ON

SOME TRANSLATIONS

AND

MISTRANSLATIONS

IN

DR. WILLIAMS'

SYLLABIC DICTIONARY OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

AMOY:
PRINTED BY A. A. MARÇAL,
1879.
DURING the five years' interval which has elapsed since the publication of Dr. Williams' Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language, its merits and demerits have had every opportunity of being very fairly tested. The fatal mistake, committed upon the threshold, of introducing a new and complicated orthography, not only for Mandarin but even for the Peking dialect; the numerous etymological blunders exposed by Mr. Chalmers in Vol. IV of the China Review; Mr. Groeneveldt's scathing critique in Vol. III of the same periodical; and the frequent inaccuracies both of sound and tone pointed out by an anonymous writer in twelve columns of the China Mail,—have all combined to show that Dr. Williams' dictionary, though in many ways an improvement upon its predecessors, is still unlikely to hold the fort for any indefinitely long period. It is indeed already felt by many that something more systematic in arrangement and more accurate in detail is wanted to meet the present extension of Chinese studies over a daily increasing area; and the following pages are intended to aid in establishing more widely this conviction, dealing as they do with the translations of a large number of entries, the greater or less erroneousness of which has hitherto been left unnoticed. These entries have not, however, been searched out for this purpose, but are simply such as have come under observation within the past eighteen months; neither does the list, unfortunately for the sake of this dictionary, pretend to be exhaustive, as may be readily proved by the student who will take the trouble to run carefully through almost any page of Dr. Williams' work.

H. A. GILES.

H. M.'s Consulate, Amoy,
17th August, 1879.
On some Translations and Mistranslations in

Dr. WILLIAMS'

Syllabic Dictionary of the Chinese Language.

When suddenly thrown into perilous straits. Should be “distressed as if in perilous straits.”

I happened to see it; I just saw it.

To delude, to trump up.

Report of a cannon.

Mischievous sprites which roam at night.

1. Cannibal ogres. See the story of the 夜叉 in the 聊齋志異.

2. The yakchas of Buddhism. This entry is given partially correct on p. 1080 c.
The name of the minister of Yuh Wang, who rules the demons.

On p. 611, the same term is explained by “a "phantom man; one story makes him to have been foster brother of the third son of Wān Wang, "and to have destroyed Tanki's (? T'a-ki's) spirit when "she returned to heaven." The 封神 sect. 3, makes this favourite god the son of a military commander, named Li; and states that after a gestation of 3 years 6 months he was born in the form of a ball which was cloven open by his father's sword.

I beg you to look into this, said by petitioners.

To implicate one by leaving something with him.

The same phrase is translated on p. 387 "to behold or examine, "as the gods do."

This phrase is commonly understood "to secretly place something in another person's box or elsewhere, and then accuse him of theft."

An unpaid creditor who after death is born again as the son of his debtor. Bad sons are believed to belong to this category.

A fabulous monster etc.; provincial judges and censors wear it as their official embroidery whence they are sometimes designated by synecdoche.

As their "badges," civil officials wear birds, animals being confined to the military. The term 史 is however defined in the 幼學 by "a title of respect applied to a District Magistrate."
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<td><em>I have nothing to trade with.</em></td>
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<td>13c</td>
<td>没有貪宰 made no profit.</td>
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<td>15a</td>
<td>A Mahommedan term for God.</td>
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<td>16b</td>
<td>The cestus being a leather covering for the fist, used much in the same way as a boxing-glove, we must conclude that Dr. Williams was thinking of something else—perhaps of the discus.</td>
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<td>15c</td>
<td>針對 Various explanations are given of this phrase. (1) As like as two needles; or, as we say, peas. (2) The needle opposite [the N. of a compass]; i. e., exactly to point. (3) “Diamond cut diamond,” the two characters being elliptical for 針尖對麥芒兒 See page 578, under 芒.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22a</td>
<td>畏覬 In a slang sense, to toady; in the sense of to give strength to the phrase will be found fully explained at the opening of Book VI of the今古奇觀.</td>
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<td>30c</td>
<td>棘 Should be “A thorn.”</td>
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To take the fee at 50a gaming.

To ask aid, as by sending a present, and hoping a large return.

To strike the hours, as a watchman.

"Register" hardly explains that the genealogy of each successful candidate is given in full.

The term may be generally used of any kind of "commission."

The same phrase is given on p. 157, where it is explained "to scheme how to get a good return; as to present a peach and get a dollar."

The Chinese clepsydra or water-clock is so called.

Should be "i.e., a man who remains unmoved in the midst of trying circumstances." He is not necessarily a patriot. Another account places this rock in the Ch'ang-kuo District and explains the term by 望之如人拱立.

The register of the tsinsz' graduates of one examination.
Those who have nothing to do with the cortège.

The officer who has the seal or really holds the post.

The regular constitutional officers of China. They use square seals as opposed to oblong ones, such as are held by special officers appointed for special purposes. This arrangement dates from the agreement made by the founder of the present dynasty that the constitutional Government of the country should remain unchanged; and though many officials have in some sort gradually usurped the functions of the regular tribunals, it is by usance and not of right. See page 472 where Williams explains the term differently from his own explanation here quoted, giving a list of the officers included. It may be worth recording that H. E. the present Viceroy of Canton, to whom the question was referred, declared Taot'ais, Prefects, and Magistrates to be the 正印官.

The first month of the year was so named etc., and confirmed by Ts'in Chi Hwang-ti, B.C. 221.

We do not understand the value of Dr. Williams' "confirmed." What happened at the beginning of the reign of 始皇帝 was that the tone of 正 was changed from 去 to 上平, because His Majesty's personal name happened to be 政 chéng.
An ancient place in Lu etc.

The beast unlike four others (in allusion to the Elephurus Davidii).

To converse while whisking away the flies.

A scarecrow, a straw man.

To which should be added the commoner classical explanation 舞勺为节而舞也.

Should be “unlike all other (kinds),” 四 不 象 being an ellipsis for 四 方. Another explanation of the term is “differing in four particulars (from other deer),” namely, as to its tail, feet, colour, and ears.

The technical name is correctly written Elephurus davidianus. See page 836 c, where the same mistake is made.

This phrase should be explained as referring to the celebrated conversationalists of the 晋 dynasty who were distinguished by horse-hair or yak's-tail whisks which they held in the hand while talking.

For “scarecrow” we should hardly like to vouch; and “a straw man” is barely sufficient to explain that the term is specially applied to the figures that are burnt by the relatives of a deceased man to be his servants in the nether world.
To judge of one's abilities for a post by trial.

A long bamboo pillow.

Carefully attend to those gone, and follow departed — ancestors.

May your parents both be vigorous.

Wise in council, ingenious etc.

94c 處分 Should be "the punishment [of civil or military officials according to a graduated scale of offences, is so called.]

95b 竹夫人 Literally, a bamboo wife. A hollow cylindrical leg-rest, made of bamboo. Commonly known to Europeans as a "Dutch wife."

100a 慎終追遠 Dr. Legge (Analects I) translates "Let there be a careful attention to perform the funeral rites to parents, and let them be followed when long gone with the ceremonies of sacrifice."

Mr. Alabaster gives a third version in his Chapter from the Chinese Gospel.

104b 樂善鑒茂 The optative use of this expression is rare, even if it may be said to exist. Should be "my parents are both alive."

116c 專對 This phrase occurs in Book XIII of the Lun Yü, and is explained by Dr. Legge "to give replies unassisted (sc. by the individuals of his suite.)"
At present styled. 118a Should be “to hold an acting appointment.”
Few ministered to his wants. 123a Should be “no one to minister etc.”
Contented with his lot. 131c To mind one’s own business; to do one’s duty in that state of life etc.
Cold cannot be avoided; i.e., who could have guarded against it? suddenly, unforeseen.
Without criticising Williams’ analysis by which he here reaches the correct meaning viz “unexpectedly,” we will draw attention to the same phrase, p. 506 c, where it is translated “he does not know who is watching him.”
Nothing worse than a little gossip. 136b The meaning is allied to that of是非場, a place where everybody is trying to be “down” on one, rightly or wrongly.
He could not speak out, and the other therefore did not learn it. 138b Legge says, “not to help out any one who is not anxious to explain himself.” Anal. VII 8.
To echo or adopt another's views.

Exaggeration in its primitive sense of piling together, like the gradual increments which a story derives from repetition. Also, simply "to add," e.g.

Gaiety, folly, vice, dissipation.

Used much oftener in a good sense, of the accomplishments and general tone of refined scholars &c. The term for a roué is 風月子弟.

The cattle have gone to roam.

From a famous sentence in the Tso Chuan which runs 君處北海, 有馬及也, has been adopted the now common phrase of 風馬牛不相及, said of two persons who either purposely avoid each other or are kept apart by the force of circumstances. The above quotation was part of a message sent by the Viscount of Ch'ü to the Marquis of Ch'i who was invading his territory, and may be rendered thus:—"Your lands, Sir Marquis, are by the northern sea, and mine are by the southern sea; so that even our horses and oxen at the breeding season would not be brought together." A popular explanation current among natives who miss the point of 風, is that horses like moving against the wind, oxen with the wind; consequently they take different ways in life.

...... i.e. the persons are no more connected than the wind and a horse.

But here 牛 has simply been omitted after 風, according to a well-known license in Chinese composition.
"...said by Tao-kwang in reference to foreigners' demand."

The full time for the period of.

The consequence of effort; effectual, prevailing; results of earnestness; verified.

Which addition by Dr. Williams to an otherwise correct translation would naturally lead the student to believe that the phrase originated with the Emperor Tao Kuang; whereas the credit of it is due to the first Emperor of the Sung dynasty, and was addressed by him to his general Ts'ao Pin in reference to the pretender 李煜.

The 二十四气候 are the twenty-four solar terms. This term is also used in the sense of "season" or "weather;" e.g. 气候犹寒

These identical words are explained on p. 1091 c to mean "a satisfactory proof of; an examination approved by a superior."

This term could be used in the sense of medicine having taken effect according to the doctors's prediction, &c. &c.
A very suspicious affair.

Is well, I will be pleased;—a phrase used by shopmen in a bill.

When traveling......

A tiger's shoulder, denotes the right side of a grave.

...... soft, pliable; flexible wood, easily bent.

See 說文; and compare Williams' analysis of 杖, p. 91 c.

An ill-omened fellow.

To bathe &c.; a decade, because in the T'ang dynasty this bath took place thrice a month.

On page 675 b we find the last three, i. e. the essential characters of this sentence translated "avoid the appearance of evil." "To avoid (arousing) jealous suspicions,” would perhaps be nearer the mark.

Which might lead a beginner to believe that such was the only use of this common phrase.

Should be “when sleeping at an inn ...”

Metaphorically, and more commonly, "hidden rocks and boulders in a rapid."

Mr. Chalmers pointed out this entry, which arose from misreading 柔 as if it had been 柔. Should be “bad luck.”

The 唐制, however, gives a more accurate explanation; namely, that under the T'ang dynasty the Court officials received their pay thrice a month, and that pay was called 浴沐之賚.
Useless for making ashes.  

It would make even an expert laugh —

Courteous and sincere.  

If you have it, that's better than being without it.

The pan is ready heated.  

For killing mosquitoes.  

Dead ashes, cinders.  Compare Chuang-tzŭ's well-known phrase 梨木死灰.  

The word "even" makes nonsense of the sentence. For a full explanation of 大方, see Wade's Ten Dialogues, Dial. X, § 76.

The first two characters are used in Chinese versions of the Bible as the equivalent of "meek." Legge translates them by "benign and mild." Williams himself translates the last two (see page 927a) by "liberal, honest, considerate."

Should be almost the exact opposite "Though you have it, you would be better without it."

Should be, "The pot is boiling."

(This sentence, as a translation, we give up.)
I sent him a present of dried fruits, cakes &c.  

To follow a father’s occupation.  (Also on p. 434 a.)

……Very brusque and stern.

My bran wife cannot come into the parlor.

To appeal to the higher court.

Girls (can) be married at fifteen.

Should be, “to send a present of money.” Dried fruits, cakes &c. come under the head of 水禮.

This is explained in the 幼學 by 盖父之懲 to hide a father’s faults.

Legge translates it “free and straight forward.”

Dr. Williams can never have met this phrase. It is “The wife of one’s husk days (sc. poverty) should not be put away in prosperity: literally, “should not go down from the halt”

The first character should be 糟

Only the first of the two phrases given bears this signification. The second is simply to bring a charge against anyone.

Should be, “at fifteen, she should gather up her hair.” The next sentence being 二十而嫁 “at twenty, she should be married.” See the 小學, chap. I.
One who depends on

337. a<br>Turning to p. 588 a,
cultivating the corners for
his living.

we find 畢於人而侔於天,

translated by

“the unequal pertains
to man, but Heaven has
things in harmony.”

A friend, who is translating Chuang-tzŭ’s works from

which the above passage is taken, informs me that these

seven characters form only the predicate of a sentence of

which the subject has been omitted by Dr. Williams, and

that the sentence should read “(The exceptional man is)

exceptional quoad mankind, but in harmony quoad Hea-

ven.” It must be patent indeed to every student who
takes the trouble to verify such quotations that Dr. Wil-
liams has got them from anywhere rather than from the
original source.

Boreas.

A record office.

To imitate another, to

ape his dress or gait.

To imbibe energy, as by
gulping morning air ac-
cording to the Taoists.

To abandon business,
to retire to one’s home.

336c 篠伯
340c 記室
348c 習氣
349a 畢市

Should be “Æolus.”
Commonly used for
“a secretary.”
Should be, “habit, custom, manner, temper, habitual conduct; and
of land=nature.”
For the correct ex-
planation of these char-
acters, see our subse-
quent remarks on p. 1102 b.

This phrase occurs
as a synonym of “de-
capitation,” the probably standing for ex-
ecution-ground. Cf. 菽
市口.
A young rascal, a street Arab.  

To tell of one's faults &c.  

Parasites, unscrupulous retainers; a camarilla.  

To yawn and stretch.  

A name for Chihli.  

Starting, convulsed; fits, such as children have.  

To hang one's self and be thrown into a ditch;—a disgraceful end.  

The Bible;—a foreign term.  

Also used in the sense of "a clever lad." Generally used in the same sense as the next entry but one. Commonly used as a euphemism for 交合.  

The common phrase for "to yawn" is 打欠; we know this one also as "to bow assent." See p. 736 b, where Williams renders it "To stretch when tired."  

Should be "for Peking." Also commonly used in a primary sense of "to fear the wind"; e.g. 腰細驚風 "her waist seemed as though a breath of wind would snap it."  

To commit suicide in a sewer or moat. 自經 has not necessarily anything to do with hanging.  

It is, however, only "the Bible" which we can consider as "foreign," since 聖經 is a well-known Chinese term for their own sacred books.
To maintain the reputation of the family.

A whore, a kept mistress.

Man's heart does not grow old;—we cannot tell all its ways.

The papers concerning a case in court.

The cautious man will keep himself out of wrong—but he will never effect anything.

This is explained in the 少學 by 承父業 “to carry on one's father's trade.”

A person engaged for the performance of certain duties something between those of a secretary and aide-de-camp. He acts as companion to his employer, receives guests, entertains them, and makes himself generally agreeable. The phrase occurs several times in Book 78 of the 紅樓夢.

Should be “man's heart is not what it was of old.”

Usually “archives.”

Legge gives, “The cautiously-decided would keep themselves from certain things.” It is of course needless to say that the conclusion drawn by Dr. Williams, accurate as it may be of itself, is not concealed in the Chinese text.
An archer; applied too to a tidewaiter who measures vessels for tonnage-dues.

He is very ignorant and yet he refuses to believe.

There is some connection between them; I have an understanding with him.

A rushing blast arose.

"Nimble lads," i. e.

The common term all over China for the underlings of a magistrate's yamen who use the so called "bow" or forked instrument by which land measurements are made.

Legge translates, "simple and yet not sincere."

This phrase is specially used of a connection by marriage. Also, of the connection between debtor and creditor.

Should be, "It begins to blow."

The absurdity of this translation has been well exposed by a writer in the China Review, vol. III, p. 64, who shewed that the term meant if anything "hasteners." A corroboration of this view is furnished by 蔡葛山, formerly a Minister of State. He pointed out that the classical word was 箇 which was identical in sound and tone with 住 "to remain stationary"; and that by travellers and others who did not wish "to remain stationary" abroad this term came to be regarded as one of bad omen, in consequence of which 快
“speedy” was substituted, the idea being to secure a speedy return. Thus 筷子 would actually, signify “hasteners.” Chinese philological discoveries are proverbially worthless; but to anyone who has studied the superstitious side of Chinese character this explanation may not seem wholly frivolous. To which may be added the curious fact that which would appear to be the older word in use for “chopsticks,” is composed of 竹 bamboo and 助 to assist, sc. “assist-ers.”

To look about. Generally used in the sense of “looking on” instead of “acting,” and often tacked to the end of an advertisement, e.g. 幸勿觀望 = “make haste to avail yourselves of the above.”

There were no vagabonds without.外無曠夫不軌不貴乎此 爲山九仞功虧一篑

Unconformable, aberrant, irregular. 不轨不貴乎此

It cannot equal this. 不軌不貴乎此

... i.e. complete a work before praising it. 爲山九仞功虧一篑

Dr. Legge says “no unmarried men.”

But specially of “seditious” people. 不軌不貴乎此

Not to value, or set store by, this. 不軌不貴乎此

Dr. Williams has here missed the “application,” which is rather to be compared with that of our own saying, “Don’t sink the ship for a ha’porth of tar.”
I was quite mistaken. 490c 過意不去 Should be, "I am very much obliged."

Or 戰國. 491c 列國 The student might here be led to believe that these two terms are synonymous and that the use of either is optional.

The whistling of the wind. 500c 天籁自鳴 Should be "the music of Heaven sounds spontaneously;" unlike "the music of Earth" which requires the intervention of a performer. The phrase will be found in Chuang-tzū's works.

An unlooked for event; a sudden mishap. 506c 抽冷子 Should be, "all of a sudden."

Afraid of one's steps. 542b 敬歩 Should be "chary of one's steps;" e.g. "萬勿敬歩...... be sure and come."

He has no tact. 543a 無靈 費 For "tact" read "versatility."
A forfeit in drinking. Should be "any restriction of a fanciful kind imposed upon themselves by the members of a festive party, breaches of which incur the penalty or forfeit of a cup of wine to be drunk by the defaulter." Literally, "wine law" or "wine rule." 酒令 "our wine law as strict as martial law."

Unselfish, guileless. On page 996 our readers will find translated "to remember a kindness." "Uninfluenced by feeling" seems to give a fair idea of the many shades of meaning which this term may have.

The job is done. Thus we have "hurried on with the job."

Order of the emperor's traveling equipage. Commonly applied to the bearers in the retinue of any mandarin.

This phrase refers to an anecdote of Ts'ao Ts'ao, who asked his servants whether the stag was a horse or not, in order &c. &c. The whole of this is inaccurate. The phrase in question had passed into history four hundred years before the time of the great general to whom it is attributed by Dr. Williams, having originated with Chao kao. See Reader's Manual, No. 43.
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<td>Valiant. 575b</td>
<td>蠶悍 Over bearing; rowdy.</td>
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<td>Why are you so set to doing it? 575b</td>
<td>這樣頑穢 Should be “so shilly-shallying or “indecisive.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exaggeration; to boast and vapor about. 580c</td>
<td>孟浪 The following phrase is in common use:—勿嫌孟浪 “don’t think me rude.”</td>
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<td>They think fondly of their wives. 586c</td>
<td>思媚其婦 Should be “wishing to humour (or coax) their wives.”</td>
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<td>A man who sorns, a hanger-on, a lackey. 593b</td>
<td>範片的客 A sponge; a parasite.</td>
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<td>Think it over and you will understand it. 605b</td>
<td>默而識之 Legge gives, “the silent treasuring, up of knowledge.”</td>
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</table>
|      | A phantom man &c. 611b | 哪咤 The name of a favourite god (神), said to have been born after three years and six months gestation in a kind of ball which was cloven open by his father’s sword. The full story is given in the 封神, section 3.
You must (do or) bear it. Should be “unable to bear it.”

An orphan. A child whose mother only is dead.

Though muddy, I am not black. “May be steeped in a dark fluid without being made black.” Legge. See Lun-yü, xvii, 7, where the full sense of the phrase is brought out.

To clean the hands with sand. Evidently a mistake for the common 捏莎 “to crumple up.”

Instrumental music; a band. After enumerating eight particular substances, the San Tzu Ching says “These are 八音” and the commentary explains that from them are made the various kinds of musical instruments distinguished as 八音. To use this term for “a band” is certainly a trifle forced.

An octagonal table. Should be “a square table, capable of holding eight persons. The name is derived from the number of the Taoist immortals.

To gamble, to bet. Should be “to play at cards or dominoes (as the case may be); hence, to gamble &c.”
To return with the troops after a victory.

In great doubt.

When the snipe and the oyster &c.

You have been gazing at the sky through a little tube;—met. you talk big.

The angry bluster of officials in the Yamen.

Hour for two guns, fired at noon in a govern- or’s office.

To withdraw troops, generally with a view of avoiding an engagement.

Should be “Half believing, half doubting.”

On p. 1140 the character 鬬 is translated “lapwing” and “oyster-catcher.”

Why Dr. Williams should have rendered 豹 by “the sky,” we are unable to say. Should be “(Like) looking at a leopard through a tube;” i.e., you will only see one of its spots, and not the whole animal. Is used of a partial acquaintance with any subject.

To behave in a disorderly manner in a public court.

The two gun signal is fired at Amoy at the beginning of the second watch of the night, after which no one may be abroad without a light.
The cannonier in chess, whose powers are like those of a knight.

To see one to his chair.

To lay aside one's robe.

To read a piece straight through.

No wonder he is poor.

Filled; vast, as the atmosphere.

A high officer has gone over the prairies and streams.

Dr. Williams was clearly ignorant of the game. For knight read castle.

Should be “to see a person off.”

Should be “undress,” i.e. the usual dress of an official when not wearing his robes. 便衣 can hardly be taken as a verb.

Should be (1) “a bold hand-writing” or (2) “a vigorous style,” the latter being the most common.

In common parlance, this phrase equals our “devilish poor.” A synonymous term is 奇窮.

Add 石 to the first character, and then we know the phrase in the sense of “unconstrained,” “familiar,” “easy” etc.

On p. 750c we read 足涉勿動 “I am too tired to stir.” The two characters common to both are explained in the 初學 by “land-travel” and “water-travel” respectively.
Elegant; clever, poetic talent.

As far as we know this phrase is generally, if not always, used in a bad sense on which it is unnecessary to enlarge.

If you love the child greatly, yet he is another’s; if you feel that he is a ruined child, still he is my own.

Sir Thomas Wade, in his Hsin Ching Lu, translates “It may be well to kill another; it is perdition to kill oneself.” For those who may not have seen our previous dissection of this phrase, we may add that it means, “Good as those may be, they are strangers; bad as these may be, they are (part of) oneself.”

A hermit.

Generally “a priest.”

Temples are often spoken of as 山門, the proper sites for them being among the hills.

A mortal wound.

Should be “a severe wound.”

It can be done for this time, but not allowed as a regular thing.

This is better translated on p. 946a by “it will only do temporarily.”
The god who cuts the thread of life, the Chinese Atropos.

By referring to page 1059a, the reader will find thus translated:—“A demon regarded as the messenger of Yen-lo Wang,—as in death has come. Dr. Williams had evidently not investigated the subject. A is the spirit of a living man employed to arrest wicked spirits on earth and convey them to Purgatory, the ordinary lictors of the Infernal Regions not being able to stand the light etc.) of the upper world. Meanwhile, the body of the man remains inanimate; which phenomenon is of course easily explained by the one word catalepsy.

Splendid but fading.

If “but fading” is to be inserted at all, it should be within brackets, inasmuch as no such sense can be got out of the text. Dr. Williams was doubtless alluding to the well-known 韶華不再.

A fan-case.

Should be “a pendant from a fan-case.”

To talk with the fingers.

It is news to us that the Chinese are able to talk (in our sense of the term) with their fingers. At any rate this well-known phrase is metaphorical, and means to play at chess, at wei-ch'i, or at any similar game.
There are three classes commonly known in yamens, employed as follows:
1. 刑名: administration of justice.
2. 钱穀: taxes.
3. 廬禀: correspondence.

To get people's goodwill.

Such are the dead, as flowing water.

To help one's parents.

A trickster; people who practice sleight of hand.

Never let down your self-respect.
I think there may be five times as many.

Shun renounced the empire......

Small, petty.

The bamboo of Shun's wife, which became speckled from his tears for her death.

......several things.

Strong with wide horns.

The good man will not join secret doings.

The words are from Mencius, and are translated by Legge (p. 132), "some twice, some five times."

Read "Shun would have renounced......"

A common term for a wife, in which sense the following entry is more properly used than for "a concubine" as given by Dr. Williams.

Read "the bamboo over Shun's grave, which became speckled by his wives' tears for his loss."

This seems a singular translation. The common meaning "to assist" might have been given with the others.

Correctly translated by Legge, Analects page 50, "red and horned."

"The superior man is not a partizan." Legge.
Fortuitously; a thing which unexpectedly came to hand.

No cause for action, it is a doubtful case.

To agree with in opinion, to coincide with, to bear the same testimony.

Half a sentence is too much to say to one whom we dislike.

No other way, no help for it.

Not pleased with.

The location of a dago-ba.

We have authority for this phrase only as "something which comes by a wrong road;" e. g. "ill-gotten gain."

A charge against some person or persons unknown.

To speak suitably to the occasion, or to the point. [See next entry.]

Half a sentence (or better, a word) is too much if not spoken to the point.

Should be "no hope," i. e. of attaining a desired object.

To be unsuited, as persons; unsuitable, as things.

According to a Chinese authority "a temple built by a private person," as opposed to a 寺. But see China Review, Vol II. p. 61.
To befriend. 884b 體恤 Better “To compassionate; to sympathise with.”

The five social relations. 895a 五典 Read “the five virtues belonging to the five social relations.” Mr. Mayers in his Reader’s Manual also makes them “identical with the 五倫.”

The country is now quiet. 896c 奠定 Should be “to settle, to secure;” e.g. 奠定民生最為要政 “to secure the welfare of the people is one of the great objects of government.”

The ground of virtue and happiness. 898c 心田福地 There would appear to be some confusion here. 心田 the “cultivable land of the heart” which properly cultivated according to the orthodox morality becomes a 福地 or a happy land” is a figurative expression commonly known to the Chinese; but the combination as given by Dr. Williams is both incongruous and (in the translation) unintelligible. The following scroll inscription will be familiar to many:—心田存一點子種叢耕.

I can assure you it is 905b 保不定 Should be “can’t guarantee it.”
He who has seen little and exaggerates in describing it, is like the man who saw a camel, and said it was a horse with a double back.

The five poisonous reptiles.

A very small job of work.

To swallow gold-leaf; it is a mode of suicide.

Not much experience.

Half a month.

Should be, "He who has seen little is astonished at much; and beholding a camel, takes it for a horse with a swelled back." Dr. Williams has 重 for 腹, whereby the whole point of the proverb is destroyed.

We only know "the five punishments (of the Ming dynasty.)"

Should be "a short time;" lit. "not the time of a meal." Cf. 半饭 etc.

"Infandum regina jubes &c." A metaphor for suicide by poison. See Celestial Empire of 21st September, 1878.

A metaphor for "suicide."

Read "half a year."
To decide for oneself.  

Also, a common euphemism for suicide.

To give a present.

Should be explained as the present of a departing friend.”

The raft collided with the ship.

For “collided with” read “scraped along.”

To present to an inferior.

Should be “to forward (to an equal or superior.)”

Towel and comb; whence a concubine is called etc.

Also commonly applied, as well as 服, to a wife.

A female officer in the time of the Han, whose duties were to direct the ceremonies, and oversee the palace hareem.

This term appears to have been an honorary designation conferred on that one of the Imperial concubines most distinguished for her literary abilities. As to the duties of this lady,

Dr. Williams would be correct enough but for the further explanation, on page 1120 b, of these same characters in the following words:—“In the T’ang dynasty, a kind of chamberlain housekeeper.”

To hold the official tablet.

Should be “To stick one’s tablet into one’s girdle;” being elliptical for 携於紳.
The apartments behind the hall.

To dig a grave.

We know this phrase only as the death-chamber of a man. For a woman 内寝 is used.

Perhaps some reader might be able to confirm this entry. The phrase 金井 is common enough, though never, to our knowledge, used for a grave. It is explained by 金人以杵撞地輒便成井, which reads almost like an allusion to the cunnus diaboli of Europe.

Brought the punishment on yourself.

Should be "you will get the punishment."

The princely man having wine ever thinks to ask others to pledge him in it.

Legge correctly translates:—[But] from the spirits of the superior man,

[His guests] fill the cup, and present it to him. Odes, p. 421.

To untie the tassel etc.

For "tassel" read "girdle."

The decease of a feudal prince.

Omit "feudal." The word is used of the death of the great Yao. See Mencius, quoting the Shu King.

......; to take a wife.

Also "to take a husband."
To get the fish and forget the trap; ungrateful.

Scarborough wrongly translates this (Proverbs No. 627) "To catch a fish and forget to take away the basket." Williams is unquestionably right in his rendering of "get the trap; ungrateful.

A reformed or married prostitute.

Should be "to reform; specially of a p. who marries." Eight motives for this step are enumerated in the 今古奇观, 萬油郎.

In good health or spirits.

It is almost impossible to give a translation of this phrase such as would be generally applicable. We have for instance "she went on with her spinning as before (or, without taking any notice of him)" &c., &c.

To walk arm in arm.

Should be "to lead away by the hand."

Japan; a term used by themselves, as the equivalent of Yamato.

As far as we know, this term being contemptuously applied by the Chinese to the Japanese (never used by themselves), the latter changed it to 大和.
Two women servants.  Read "two women to
wait on him (Shun)."

Mencius.

If it be not black, it is not a crow.

This sentence comes from the Odes and should
be "Nothing black but crows," the preceding
line being "nothing red is seen but foxes."

There cannot but be a reason.

Should be the exact opposite; literally, "it
cannot but be (that) without reason (e.g. he
was punished)."

To judge by the looks.

Should be "to search for; to find." From the
expression "search one (a sage)
cut out by his appearance."

......is a colophon or paraph.

Omit the words "co-
lophon or," colophons
and paraps being as
distinct as title-pages
and the signatures of
their authors.

In the sun; towards the south.

Hence its usual mean-
ing, "On the throne."
Not worth a scratch, of no importance.

Should be “Having no mutual interests,” or literally, “not feeling each other’s pains and itches.”

I have to bear it.

A common phrase in the mouth of every Chinese doctor, equivalent to “I am afraid it is all up with him.”

Undecided, as one from having his plans frustrated.

Should be something more like “stranded” or “thrown out,” e.g. 中歳偃蹇 found himself stranded in middle life (as a middle-aged man.)

The paraphernalia of a bride.

Defined in the commentary to the 小學 as 自奉之器 in contradiction to those used for sacrificial purposes.

To play at chess.

For chess read wei-ch’i.

A game where the men number 180 white and black men each, to represent days and nights &c. This is of course the explanation of one who is totally ignorant of the game. For a full description see the Temple Bar magazine for January, 1877. The word has also been wrongly translated (see Mencius) by Dr. Legge as “chess,” it should be wei-ch’i, being quite distinct from Chinese chess.
The pearly secretion; 1095a met. spring water.

He willingly remained 1097c in retirement.

To hold in the breath, 1102b as the Taoists or jugglers do.

To begin with 道 is a mistake for 順. The phrase means literally "lead and prolong," and is a particular method of breathing by which a man can learn to do without food, gradually make himself imponderable, and thus attain to immortality. In Vol. II, p. 234, of Doolittle's Vocabulary and Handbook of the Chinese Language, Mr. Chalmers renders the phrase 屈伸導引 by "extending and contracting the limbs," which of course refers only to the first two characters and leaves the last two untranslated.

The tassels or pendants 1106c on a bridle.

We know this as a flower, identical, we believe, with the 紫荆 Judas tree. [門前一樹馬櫻花]; also, as a tassel to an official hat.

Whence the blessings 1110b and emoluments come to me.

Should be "Happiness and prosperity be mine (or yours)." Also used in the sense of "Happiness prosperity will accrue in the future [for some good act performed in the present]."
He could not sit easy. The leading character is however quite ignored by such a rendering, which should be "neither could he sit easy."

Our Emperor. The term occurs on p. 17 of Proleg. to Legge’s Shi-King, viz. 余一人所聞, which is there simply translated by "This is what I have heard."

An awkward performer blowing the organ; i.e. a charlatan, one who gets paid for what he cannot do &c. "an incompetent tyro at playing upon the organ, or? shepherd’s flute." The allusion, however, is to an old story of how on a particular occasion certain absentees from the Imperial band were replaced, in order to make up the full number of performers, by some outsiders who couldn’t play a note but who were instructed to pretend to do so, in the hope that the deception might escape notice. It should therefore be rendered "a sham performer on the —— whatever instrument Yü may be."

He has thoroughly examined its deep meaning. Should be "to make oneself acquainted with the feelings (or state) of the people."
How lively (the fish) are &c.

For "lively" read "embarrassed." See Mencius.

What man is there whose heart does not rise at the thought of the old garden, i.e. his native place.

Should be "What man (or Is there a man who) never thinks about the old garden &c.

To arrange a book of punishments.

A 爱书 is the record of a criminal case which a magistrate, for instance, hands with the prisoner to the Prefect.

Spare your steps!—i.e. I regret you could not have come.

Compare our entry 542b; also Dr. Williams' entry 542c, viz: 幸勿 累玉 which is translated "I hope you will not regret your steps" instead of "Please don't fail to come."

A secret grief which is not divulged.

Should be "oppressed without remedy."
Confucius never said this. It is simply related (論語 ch. x. 4.) that he himself never trod on the threshold.

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