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FI-HO-TI; OR THE PLEASURES OF REPUTATION.

A Chinese Tale.

Fi-ho-ti was considered a young man of talents; he led in Pekin, a happy and comfortable life. In the prime of youth, of a highly respectable Japanese family, and enjoying a most agreeable competence, he was exceedingly popular among the gentlemen whom he entertained at his board, and the ladies who thought he might propose. All the pleasures of life were at his command; he drank, though without excess, the cup of enjoyment; ate, laughed, and loved as he pleased. No man in Pekin was more awake during the day, or enjoyed a serenest slumber during the night.

In an evil hour, it so happened that Fi-ho-ti discovered that he possessed the talents we have referred to. A philosopher, who, being also his uncle, had the double right, both of philosophy and relationship, to every thing unpleasant to him,—took it into his head to be very indignant at the happy life which Fi-ho-ti so peacefully enjoyed.

Accordingly, one beautiful morning, he visited our young Chinese. He found him in his summer-house, stretched on luxurious cushions, quaffing the most delicious tea, in the finest little porcelain cups imaginable, reading a Chinese novel, and enjoying the study, from time to time, by a light conversation with a young lady, who had come to visit him.

Our philosopher was amazingly shocked at the prospect of so much comfort. Nothing could be more unphilosophic; for the duty of Philosophy being to chain us with life, she is anxious, in the first place, to make it a burden to us. The goddess is enamoured of patience, but in impatient pleasure.

Our sage was a man very much disliked and very much respected. Fi-ho-ti rose from his cushions, a little ashamed of being detected in so agreeable an indulgence. The novel fell from his hand; and the young lady, frightened at the long beard and the long nose of the philosopher, would have run away, if he had not allowed her; as it was, she summoned her attendants, and hastened to complain to her friends of the manner in which the pleasant tea-table could be spoiled, when young men were so unphilosophic as to have philosophers for uncles.

The Mandarins, for Fi-ho-ti's visitor enjoyed no less a dignity,—seeing the coast clear, hemmed three times, and commenced his avuncular admonitions.

"Are you not ashamed, young man," said he, "of leading a life of pleasure?—are you not ashamed to be so idle and so happy? You possess talents; you are in the prime of youth;—are you dead to the noble duty of Virtue?—are you ready for exertion, to distinguish your name,—to collect the examples of Confucius,—give yourself up to study,—be wise and great?"

More moved to this effect spoke the Mandarin, for he had a nearness of talk; and, like all men privy to give advice, he fancied that he was wonderful. In this instance, his vanity did not deceive him; for it was the vanity of another that he addressed. Fi-ho-ti was moved; he felt he had been very foolish to be happy so long. Visions of disquietude and fame floated before him; he listened with attention to the exhortations of the philosopher; he resolved to distinguish himself and be wise.

The Mandarin was charmed with the success of his visit; it was a great triumph to disturb so much enjoyment. He went home, and commenced a tract upon the virtues of philosophy.

Fi-ho-ti retired himself to study. He retired to a solitary cavern, near upon Kailong; he filled the retreat with books and instruments of science; he pursued his social intercourse; the herbs of the plain and the water of the spring sufficed the tastes hitherto accustomed to the most delicious viands of Pekin. Engaged in love and of pleasure, he resigned three of the latest years of his experience to uninterrupted labor. He instructed himself—he imagined he was capable of instructing others.

Fi-ho-ti, with increasing ambition, our student retired to Pekin. He commenced a work, which, though light and witty enough to charm the gay, was the origin of a new school of philosophy. It was at once bold and polished; and the oldest Mandarin or the youngest beauty of Pekin could equally appreciate all its merits. In one word, Fi-ho-ti's book became the rage;—Fi-ho-ti was the author of the day.

Delighted by the novelty of literary applause, our young student more than ever resigned himself to literary pursuits. He wrote again, and again succeeded; all the world declared that Fi-ho-ti had established his reputation.

Was Fi-ho-ti the happier for his reputation? You shall judge.

He went to call upon his uncle, the Mandarin. He imagined the Man arid would be delighted to find the success of his admonitions. The philosopher received him with a frigid embarrassment. He talked of the weather and the Emperor,—the last pagoda and the new fashion in tea cups; he said not a word about his nephew's books. Fi-ho-ti was piqued; he introduced the subject of his own accord.

"Ah!" said the philosopher drily, "I understand you have written something that pleases the women; do not you will grow solid as your judgment increases. But to return to the tea-cups."

Fi-ho-ti was chagrined; he had lost the affection of his uncle forever; for he was now considered to be more than his uncle himself. The common modification in success is to find that your family hate you for it. "My uncle no longer loves me," thought he, "as he entered his parlour. 'This is a misfortune.' Alas! it was the effect of Reputation."

The heart of Fi-ho-ti was naturally kind and genial; though the thirst of pleasure was cooled in his veins, he still cherished the social desires of friendship. He summoned once more around him the comrades of his youth; he fancied they, at least, would be delighted to find their friend not unworthy of their affection. He received them with open arms;—they returned his greeting with shyness, and an awkward affectation of sympathy;—their conversation no longer flowed freely;—they were afraid of committing themselves before so clever a man;—they felt they were no longer with an equal, and yet they refused to acknowledge a superior. Fi-ho-ti perceived with indescribable grief, that a wall had grown up between himself and the companions of past years; their pursuits, their feelings, were no longer the same. They were not proud of his success—they were jealous;—the friends of his youth were the critics of his manhood.

"This, too, is a misfortune," thought Fi-ho-ti, as he threw himself at night upon his couch. Very likely; it was the effect of a Reputation.

But if old friends are no more, I will gain new; thought the student. "Men of the same pursuits will have the same sympathies. I aspire to be a sage; I will court the friendship of sages."

This was a noble idea of Fi-ho-ti's. He surrounded himself with the authors, the wits, and the wise men of Pekin. They ate his dinners,—they made him read their manuscripts,—and a bad caligraphy,

whose height is estimated by the length of its shadow. The sensitive and high wrought mind of Fi-ho-ti now gave way to a gloomy despondency. Being himself misinterpreted, calumniated and traduced; and feeling that none loved him but through vanity, that he stood alone with his enemies in the world, he became the prey to misanthropy, and gnawed by perpetual suspicion. He distrusted the smiles of others. The faces of men seemed to him as masks; he felt every where the presence of deceit. Yet these feelings had made no part of his early character, which was naturally frank, joyous, and confiding. Was the change a misfortune? Possibly; but it was the effect of reputation!

About this time, too, Fi-ho-ti began to feel the effects of the severe study he had undergone. His health gave way; his nerves were shattered; he was in that terrible revolution in the mind—that vindictive laborer—wrecks its ire upon the enfeebled taskmaster, the body. He walked the ghost of his former self.

One day he was standing pensively beside one of the streams that intersect the gardens of Pekin, and gazing upon the waters, he muttered his bitter reveries. "Ah!" thought he, "why was I ever discontented with happiness? I was young, rich, cheerful; and life to me was a perpetual holiday; my friends caressed me, my mistress loved me for myself. No one hated, or maligned, or envied me. Like you leaf upon the water, my soul danced merrily over the billows of existence. But courage, my heart! I have at least done some good; benevolence must experience gratitude—young Psi-ching, for instance. I have the pleasure of thinking that he must love me; I have made his fortune; I have brought him from obscurity into repute; for it has been my character as yet never to be jealous of others!"

Psi-ching was a young poet, who had been a secretary to Fi-ho-ti. The student had discovered genius and insatiable ambition in the young man; he had directed and advised his pursuits; he had raised him into fortune and notice; he had enabled him to marry the mistress he loved. Psi-ching vowed to him everlasting gratitude.

While Fi-ho-ti was thus consoling himself with the idea of Psi-ching's affection, it so happened that Psi-ching, and the philosopher of the day whom the public voice esteemed Second to Fi-ho-ti, passed along the banks of the river. A tree hid Fi-ho-ti from their sight; they were earnestly conversing, and Fi-ho-ti heard his own name more than once repeated.

"Yes," said Psi-ching, "poor Fi-ho-ti cannot live much longer; his health is broken; you will lose a formidable rival when he is dead."

The philosopher smiled. "Why, it will certainly be a stone out of my way. You are constantly with him, I think?"

"I am. He is a charming person; but the real fact is, that, seeing he cannot live much longer, I am keeping a journal of his last days; in a word, I shall write the history of my distinguished friend. I think it will take much, and have a prodigious sale."

The talkers passed on. Fi-ho-ti did not do so soon as was expected, and Psi-ching never published the journal from which he anticipated so much profit. But Fi-ho-ti ceased to be remarkable for the kindness of his heart and the philanthropy of his views. He was known in after-life for the sourness of his temper and the bitterness of his satire. Was this deterioration of the kinder elements of his nature a misfortune? Perhaps it might be so; it was the effect of his REPUTATION!

THE HARPE'S HEAD.—A Legend of Kentucky; by James Hall; The following is an extract from this late work of the gifted author of "Letters from the West."

The camp was again crowded with Indian warriors; the party which had gone in pursuit of the fugitives was returned; they had overtaken Colonel Hendrickson, and that unfortunate gentleman was again a prisoner. His fate was now sealed. The determination which had originally been formed of carrying him to the village of the captors, to be publicly sacrificed, was now abandoned; and the savages determined to gratify their eager thirst for his blood, by torturing him at the stake, without further delay. He was again bound, and preparations were made for the awful solemnity.

Some of the savages employed themselves in painting their faces and bodies, to render them the more terrific; others whetting the edges of their tomahawks and knives; and some were endeavouring to excite their own passions, and those of their companions, by the utmost pitch of fury, by hideous yelling, by violent gesticulations, and by pouring out bitter execrations upon their defenceless prisoner.

"I saw you on the dark and bloody ground," said one, drawing the back of his knife, in mockery, across the throat of the victim—"You killed my brother there, and I will have your heart's blood!"

"You slew my son," shrieked a hoary-headed savage; "his bones lie unburied in the villages of the white men, his scalp is hanging over the door of your wigwam—but his spirit shall rejoice in the agonies of your death!"

"You led the warriors of your tribe to battle," exclaimed a young warrior, as he flourished his tomahawk over the head of the veteran pioneer, "when the long knives met the red men on the banks of the big river—my father fell there—your foot was on his neck—I will trample on your mangled body. The wolf shall feed upon your flesh—the bird of the night shall flap her wings over your carcass, and the serpent shall crawl about your bones!"

"Revenge is sweet!" shouted one.

"Revenge! revenge!" echoed many voices.

"It is good, and pleasing to the spirit of the warrior, to witness the death-pang of the enemy he hates!" exclaimed another human monster.

"The white man is our enemy!"

"He is the serpent that stung our fathers!"

"He is the prowling fox that stole away our game!"

"He is the hurricane that scattered our wigwams and destroyed our cornfields!"

"He drove us from our hunting grounds, and trampled in scorn on the bones of our fathers!"

"His knife has drunk the blood of the red man; the blood of our women and children is on his hands!"

"Let him perish in torture!"

"Let him be slowly consumed in torture!"

"The great spirit will laugh when he sees the white man writhing in agony!"

"The spirits of our fathers will rejoice—they will shout and clap their hands in the world of shades when they hear the shrieks of the white warrior."

These exclamations were uttered severally by different individuals, in the Indian tongue, with which Col. Hendrickson was acquainted, in the emphatic tones of savage declamation, and with that earnestness of gesticulation, which renders their eloquence so impressive. There were others who addressed the victim in coarser language, loading him with opprobrious epithets, and pouring out in the bitterness of their malignant hearts, copious streams of vulgar invective. And now the wood was piled about the victim; torches were lighted and blazing brands snatched from the fire, and the hellish crew, flourishing them around their heads, dancing round the prisoner with that malignant joy, with which devils and damned spirits may be supposed to exult in the agonies of a fallen soul.

At length a chief stepped forward and commanded silence. "White man" said he, "are you ready to die?"

"I am!" replied the brave Kentuckian, in a calm tone: "the white man's God has whispered peace to my soul."

"Can the God of the white man save you from torture? Can he prevent you from feeling pain when your flesh shall be torn, when your limbs shall be separated one by one from your body, and the slow flames shall scorch without consuming your miserable carcass?"

"My God is a merciful God," replied the undaunted pioneer: "his ear is ever open to the prayers of those who put their trust in him. He has filled my heart with courage. I have no fear of death—blessed forever is the Lord God of Israel! Then raising his eyes upward, he exclaimed, with devout fervor, 'Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O Lord. Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul. Let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt!'"

Virginia, who had thus far endeavoured to restrain her feelings, now rushed forward, and gliding rapidly through the circle of warriors, threw herself upon her uncle's bosom, exclaiming in frantic accents, "Let us die together!" while Mr. George Lee, who had gazed on the preceding scene with stupid wonder, sought to follow her, determined to share her fate. Being prevented, he swore that it was "the most infamous transaction he had ever witnessed, and that if he got back to old Virginia, he would have satisfaction at the risk of his life."

And now the whole fury of the savage band was ready to be poured upon their devoted but heroic prisoner, when the report of a single rifle rang through the woods, and the principal chief, who stood alone, received a death wound.

From the Philadelphia American Sentinel.

SKETCHES OF MEN AND MANNERS IN AMERICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF CYRIL THORNTON.

In his 14th chapter, Mr. Hamilton continues his remarks on Washington; and diverges from the executive to the legislative government—speaking first of the importance of eloquence to our legislators, and asserting that nineteenth twentieth of them are lawyers, and that almost all our merchants (whom he is pleased to term 'the most enlightened body of citizens in the union') are as effectually excluded from political power by their deficiency in oratorical accomplishments as they could be by express legal enactments; laughing then at our mode of acquiring oral eloquence and of our culpable practice of making long speeches in Congress, which he calls speaking against time and sense; and having animadverted on the customary episodes of a legislative debate, he adds:

"The truth, I believe is, that the American Congress have really very little to do. All the multiplied details of local and municipal legislation fall within the province of the state governments, and the regulation of commerce and foreign intercourse practically includes all the important questions which they are called on to decide. Nor are the members generally very anxious so to abbreviate the proceedings of Congress, as to ensure a speedy return to their provinces. They are well paid for every hour lavished on the public business; and being once at Washington and enjoying the pleasures of its society, few are probably solicitous for the termination of functions which combine the advantage of real emolument, with the opportunities of acquiring distinction in the eyes of their constituents. The farce, therefore, by common consent continues to be played on.—Speeches apparently interminable, are tolerated, though not listened to; and very maneuver, by which the discharge of public business can be protracted, is resorted to, with the most perfect success.

Of course, I state this merely as the readiest hypothesis by which the facts, already mentioned, can be explained; but in truth, there are many other causes at work. Though in either house there is no deficiency of party spirit, and political hostilities are waged with great vigor, yet both in attack and defence there is evidently an entire want both of discipline and organization. There is no concert, no division of duties, no compromise of opinion; but the movements of party are executed without regularity or premeditation. Thus instead of the systematic and combined attack of an organized body, deliberately concerted on the principle which will unite the greatest number of auxiliaries, government has ingeneral to sustain only the assaults of single and destitute combatants, who mix so much of individual peculiarity of opinion, so with what is common to their party, that any general system of effective co-operation is impossible. It is evident enough, in whatever business the house may be engaged, that each individual acts for himself, and is eager to make or discover some opportunity of lavishing all his

crudities of thought or fancy on his brother legislators.

The consequence of all this is, that no one can guess, with any approach to probability, the course of discussion on any given subject. A speech, an argument, an insinuation, an allusion, is at any time sufficient to turn the whole current of debate into some new and unforeseen channel; and I have often found it absolutely impossible to gather, from the course of argument, even the nature of the question on which the house were divided in opinion.

One of the first debates at which I was present, related to a pecuniary claim of the late President Monroe on the U. States; amounting, if I remember rightly, to sixty thousand dollars. This claim had long been urged, and been repeatedly referred to committees of the House of Representatives, who, after a careful investigation of the subject had uniformly reported in favor of its justice.

The question at length came on for discussion. "Is the debt claimed by Mr. Monroe from the U. States a just debt or not?" Nothing could possibly be more simple. Here was a plain matter of debtor and creditor; a problem of figures, the solution of which must rest on a patient examination of accounts, and charges, and balances. It was a question after the heart of Joseph Hume,—a bone, of which that most useful legislator understands so well how to get at the marrow.

Well, how was this dry question treated in the House of Representatives? Why, as follows:—Little or nothing was said as to the intrinsic justice or validity of the claim. Committees of the House had repeatedly reported in its favor, and I heard no attempt by fact or inference to prove the fallacy of their decision. But a great deal was said about the political character of Mr. Monroe some dozen years before, and a great deal was said about Virginia, and its presidents, and its members, and its attempts to govern the Union, and its selfish policy. A vehement discussion took place as to whether Mr. Monroe or Chancellor Livingston had been the efficient agent in procuring the cession of Louisiana. Members waxed warm in attack and recrimination, and a fiery gentleman from Virginia was repeatedly called to order by the speaker. One member declared, that disapproving *toto caelo* of the former policy of Mr. Monroe's Cabinet, he should certainly now oppose his demand for the payment of a debt, the justice of which was not attempted to be disproved. Another thought Mr. Monroe would be well enough off if he got half what he claimed; and moved an amendment to that effect, which, being considered a kind of compromise, I believe, was at length carried, after repeated adjournments, and much clamorous debate.

Another instance of discussion, somewhat similar, struck me very forcibly, and will afford. I imagine, sufficient illustration of the mode of doing business in the House of Representatives. It took place on a claim put forward by the widow of Com. Decatur, for prize money due to him and his ship's crew for something done in the Mediterranean. The particulars I forget—but they are of no consequence. The Commodore having no family, had bequeathed the whole of his property, real and personal, to his wife, whom circumstances had since reduced to poverty. When I entered, the debate had already commenced, and the House seemed almost unanimous in the admission of the claim. This was dull enough, and as the subject itself had little to engage the attention of a stranger, I was determined to try whether any thing of more interest was going forward in the Senate. While I was conversing with a member of the House, however, some symptoms of difference of opinion began to manifest themselves. One member proposed, that as the money was to be granted principally with a view to benefit the Widow of Commodore Decatur, the ordinary rules of prize division should not be adhered to, and that a larger share than usual should be allotted to the commander of the armament. This proposition, however, was evidently adverse to the wishes of the majority, and the amendment met with little support. This matter after being settled, the discussion for some time went on smoothly enough, and there seemed every prospect of its reaching a speedy and amicable termination.

At length however a member rose, and argued that the circumstance of the Commodore having bequeathed his whole property to his wife, when he imagined he had very little property to leave, afforded no ground for the conclusion, that if he had known of this large addition it might not have been differently applied. He, therefore, expressed his firm determination to oppose its exclusive appropriation to the widow. The widow, however, was not without able & zealous advocates to set forth her claims, and urge their admission. These pronounced her to be one of the most amiable and excellent of her sex; and maintained that as the House had no possible access to know how the Commodore would have acted under circumstances merely hypothetical, there was no course to be pursued but to appropriate the money according to the desire actually expressed in his last will and testament.

While the House were, for the nonce, divided into *widowites* and *anti-widowites*, the discussion became still farther embroiled. New matter of debate arose. Admitting that Mrs. Decatur was entitled to the usufruct of the money during her life, was it fitting that she should have the power of alienating it at her death from the relatives of her husband? This was very warmly debated. At length, a gentleman, in a very vehement and pathetic speech, set forth the attraction, both mental and personal, of two young ladies, daughters of a sister of Captain Decatur, whose necessities, unfortunately, were equal to their merits. He had the honor, he said, of being their neighbor in the country; they were elegant and accomplished, and often did his family honor to accept such hospitality as they could offer. He