

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### THE AH FANG PALACE.<sup>4</sup>

BY TU MU (A. D. 803-852).

[Tu Mu, otherwise Tu Mu Chih, belonged to a family resident in the capital (Chang-an) for many generations. In the second year of the period Tai Ho, he took his doctor's degree, and other titles, both civil and military, were conferred on him. He has been called the "lesser Tu," to distinguish him from his namesake, the great poet Tu Fu. While the characteristic of the later T'ang poetry is an over-softness and elegance, Tu's verses are strong and masculine, and among the later T'ang poets he has been accorded the first place.

The following poem refers to the fall of the Six Kingdoms and the rise of the Chin Dynasty, and the subsequent fall of Chin owing to its inability to profit by the lessons of the past. The poem hinges on the building of the palace of Shih Huang-ti, evidently a distasteful piece of extravagance on the part of an emperor who was also obnoxious as the architect of the "Great Wall" and the destroyer of the books. Several lines have been omitted in the following version, being, probably, those in which Dr. Grube finds a prodigality of metaphor sounding harsh to western ears. But as characteristically Oriental, it may be permitted to insert them here, although perhaps the translation "westernizes" them, if I may say so, too much.

"See bright stars twinkling overhead,  
'Tis folding mirrors open spread.  
See that dark cloud that hides the sun,  
The ladies' toilet is begun.  
And see, in flood the river flows,  
As labors of the toilet close.  
But hark, 'tis thunder sure, I hear.  
No, 'tis the Emperor's chariot near.  
And grandly rolling, rolling on,  
Now heard afar, from sight 'tis gone."

The purpose of these lines is to emphasize the immensity of the palace. So numerous, the poet intends to say, were the women of the harem that when they took out their mirrors for toilet purposes, the light flashing on them seemed to the onlooker like a sky full of stars. When the ladies let down their black hair, it seemed like the coming of clouds to obscure the sun. And when they poured off the toilet water, the river seemed to rise in a flood, so great was the quantity used by so many people.]

<sup>1</sup> Translated by James Black.

## I.

The Six are done: the Empire One.  
 Though hills are bare, a palace rare  
 Fills up three hundred *li* and more,  
 And dims the light the landscape o'er.  
 From Li Shan north extending far,  
 Then towards the west the buildings are.  
 From there to Hsien Yang straight we go,  
 And still the palace precincts show.  
 The walls are crossed by rivers two,  
 And as we stroll the place to view,  
 Some stately building here we spy,  
 And here some tower that rises high.  
 Like silken ribbons wind the halls;  
 The eaves jut out from lofty walls.  
 Fitly around each building stands  
 Crescentic center all commands.  
 And as they spiral o'er the ground,  
 The courts, like honeycombs, abound,  
 Each with its proper water-flow  
 Through which the eddying currents go.  
 To view the bridge that leads the way  
 From shore to shore, who would not say—  
 "A dragon from the river rears,  
 Though in the air no mist appears."  
 A corridor, it spans the tide,  
 And shines, by curious eye descried,  
 Like rainbow arching o'er the stream  
 Though no soft shower aslants the gleam.

## II.

In singing tower how mild the air  
 From the warm breath that mingles there!  
 In dancing room a chill wind blows  
 From off the dancers' fluttering clothes.  
 One palace and one day bring forth  
 The balmy south, the frigid north.  
 And ladies fair, and sons of kings  
 Each day to Chin's great palace brings.  
 At morn they sing, at night they play,  
 To while an emperor's time away.  
 . . . . .  
 The charm that each from nature caught  
 Is here by art to excellence brought  
 And here the courtiers stand and vie  
 For notice from the imperial eye.  
 Alas, how many stand in vain  
 Through the long years a king may reign.  
 The stores of Yen Chou here are laid,  
 The arts of Han Wei are displayed,

The treasures of Chi Chu arrayed,  
 Full many a generation here,  
 And toil of many a toilsome year,  
 To this grim pile consigned at last  
 From those who owned them in the past.  
 Through halls agleam with jewelled rays,  
 The Chin men pass, but scorn to gaze.

## III.

And yet, be one man's heart surveyed,  
 Behold the hearts of all displayed.  
 The Chins love luxury. True; but all  
 The joys of home how oft recall.  
 Then why should Chin these homes despoil,  
 To scatter wanton o'er the soil?  
 And why should palace more contain  
 Of pillars than the fields have men?  
 Of crossbeams than in robe you find  
 The threads by weaver's hand entwined?  
 Of lattice work should it have more  
 Than city walls the empire o'er?  
 And sounds of mirth that reach the town  
 The voices in the market drown.  
 Protest the people dared not, though  
 They dared to led their anger grow.  
 But he, the Solitary One,  
 Increased in pride from sun to sun.

## IV.

The kingdoms six themselves destroyed,  
 Not Chin, though Chin's the arm employed.  
 And who in turn caused Chin to fall?  
 'Twas Chin. The people? Not at all.  
 Oh! Had the Six the people loved,  
 In vain had Chin against them moved.  
 Had Chin the peoples' voice but heard,  
 It had not perished in its third,  
 But countless kings had borne its name,  
 And none could rise to blast its fame.  
 No pity, bent to milder ways,  
 Had Chin, though its decay may raise  
 Pity for it in after days.  
 And later generations too  
 Still miss the lesson old and true,  
 And they are pitied by the new.

---

 MELANCHTHON ON DUERER'S MELANCHOLY.

BY EBERHARD NESTLE.

In the July number of *The Open Court* there is an interesting paper on "Albrecht Dürer and the Freemasons," together with a reproduction and long