clouds reins,” or in a more expanded form “[swift as the] wind manes [used by synecdoche for *horses*, and countless as the] clouds reins [used by synecdoche for *chariots*]”; that is, “swift horses and countless chariots.” Similar examples are common enough in Chinese literature, and are easily understood by the general reader. Compare such a sentence as “*Le vin rit dans le cristal*,” an instance of metaphor and metonymy occurring in the short space of six words.

CLASS III.

1. *Antithesis*.—This figure consists in the institution of a contrast. It enters very largely into all kinds of Chinese composition.

E. G.: 貧而樂: poor but happy.

The above is an expression of contrast under its simplest form; a more elaborate example would be

君受虛誚我被寬傷: you got unsubstantial curses,
but I received a real wound,

in which sentence each of the last four words are directly opposed either in form or sense to the corresponding character of the first four.

As a specimen of secondary antithesis, *i. e.* where the antagonism of the parts opposed is weaker than in the examples given above, we may take

以食愈飢以學愈愚: cure hunger with food;
ignorance, by study.

Chinese proverbs and household words derive much of their point from the skilful use of this figure.

E. G.: 生勞不如死逸: it's better to be dead and happy than living and miserable.

民可使由之不可使知之: the people may be led, but they cannot be made to understand.

先到爲君後到爲臣: he who arrives first is prince, he who follows is minister only.

先炊先餐: first at the fire, first with his food, *i. e.* first come first served.

These last two sayings, the first of which is of very varied application, exemplify the antithesis (1) expressed and (2) understood, the contrast being in both cases between 先 and 後 "first" and "afterwards," though in the latter instance the actual antithesis is not visible in the text. To rhetorical antithesis, it may be mentioned *en passant*, an antagonism is necessary which in merely structural antithesis often almost entirely disappears.

As an instance of tersely-elegant antithesis of a structural character, the following are selected from a long list:—

晝同几夜共榻: the same table by day, the same bed at night. (Said of inseparable friends.)

此處夏無大暑冬無大寒花無斷時: here the summer is never excessively hot, nor the winter excessively cold, while flowers bloom all the year round. (From a description of the Isles of the Immortals.)

來是是非人去是非者: he comes and abuses others, and then goes away and abuses the person [to whom he had just been speaking].

A special kind of phraseology, peculiar as far as I know to the Chinese language, consists of abstracts formed by the simple juxtaposition of concretes.

E. G.: 來往: *lit.* "come go," signifies the mutual inter-

course of friends, or any similar form of correspondence.

多少: *lit.* "many few," is used for "number" in the abstract.

The following examples will be sufficient to illustrate the use of antithesis in Chinese poetry:—

有心栽花花不發
無意插柳柳成陰

You may set with all care,—yet the flow'ret will fade,
While the chance-planted willow throws o'er you its shade.

萬時不如杯在手
人生幾見月當頭

The cup's in the hand: seize the hour ere 'tis fled;
How seldom in life is the moon overhead!

Disarrangement of the strictly antithetical order of words is comparatively rare.

E. G.: 我不以貧富爲有無: I am not talking about what the rich can afford and the poor can not.

規矩方圓之至也: the compasses and the square are the embodiment of the rectangular and the round.

There exists one single sentence in the Chinese language for which, like *silver* with regard to rhyme, no corresponding antithesis can be constructed. It is

烟鎖池塘柳: smoke envelops the willows by the pond.

In the characters here employed all the five elements are already present, thus leaving according to Chinese rules no field from which to draw corresponding antithetical terms.

2. *Epigram*.—Epigram is a term which, like several others in rhetorical use, has been modified by lapse of time. It seems to have been originally applied to inscriptions, and from that to have developed into "a short poem containing some single

thought pointedly expressed," taking in on its way all kinds of titles, advertisements, superscriptions, etc., etc., which might afford scope for the play of epigrammatic wit.

An epigram need not of course be a poem, though it should be short; and it should be, strictly speaking, of such a nature as to rouse the mind by some "conflict or contradiction between the form of the language and the meaning really conveyed." Thus it will be seen that the boundary-line between Epigram and Antithesis is not very clearly defined; unless we confine ourselves, in common with the best authorities, to such specimens as are distinguished by brevity and some play on words therein contained. That Chinaman was of an epigrammatic turn of mind who announced some years ago that

康熙字典有一個錯字

In K'ang Hsi's dictionary there is a word wrong.

setting all the literati of Kiang-su by the ears until some one discovered that the word "wrong" was the word in question.

It may be mentioned in parentheses that the Pun is a sub-head of Epigram; and for want of a better example we may take the old joke of the man who declared he was what sounded like 進士 *chin shih* "a graduate of the highest degree," but which he afterwards explained to be 近視眼 *chin shih yen* "near-sighted"; or that of the bashful young man who was likened to a country carpenter because he had only 一鋸 "one saw," which has precisely the same sound in Chinese as 一句 "one sentence," *sc.* nothing to say for himself.

It was decidedly epigrammatic to say that men mostly prefer

自己的文章人家的老婆

Their own compositions, but their friends' wives.

So also it was an epigram by which a certain gentleman notified the newly-engaged tutor for his son that he should not squeeze the hand of the waiting-maid who brought him breakfast and dinner:—

奴手爲擊,先生以後勿擊奴手.

The tutor's reply was in a similar strain:—

人言爲信,東家以後勿信人言.

3. *Hyperbole*.—黑子彈丸極言至小之邑：“a black speck,” or “a pill”; these are hyperbolic expressions for a very small District. (See the 幼學.)

Hyperbole is the figure by which anything is excessively magnified or diminished, beyond the limits of truth. Of such a kind is the phrase 斗室 (see *Metaphor*) for “a house no bigger than a bushel measure.” Examples are common enough.

E. G.: 儼若山岳目如兩日: he was as tall as a mountain, and his eyes were like two suns.

駭如天降: as scared as if the sky had fallen.

疾若乘風: swift as if riding on the wind.

鼾呼雷動: he snored with a noise like thunder.

傾國: a nation overthrower; *sc.* a very beautiful woman.

萬里長城: the 10,000 *li* rampart; *sc.* the Great Wall.

Apropos of 10,000 *li* (say 3,000 miles) the landscapes of the celebrated painter Wang Fei were said to have been so artfully executed that the eye could wander over scenery to this extent (萬里爲遙) all within the narrow area of an ordinary fan.

The Chinese delight in hyperbole. They speak of their children as “dogs,” of their friends as “princes,” of the Heir Apparent as “a thousand autumns,” of the Emperor as “Lord of Ten Thousand Years,” and of China as “all beneath the canopy of the sky.” The records of their antiquity teem with examples; while the records themselves go back to a period of 2,269,360 years ago.

Mencius, on one occasion, took the trouble to point out that hyperbole was a figure of rhetoric, and that its terms should not be literally construed. “We must not understand,” said he, “that passage in the *Odes*—‘of the black-haired people of Chow, not a single one was left 周餘黎民靡有子遺’—in its literal sense.”

4. *Climax*.—Of this, the “ladder” figure, so called because the mind is carried, as it were rung by rung, up an ascending

scale until the final point is reached, the 大學 *Ta Hsüo* furnishes no inconsiderable number of examples. E. G.:—

欲治其國者先齊其家，欲齊其家者先修其身，
欲修其身者先正其心，欲正其心者
先誠其意，欲誠其意者先致其知
“[The ancients] desirous of good govern-
ment in the State, began by good order
in the family; to attain good order in the
family, each began by attending to his
own personal demeanour; to attain to
proper personal demeanour, it was neces-
sary to rectify the heart; to rectify the
heart, it was necessary to refine the
thoughts; and to refine the thoughts, it
was necessary to extend knowledge.”

5. *Interrogation*.—This figure, employed to surround a proposition with extra rhetorical force, is commonly employed by Chinese authors. The very first chapter of the Confucian *Discourses* opens with three good examples. The first is—

學而時習之不亦說乎

Lit. To learn, and from time to time to practice (what is learnt),
is not that pleasant?

The two following quotations are in a lighter style:—

受人數金便當淹禁死耶：because I have taken
a few pieces of a man's money, is he to
shut me up to death, eh?

我虽貧固管纒之貫彼以執鞭發跡何敢遂腰敵：
though poor, I am descended from a
noble family, and shall this carter fellow
presume to take my daughter for his
concubine?

For two further examples, see *Personification*.

6. *Exclamation*.—Of this figure one example will doubtless suffice.

子曰莫我知也夫

“Alas!” said Confucius, “there is no one who appreciates me.”

Many similar instances are to be found (*e. g.*) in the 書經, where they are usually introduced by some such words as 嗚呼. So also the proverbial saying—

嗚呼哀哉
人死難猜.

7. *Apostrophe*.—This figure consists in suddenly addressing somebody, or something, absent, as if they were present. Of such kind are invocations to deities and devils, which are common enough and are generally prefaced by 祝曰, or 禱曰.

E. G.: 飲則酌地 祝曰河中鬪鬼得飲: and when he drank, he would pour out a libation on the ground and utter the following invocation:—“Drink, too, ye drowned spirits of the river!”

For further examples, see the 書經 *passim*.

8. *Innuendo*.—When one Chinaman says that another reminds him of the fan used by the ruler of the Infernal Regions, he avails himself of an innuendo; for tradition has it that the fan in question is *black* inside, and black-heartedness has much the same signification in China as elsewhere. So also when he speaks of people or things as 廟貧 “temple wares” (*i. e.* the miscellaneous articles sold at stalls in temples on religious festivals), he is suggesting that they cannot be depended upon 靠不住. A paragraph in the *Shanghai Courier* recently noted the destruction by fire of an ice-house, and the writer very naturally remarked that it was the last place where he should have expected a fire to break out. Now the Chinese frequently use as an innuendo the phrase 火燒冰窖 “an ice-house burnt down,” as applied to events which seem to be a special manifestation of the will of Heaven 天意, or destiny. It is also an innuendo to liken a man to a lamp on the top of an 18-foot pole 丈八的燈台. Such a lamp

throws indeed its light to a distance, but leaves its own immediate neighbourhood in gloom 照遠不照近; and the *sous-entendu* is that the individual in question throws more light upon the faults of others than upon his own. It is an innuendo to call a man an "earthenware cock" 磁公雞, the implication being that you can't pull a hair out of him 一毛不拔, *sc.* that he is a stingy fellow. Degeneration in a family is hinted at by the phrase "a swan hatching ducks" 仙鶴養鴨子, and a cruel mandarin is often spoken of as a "blacksmith official" 鐵匠作官 whose only thought is to strike 只是打.

9. *Irony*.—It is well known that the sense now attached to this term is of comparatively modern date. Irony, in the time of Aristotle, signified "saying less than was meant," whereas we now understand by it "saying the opposite to what is meant," a figure known to the ancients as *Litotes*.

E. G.: 罵妻子已大惠 "that you should sell your wife and child was already very kind of you,—" which words are spoken by an angry wife to whom her dissolute husband is about to do some further injury.

The above is irony direct; as an example of the indirect I may quote the following story from the *Liao Chai*. A virtuous young man goes to visit his elder brother who holds office in a distant part of the empire, and while residing in his yamên becomes aware of a very extensive system of bribery and corruption which is daily practised there, to the utter exclusion of anything at all like justice or impartiality. With tears in his eyes he reports what he has seen and heard to his brother, who however only laughs at him and says, 弟日居衡茅故不知仕途之關竅耳黜陟之權在上臺不在百姓何術復令上臺喜也 ... "My brother, your life has been spent in a cottage, and therefore you do not know the ins and outs of official life. We look for our advancement or dismissal to our superior officers, not to the people; hence, he who

gratifies those in authority over him is the good public servant. But if a man were to occupy himself with the interests of the people, how could he at the same time cause gratification to his superior officers?"

The irony in this passage is of course that of the author and not of the speaker in the dialogue.

ADDENDUM.

Ellipsis.—This figure belongs, strictly speaking, to the province of Grammar, though some writers have given it a place in treatises nominally confined to Rhetoric alone. The written and spoken languages of China teem with interesting examples. To begin with a simple instance: we generally find 查照 in place of the full expression 查考照對. So 西商 is an ellipsis which might at first sight be understood as applying to European merchants, and not, as is the case, to the native bankers of Shansi, who are also familiarly known as 老西兒 or 西老. Passing on to more recondite examples, oft-times difficult of expansion and occasionally even of explanation, we have

王矢不他: *lit.* Wang-arrow-not-he; *i. e.*, Wang swore he would never marry anybody else.

鳥窻洪案: *lit.* fowl-window-Hung-table; *i. e.*, she made a very good wife, the full expansion being, as given by a writer in the *China Mail*, "For many years she rose at cock-crow, as soon as dawn first glimmered through the *window*. She was as faithful as Mêng Kuang, the wife of Liang Hung, who, when eating, would raise the *table* up to her brow as a token of respect."

妾望君如歲: *lit.* concubine-long-prince-like-year; *i. e.*, "Every day has seemed a year to

me since you left," being of course an address from a wife to a husband.

A beginner might fairly stumble over 飭快, but the insertion of 馬 between the two characters makes the phrase easily intelligible as "ordered the constable." So also 緇黃 "dark-yellow" is no mean puzzle, until its expansion into 緇衣黃冠 "dark robes, yellow caps" points at once to the priests who are thus specially distinguished. But of all examples of ellipsis pure and simple, *i. e.* where the knowledge of no allusion 典故 is necessary to elucidate the sense, commend us to an example quoted in the *China Review* by Mr. Parker: 人一能之已百之 "If [any other] man can [do] it [in] one [day], [then] I [will give a] hundred [days to] it [rather than fail]."



E R R A T A.

- Page 4 Line 2 for 'that' read 'the sense.'
- „ 7 „ 13 „ 'Mun Mong' read 'Mun Mooy.'
- „ 10 „ 8 from below, for 兮 read 分.
- „ 11 „ 3 for 鳳 read 風.
- „ 11 „ 12 from below, for 寬 read 實.
- „ 16 „ 16 for 'employed' read 'intended.'
- „ 16 „ 8 from below, for 虫 read 雖.
- „ 17 „ 12 „ „ „ 貧 „ 貨.
- „ 18 „ 4 „ „ before 何術復令上臺喜也 insert
上臺喜便是好官愛百姓.

