

1929, and the community was once more appealed to, it responded with even greater generosity, which resulted in the erection of its present fine edifice, many times the size and capacity of the old building. By a series of unfortunate circumstances this building cost considerably more than the original estimate, with the result that the Society was saddled with a burdensome debt, which continued adverse economic and political conditions have made impossible to remove. Those conditions have seemed to render it inadvisable to make a further appeal to the community to remove the debt, which, in spite of every effort on the part of those responsible for the conducting of the Society's affairs, has increased. Running expenses have been pared down to a minimum, and many channels have been explored with a view to increasing the Society's income and reducing its debt. Other channels in foreign lands are even now being explored, but the fact remains that the Society, while alive and active in many ways, is in an extremely serious financial position.

I have no intention of minimizing to you the seriousness of this situation, although I refuse to view the Society's future with anything but optimism. Nevertheless, it is abundantly evident that something drastic must be done in the immediate future if the Society is to continue its occupation of this building and retain its Museum and Library, the importance of which to the Shanghai community can hardly be over-estimated in view of what has happened to cultural institutions in this part of China during the past eighteen months.

It would appear that there is nothing for it but another appeal to the Shanghai public for funds to wipe out the Society's indebtedness, in spite of the present adverse conditions. Such an appeal will, I hope, shortly be launched, and, to make it successful, it will be necessary to have the active support and cooperation of every member of the Society.

It is intolerable to think that an organization with the long record of achievement that the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society has to its credit, with its fine Museum and valuable Library, in a city in which such institutions are all too few, should be forced out of existence by the lack of the financial support and backing that it deserves. Such a contingency would be an irreparable loss to this city, of which we are all justly proud, and I feel sure that a properly directed and understood appeal to this community could not meet with failure, in spite of hard times.

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## SOME CHINESE ANIMAL MYTHS AND LEGENDS\*

By ARTHUR DE CARLE SOWERBY

Although the Chinese have nothing quite of the nature of the ancient Greek tales known as Æsop's Fables, or the almost equally famous Negro animal stories of the old plantation days in the Southern United States of America gathered together by Joel Candler Harris in his delightful book "Uncle Remus," their legends and folk tales are rich in references to animals or with animals playing the leading rôles in the romances they unfold.

In Æsop's Fables animals take the place of human beings in more or less allegorical accounts of happenings, and each fable has its moral. The stories told by the old Negro, Uncle Remus, which undoubtedly had their origin in the African jungle, are of much the same type, though far more humorous and subtle in their delineation of human character and foibles, but in neither Æsop's Fables nor Uncle Remus' stories are there any religious significance or supernatural elements.

Chinese animal legends and myths, on the other hand, are either frankly religious or pertain to the miraculous and supernatural, being more like our European fairy tales in which animals appear. It may be noted, however, that, while Chinese animal myths and legends in their present form are mostly connected with Buddhism or Taoism, there seems to be a much more ancient element about them going back to pre-Han times and traceable to the Animal Cult of the Huns, Scythians and other Central Asiatic tribes, so similar to that of the North American Indians and all races of mankind in the hunting period of their development before they became herders or learned to cultivate the soil. The Chinese in prehistoric times passed through this stage, and even in the Shang period (1776-1122 B.C.), when they had already taken to agriculture, they still hunted extensively, as is well shown by the many pictographs of animals and hunting methods, such as bows and arrows, nets, snares and pits, found in the quaint writing of that period. It persisted into Chou, Ch'in and Han times, the bronze vessels of these periods often being richly decorated with animal *motifs*, and many of them depicting hunting scenes. The same applies to the pottery vessels of the

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Han period, while animal tomb figures dating from Han and subsequent dynasties down to the T'ang are abundant.

Undoubtedly this ancient Animal Cult, not only influenced the early art of the Chinese, but it also impregnated their folklore and mythology, which were strongly animalistic. Taosim and later Buddhism, as they came into vogue, naturally utilized this animal material and worked it into legends and myths of their own, giving it a religious significance, and we have such famous examples as the story of Sun Hou-tze (孫猴子), the monkey who became a god, winning immortality and being incorporated in the Buddhist pantheon.

There is also an animistic element in the animal folk tales and myths of the Chinese, a survival of the very ancient Nature Worship that held sway amongst the peoples of this part of the world at the dawn of civilization, so that we have to-day such conceptions as the God of Lice and the belief that certain animals, such as the tiger, the hedgehog and the fox, are really spirits or *Shên* (神).

Roughly speaking, Chinese animal myths may be divided into four groups, namely: (1) those of a classical or religious nature in which animals are the heroes or play major or minor rôles in the stories they recount; (2) those connected with the old style Chinese medical practice in which certain animals are believed to have more or less magical medicinal properties; (3) folk tales and superstitions involving various animals, birds, reptiles, fishes and insects which the simple villagers see around them in their lives, or hunters encounter in their excursions into the wilderness; and (4) stories with no particular religious significance yet dealing with alleged supernatural happenings, such as men or women turning into animals or *vice versa*, or animals talking and behaving like human beings, and which may be classed as ordinary fairy tales.

Although there are many thousands of different forms of animal life to be found in China, only certain definite species appear in this country's mythology, due, no doubt, to the tendency of the Chinese to conventionalize everything. Thus, in spite of the fact that China's waters contain an enormous number of different kinds of fish, the form referred to in Chinese legends and folk tales is almost invariably the carp, while the rat of their stories is always the common house rat, although a great many species of rats and mice are known to occur in this country.

Animal forms which mainly occur in Chinese legend, folklore or fairy tales include the following:

#### FABULOUS ANIMALS

Lung (龍) or Dragon  
Chi-lin (麒麟) or Unicorn  
Shih-tze (獅子) or Lion  
Fêng-huang (鳳凰) or Phoenix  
Ch'an (蟾) or Three-legged Toad.

Chinese art shows many other kinds of fabulous mammals, birds or reptiles, but these five appear to be the chief forms included in

this country's written or spoken mythology. It should be noted that there are many varieties of dragons according to the Chinese, each with its own special name.

#### REAL ANIMALS

<i>Mammals</i>		
Monkey	Fox	Horse
Gibbon	Dog	Donkey
Bat	Cat	Sheep (or Goat)
Hedgehog	Badger	Tapir
Tiger	Rat	Pig
Bear	Hare	Rhinoceros
Wolf	Deer	Elephant
Leopard	Ox	Mammoth
<i>Birds</i>		
Crane	Domestic Goose	Mandarin Teal
Magpie	Domestic Duck	Falcon
Crow	Owl	Eagle
Domestic Fowl	Swan	Wild Goose
Sparrow	Swallow	Wild Duck
<i>Reptiles and Amphibians</i>		
Tortoise	Crocodile	
Turtle	Lizard (Gecko)	
Serpent	Frog	
Alligator	Toad	
<i>Fish</i>		
Carp		
<i>Insects</i>		
Locust (and Grasshopper)	Butterfly (and Moth)	
Cicada	Louse	
Fly	Silkworm	
<i>Other Arthropods</i>		
Crab	Scorpion	
Centipede	Spider	
<i>Molluscs</i>		
Snail (land)	River Snail	
Conch-shell	Fresh-water Mussel	
<i>Worms</i>		
Earthworm		

The Chinese have a way of grouping animals which is not met with in any other country. Thus they have the twelve animals each representing a year in the Twelve-year Cycles in the Sixty-year Cycle of their system of chronology. These animals are also known as the Twelve Terrestrial Branches. In their proper order they are the rat, the ox, the tiger, the hare, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the sheep, the monkey, the cock, the dog and the pig. Frequently when a man is asked his age he will reply by merely naming the animal of the year in which he was born, leaving his interrogator to work out the problem. The year 1936 was that of the rat, the first

in the present cycle. Each of the twelve animals has some special significance, and is symbolical of some special attribute or attributes. Thus the rat is the emblem of timidity and meanness; the ox is the emblem of spring and agriculture; the tiger represents magisterial dignity and sternness as well as ferocity, strength and courage; the hare is an emblem of long life; the dragon symbolizes Imperial power; the snake sycophancy, cunning and evil; the horse speed and perseverance; the sheep is the emblem of a retired life; the



The Twelve Animals of the Chinese System of Chronology as depicted on Copper or Brass Coin-like Charms.

monkey represents ugliness, trickery and intelligence; the cock is emblematic of the male principal (*Yang*) of literary ability, courage, benevolence and a sense of time; the dog represents fidelity; and the pig the baser passions, the wild boar also representing wealth.

The same twelve animals in the same order also represent the twelve two-hour periods or watches into which the Chinese formerly divided the day and the night; while in the same sequence, but commencing with the tiger, they represent the signs of the Zodiac, each being assigned to one of the months of the year. Thus the tiger represents the First Moon, the hare the Second Moon, down to the ox, which represents the Twelfth Moon.

Then there are the animals of the Twenty-eight Constellations, equivalent to the days of the Chinese month or Moon. These in their correct order, according to Bredon and Mitrophanow, are the crocodile, the dragon, the badger, the fox, the dog, the wolf, the hare, the porcupine, the rat, the leopard, the griffon, the bat, the pheasant, the gibbon, the cock, the crow, the horse, the earthworm,

the deer (river deer), the monkey, the snake, the stag (sika deer), the sheep, the tapir, the swallow, the ox, the tiger and the pig. Superstitions are attached to these animals and the days they represent, according to which the days are auspicious or the reverse for performing various acts, such as getting married, being buried, starting the building of a house or opening a business.

The animals of the Zodiac are often found on bronze amulets, as also are those of the Twenty-eight Constellations.

One of the most important animal groups is that known as the Four Sacred Animals, the dragon, the phoenix, the white tiger and the tortoise. They represent, respectively, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, and are the Guardians of the Eastern, Southern, Western and Northern Quadrants of the Heavens. The Five Poisonous Creatures, the snake, the centipede, the scorpion, the wall lizard or gecko (sometimes the spider) and the toad, form another important group; while the Five Bats, form yet another, representing the Five Blessings, *Wu Fu* (五福), namely, old age, wealth, health, love of virtue and a natural death. Still other animal groups will be mentioned in their proper place in this paper.

Most important of the fabulous animals is the *lung* (龍) or dragon, a composite beast with the features of many creatures. In its present form it has the head, including the jaws, teeth, ears and whiskers, of some carnivorous mammal, probably the tiger, with the horns of a deer and the long barbels of a catfish. Its long sinuous body is that of a serpent, with the scales, not of a snake but of a fish, the common carp, and the dorsal fin-like crest of the alligator, ending in a many-rayed pointed tail-fin like those of certain marine fishes. Its four legs are those of a lizard, with five (sometimes four or only three) eagle-like toes or talons. Undoubtedly the Chinese dragon originated in some large serpent, possibly the python, which still occurs in South China as far north as Fukien Province, to the writhing body of which the various other feathers have been added in the course of time. In its earliest form, that of the Shang Period, it consisted only of a serpent's body with the head of a tiger or other carnivorous beast. At one time it was given either bird-like or bat-like wings, but later these were omitted, probably because the dragon, being a supernatural creature, could move at will through space and so did not need wings. In Chinese mythology the dragon has always been considered a benevolent creature, and is believed to control the weather. To Lung Wang, the Dragon King, the Chinese still pray and offer sacrifice when rain is needed. The dragon is the guardian of the Eastern Quadrant of the Heaven. It is the fifth of the animals of the Chinese Twelve-year Cycle, and represents the Third Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. Its abode is in deep pools and lakes, in rivers, on mountain tops or even in the clouds. Its appearance is a good omen. There is a regular Dragon Cult amongst the Chinese, especially the farmers, to whom the occurrence and distribution of rain is of paramount importance. As it exists in the Peking area this cult is described by Bredon and Mitrophanow in their able work "The Moon Year." In that part of China the end of the Fifth Moon sees the beginning of the rainy season, when the

Lord of Heaven assigns to each dragon its appointed task for the year, and it is a matter of great moment to every farmer which dragon is assigned to his district, for on this depends the abundance or otherwise of rain it will receive. Stormy weather and excessive rain is caused by the fights amongst themselves when too many dragons gather together over one locality. Then Lung Wang, the Dragon King, is besought by the farmers with sacrifice and fire-crackers to disperse the dragon hosts so that rainfall shall be evenly distributed over as wide an area as possible for the benefit of all. When rain does not fall and a drought is threatened various expedients are resorted to in order to discipline the dragons. All through North China, where arid conditions often prevail, when a drought occurs, the villagers wrap willow wreaths about their heads and go in processions to the tops of the highest mountains to pray to the dragons for rain. The peasants at such times are liable to be in a very excited state, evincing symptoms bordering on religious frenzy. Many years ago, when I was on the Clark Expedition through Shensi and Kansu, a prolonged drought was raging in the latter province. The Indian Army surveyor attached to the Expedition was making a plane-table survey of the route being taken, which necessitated getting bearings from the peaks of certain high mountains and hills on other peaks. Unfortunately while engaged in this task on a peak some distance south of Lan-chou Fu, the capital of the province, he encountered one of these processions. So incensed were the farmers at finding him there, as they believed, interfering with the local dragon, they set upon him and beat him to death. This was followed later by a march on my camp in the valley below, apparently with the object of attacking me too. The villagers changed their minds, however, for, although I could see their lanterns on the mountain slopes above me, and heard their shouts, they finally went away. This incident goes to show how strong and deep-rooted is the Chinese belief in their dragon myths.

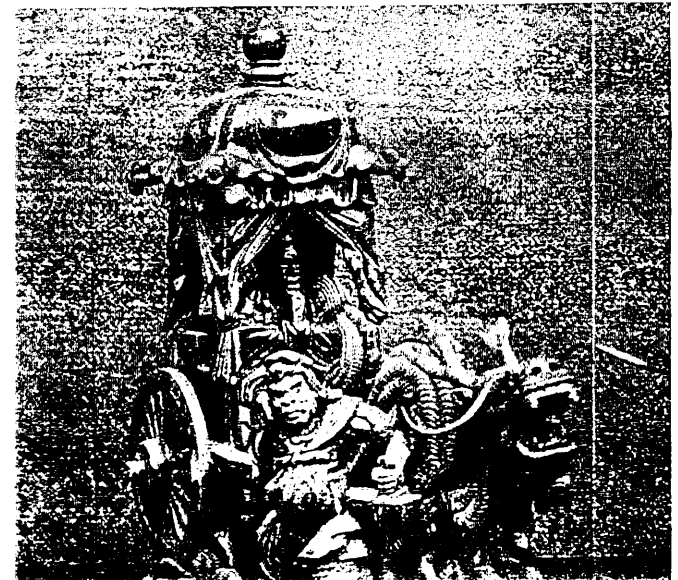
The *chi-lin* (麒麟), called by Westerners the unicorn because it is usually shown with a single horn sloping backwards from the crown of the head, although it is sometimes depicted with two horns like the dragon, is also a composite animal. Its head is very similar to that of the dragon. Its neck, body and legs are those of a horse, although the hoofs are cloven like those of an ox. The tail is bushy like that of the Chinese lion. Sometimes wings are present on the sides of the neck or over the shoulders. The body, like that of the dragon, is covered with the scales of the carp. Although a fearsome looking beast, the *chi-lin* is also considered benevolent. Its appearance on earth, only at great intervals of time, is an extremely good omen, and heralds the birth of a sage. Indeed, the *chi-lin* itself is said to be the paragon of all the virtues and so has become the emblem or symbol of integrity. Before Confucius was born his mother is said to have seen a whole herd of these animals, and late in his life when it was reported to him that some hunters had killed what from its description he believed must have been one of these animals, he was so overcome with sorrow and shame that he ceased work on a history he was writing and never resumed it. It is

## SOME CHINESE ANIMAL MYTHS AND LEGENDS



The Dragon is one of the most ancient fabulous Animals in China. It originated in the Serpent, the Attributes of other Animals being added from Time to Time. Above is shown a Dragon winding round a Pillar in the fine Temple of Chin Ssu, near Tai-yuan Fu in Shansi.

The Snake has a prominent place in Chinese Legend, as indicated in the Drawing above illustrating a Chinese Story.

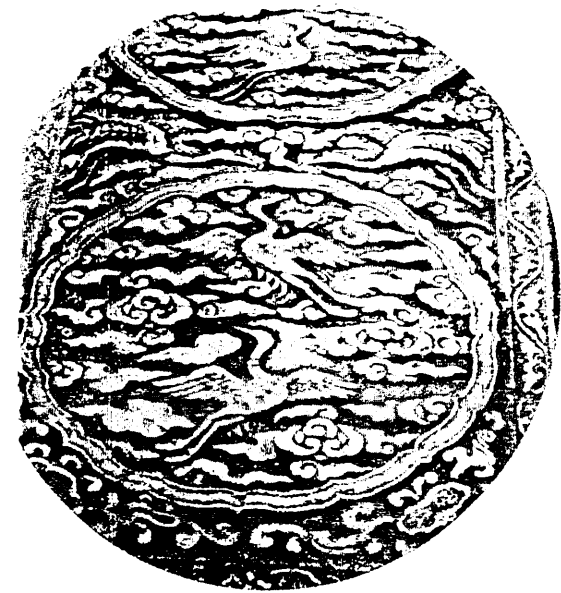


Lung Wang, the Dragon King is here shown in a Wood Carving being drawn in a Charict by a Dragon. The late George Croft's Collection.

The Crane in Chinese Mythology is a Symbol of Longevity and Good Fortune.

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The Hare, also an Emblem of Longevity, represents the Moon to the Chinese, this Celestial Orb often being referred to as the "Jade Hare." In the Design on the T'ang Mirror below are shown the Hare pounding out the Elixir of Life, Chang O and the Three-legged Toad under a Cassia Tree, which is what the Chinese see on the Face of the Moon.



The Carp is prominent in Chinese Mythology, being closely connected with the Dragon. Below may be seen a number of Sacred Carp in a Temple Pond in Hangchow.



probable that the idea of the *chi-lin* originated in the rhinoceros, which, from various classical references, must have existed in China well into historical times, but by the Chou or Han period had become very rare, shortly afterwards becoming extinct. It may here be noted that the horn of the rhinoceros is believed to have magical medicinal properties, being, amongst other things, an antidote to poisons, for which reason it became popular as a material from which to carve drinking cups. It is also believed to cure demon possession, while, taken in powdered form, it gives strength and courage. The Chinese do not identify the rhinoceros with the *chi-lin*, however, and perhaps it is not, therefore, permissible to confuse the two. One of the Four Divine Animals, the *chi-lin* is often portrayed in legend and art as a mount for various deities. The other three Divine Animals are the dragon, the tortoise and the *fêng-huang* or phoenix.

Perhaps the *fêng-huang* (鳳凰) should be placed next to the dragon in importance amongst the fabulous creatures that appear in Chinese mythology. This sacred bird has been called the phoenix by Westerners for want of a better name, but it possesses none of the attributes ascribed to the latter. Like the dragon and the *chi-lin* the *fêng-huang* is made up of several other forms. As a matter of fact, it is really two birds, a male and a female, *fêng* (鳳) being the male and *huang* (凰) the female. Thus the two birds are often shown together, with certain differences, in painting, embroidery and carvings, but in legends and stories they are usually referred to as one, while as often as not but one bird is portrayed in works of art. Early representations of the *fêng-huang* suggest that the domestic cock or rooster was its origin, but in the course of time features of many other birds were added. As it exists to-day it has the head of a cock, with a cock's wattles and sometimes the comb of this common bird. Also the feathers of the neck, or hackles, are those of the cock, while spurs are often shown on its long legs, which are those of a crane with the talons of an eagle, the toes sometimes being placed two directed forwards and two backwards as in a parrot. The beak is usually that of a falcon or other bird of prey. Long waving tail feathers, with "eyes" at their ends like those in the tail feathers of the peacock, and upright plumes on the wings, like those that ornament the male Mandarin teal, complete the ensemble of a bird whose colours eclipse those of any known species, except, perhaps, those of the golden pheasant, which also may have served as one of the models upon which the *fêng-huang* in all its glory is based. The character of the *fêng-huang* in virtue and righteousness transcends even that of the *chi-lin*, and it is said to have been a mount, for Hsi Wang Mu (西王母), Queen Mother of the Western Paradise, when she periodically visited the Emperor Wu Ti (武帝) to teach him the virtues and purify his soul of all evil. The appearance of the *fêng-huang* on earth is considered a sign of great felicity, but this happens only once in a long period. As an emblem of perfect conjugal love and happiness the *fêng-huang* is embroidered upon wedding garments, bedding, curtains and scrolls.

There are in Chinese art many birds with long tails and crests and of bright plumage that have no counterpart in nature, and

sometimes these are mistaken by Europeans for the *fêng-huang*. The peacock, even when rendered in a more or less naturalistic manner, is also frequently confused with the Chinese phoenix, but it should easily be distinguished by its crest and the form of its tail. As far back as the T'ang period the peacock comes into Chinese legend, for there is a story to the effect that very early in the 7th century A.D. there was a wealthy gentleman in Tai-yuan Fu, capital of Shansi Province, named Tou Yi (竇毅), whose exceedingly clever daughter was eagerly sought in marriage by the youths of the city. Tou Yi put forward a strange condition for his daughter's suitors to fulfill. Setting up a picture of a peacock he said that whoever could shoot out its eyes could marry his daughter. Only one young archer successfully performed this feat, and so married Tou Yi's daughter. This was Kao Tzu, who afterwards became the founder and first Emperor of the illustrious T'ang Dynasty.

It may be of interest to learn that Chinese legend has its Blue Bird, although this is not the Blue Bird of Maeterlinck's immortal story, but in form is probably only one of the many more or less mythical birds of Chinese decorative art. According to Werner's "Dictionary of Chinese Mythology" the daughter of Shên Nung (神農), the Divine Husbandman and second of the Five Rulers of the legendary period, was drowned when crossing the sea to join Ch'ih Sung-tze (赤松子), and was metamorphosed into a blue bird. She thereupon set herself the task of filling up the sea by throwing all kinds of objects into it. The Queen Mother of Heaven took pity on her and made her caretaker of her garden.

The *shih-tze* (獅子) or lion of the Chinese in its modern form bears very little resemblance to a real lion, being more like a Pekingese pug or poodle, with a hideous rather fearsome mien. The manner of its origin would take too long to go into here in detail, but it may be noted that the lion first became known to the Chinese in Han times, when living specimens of this great feline were sent to the Emperor's court as presents or tribute from countries in the West. At that time large fairly naturalistic stone sculptures of the lion were executed and set to guard the approaches to tombs or graves of important personages. But, even so, the flowing mane was in part usually rendered in the form of wings from the side of the neck or from the shoulders. These stone lions continued in this form down to T'ang times, when Buddhism brought with it the Indian rendering of the lion. From that time on the *shih-tze* became more and more fabulous in appearance, later degenerating even as a fabulous animal and taking on the aspects and physical attributes of the poodle. Certainly no one seeing the grotesque stone carvings of a pair of these animals guarding the entrance to a Chinese temple to-day would see in it the noble form of the lion as we of the West know it. Besides acting as the guardian of the gates of temples, official buildings and even private residences, the lion in Buddhist legend is usually shown as a mount for Wen Shu (文殊), the God of Transcendent Wisdom, who was asked to convert the Chinese to Buddhism. As now depicted the lions guarding the gates of buildings represent a male and a female, on the left and right, respectively.

The male is shown grasping a hollowed sphere, which represents the Jewel of Omnipotence, while the female usually holds a cub in its paw. Unlike the dragon, *chi-lin* and *fêng-huang*, the *shih-tze* does not appear to any extent in Chinese classical or religious mythology, or even in fairy tales or folklore, obviously because it is an importation and did not originate from any indigenous Chinese animal.

The inclusion of the *ch'an* (蟾) or three-legged toad in the fabulous animals of the Chinese is based both on its appearance and its supernatural attributes. The head, body and front legs are like an ordinary toad, with its wart-covered skin, prominent eyes and wide mouth. The hind quarters, however, taper away into a single leg projecting backwards like a tail. Usually the feet have but three toes. In legend the *ch'an* is associated with Liu Hai Hsien (劉海仙), an Immortal, who is supposed to have been a Minister of State under T'ai Tzu (太祖) of the later Liang Dynasty. As a youth he joined the family of a merchant, who treated him kindly, and whom he used to help in various ways. One day, while drawing water from a well, Liu Hai caught a three-legged toad, whereupon he was greatly rejoiced, explaining to those he met that he had been looking for this creature for many years. He plaited a cord of many colours, which he tied to the *ch'an*, and thus he is usually depicted holding a cord with a toad at its end. When many people gathered round Liu Hai, he clasped his hands together, thanked his hosts, and rose into the air, where he and the toad disappeared.

Although toads and frogs generally are liked and honoured by the Chinese, even worshipped in many places, and are considered benevolent creatures, the toad is included as one of the Five Poisonous Creatures, the other four being the snake, the centipede, the gecko or wall lizard and the scorpion. Sometimes the spider takes the place of the gecko. Of these, neither the toad nor the gecko, of course, are poisonous, and it seems rather strange that they should have been included in this category, more especially the toad, of which the Chinese are not in the least afraid, although they all seem greatly to fear the gecko. This little reptile, it may be noted in passing, is known in North China as *hsien-hu-tze*, meaning the scorpion-tiger, as it is said to hunt and eat scorpions. If it touches or partakes of human food, the latter is believed to become poisonous and unfit for consumption.

Both frogs and toads occur fairly frequently in Chinese legends. Indeed the frog is considered one of the many emblems of wealth, finding pictorial expression in the drawing of a boy playing with a frog and a string of cash. As a matter of fact the boy is supposed to be Liu Hai Hsien, but he is often shown with an ordinary frog instead of the three-legged toad. In Fukien Province the Frog Cult is strong and there are many temples dedicated to this amphibian. In Central China, too, there are many temples in which the Green Frog Spirit is worshipped. By farmers frogs and toads are revered because they destroy noxious insects. However, this does not prevent them from turning an honest penny by capturing certain species of large frogs and selling them in the city markets to tickle the palates of epicures. A few years ago the Mayor of Greater Shanghai issued

an order forbidding the selling and eating of frogs in the local markets, but this rule was more honoured in the breaking than in the keeping.

Of real animals that occur in Chinese legends and folk tales undoubtedly the most famous is Sun Hou-tze (孫猴子), the monkey hero of the great Buddhist epic, the Hsi Yu Chi (西遊記), or "Record of a Journey to the Western Paradise," which Werner describes as a dramatization of the introduction of Buddhism into China. It would take too long to give even a short account of Sun Hou-tze's life and activities, but it may be briefly told that he was created by Yü Huang (玉皇), the Lord of Heaven or the Pearly Emperor, on the Hua Kuo Mountain across the seas, "to skip and gambol to the highest peaks of mountains, jump about in the waters, and, eating the fruit of the trees, to be the companion of the gibbon and the crane. Like the deer he would pass his nights on the mountain slopes, and during the day he would be seen leaping on their summits or in their caverns—the finest ornament of all for the mountains." He soon became King of the Monkeys, whereupon he began to seek a way to become immortal. The legend runs that he journeyed to the Western Paradise, where he stole the peach of longevity from Hsi Wang Mu, and swallowed the Pearl of Immortality. For this he was severely reprimanded, whereupon he repented of his evil ways and ultimately became a deity, being appointed God of Victorious Strife. In his unregenerate days he represented human restlessness, folly, lack of discipline and general contrariness, but, when he changed his nature, he was emblematic of the triumph of good over evil. It is because Sun Hou-tze stole the Peach of Longevity that the monkey is usually depicted in Chinese art holding a peach in its hands.

The monkey, it may be noted, is the ninth animal in the Twelve-year Cycle of Chinese chronology, and represents the Seventh Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. The species of monkey represented in Chinese legend and art is the common rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*, Zimmermann), which occurs in many places in this country.

Associated with Sun Hou-tze was Chu Pa-chieh (猪八戒), the Pig Fairy, a gross person with all the lower instincts of the pig. He was appointed Superintendent of the Milky Way by Yü Huang, but when drunk on one occasion he abused Yü Huang's daughter, for which he was given two thousand blows with a heavy mallet and banished from the earth. When the time came for him to be born once more he entered a sow's womb by mistake, and so was born in the form of a man with a pig's head. He still continued his evil ways. The first thing he did in his new life was to kill and eat his mother, and later his brothers and sisters—all pigs, of course. He then repaired to Fu-ling Shan, where he attacked pilgrims with an iron rake, killing some. Later he, too, repented of his evil ways, became a monk, and helped spread the Buddhist religion in China. For this he was rewarded by being appointed Altar-washer in Chief to the Gods. In his evil days he was symbolical of the grosser passions of human nature, his regeneration again representing the triumph of good over evil. In the Twelve-year Cycle the pig takes

the last, that is, the twelfth, place, while it represents the Tenth Moon in the Zodiac.

The tiger is a most important animal in Chinese mythology and folklore. There are a great many tales about this savage feline, which is believed to have supernatural attributes and to be a *Shên* or spirit. In many parts of China the native hunters are afraid to molest it, in spite of the high prices they might get for its bones and blood and other parts of its body as medicine, not to mention the pelt. I found this to be very much the case in the mountains of Western Shansi, where the tiger is still to be found. The hunters absolutely refused to assist me in any way to secure a shot at a tiger, as they said that, even if I succeeded in killing one, its spirit would come and wreak vengeance upon them for helping me. In religious legends it acts as a mount for various deities. A white tiger dominates the Western Quadrant and the autumn season. The tiger is the third animal in the Twelve-year Cycle, and represents the First Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. It also represents the elemental and savage forces of nature and is man's enemy. It is a malevolent spirit, the opponent of the dragon, which is man's friend and protector. Its bones, blood and flesh, taken orally, give strength and courage, and fetch high prices in old style Chinese medicine shops. One of the things that seems most significant to the Chinese is the presence of the character *Wang* (王), meaning King, on the tiger's forehead, signifying its royal character. In the old Chinese army there was a regiment of soldiers dressed up to represent tigers, and bearing shields with a tiger's mask painted on them. They were known as the Tiger Braves, and, traditionally, were invincible.

The fox is another animal of evil repute amongst the Chinese, because it, too, is a spirit, having the power of assuming human form, and often turning into a beautiful woman, whose aim is usually to ensnare some man and bring about his ruin. That the country folk firmly believe this is abundantly evident. Some years ago when staying at Lung Wang Shan east of Tai-yuan Fu in Shansi Province, I had a good demonstration of this. One night a native woodcutter came running into the temple where I was staying in a state of fear bordering hysterics. He said he had seen some spirit foxes out on the mountain side, and something terrible would certainly happen to him. So real were his fears that I went out to investigate, and, sure enough, there were lights on the opposite mountain side. The Chinese all insisted that they were spirit foxes, which were up to no good. Not satisfied, I marked the spots where the lights had appeared, and next day visited the place. I discovered some long abandoned coal mine shafts, which showed evidences of having been recently used by charcoal burners. This did not shake the belief of the local villagers and my servants that the place was haunted by fox spirits, and they could not be persuaded to go near it. That fox spirits are not, however, always evil according to Chinese legend is indicated by two stories in "Chinese Folk Tales" by the Reverend J. Macgowan, in one of which one of these fairies assumes the form of a wealthy man named Hu, and ultimately marries the beautiful daughter of another wealthy man, bride and groom living happily

ever after. In the other a fox fairy in the form of a beautiful woman marries a handsome young man named Liu, again with the happiest results. Small shrines are sometimes erected in country places to the local fox spirits, offerings being made and incense burned to them. There are a great many fairy tales about fox spirits. Ferguson in his "Chinese Mythology" in "The Mythology of All Races," Volume VIII, says, "The fox (*hu-li*) is the symbol of cunning, and associates with fairies." In Japanese mythology the fox and the badger both play an important part, but in China the badger seldom appears in the mythology, legends or folklore of the country, although it is very common. It does appear, however, in the old *Materia Medica*s, and is one of the animals of the Twenty-eight Constellations.

The rat also figures extensively in Chinese legends, folklore and fairy tales. It does not, however, seem to be accorded supernatural attributes to the same extent as the fox. The rat is first of the animals in the Chinese Twelve-year Cycle, and represents the Eleventh Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. It is, of course, a household animal, and, therefore, stories about it are more or less connected with domestic affairs. The Chinese have a very interesting custom in connection with the rat, derived from a curious legend, which runs: Many centuries ago a rat made its summer home in a hollow in the rocks of a mountain. There it became transformed into a woman. Desiring a husband, it, or she, went to a nearby charcoal-burner's hut, where she offered and was permitted to prepare the man's meal. Looking at her as she worked the charcoal burner was horrified to see that she had the claws of a rat. He thereupon seized a meat-chopper and hacked off one of her hands. She ran away out of the hut, leaving a blood trail. Later the charcoal-burner and his companions followed this to the hollow in the rocks, obviously a rat's abode, but there was no sign of either woman or rat. The men concluded that the woman was an immortal. When they told their wives about it, the women, fearing revenge, laid food-offerings at the mouth of the rat's cave, and continued the practice every year on the same date. This was on the 19th Day of the First Moon, and even now this date is celebrated as the Rats' Wedding Day. On it the people retire early to bed so as not to disturb the rats at their nuptial ceremonies. The family cat is kept under lock and key. Sometimes food and even little lanterns are placed under the cupboards and other articles of furniture for the rats' celebrations.

There is a belief amongst the Chinese that rats turn into quails in the spring when they go into the country, changing back into rats again in the autumn when they return to the towns or villages.

There are many Chinese legends about the hare, most important of which is one concerning the flight to the Moon of Chang O (嫦娥), wife of Shên Yi (神羿), the Divine Archer, after she had swallowed a pill which he had and which enabled him to fly through space at will. She reached the Moon, where she found the hare pounding out the Elixir of Life in a mortar under a cassia tree. She spat out the pill, which immediately turned into a three-legged toad, and this is the picture that the Chinese see on the face of the Full Moon—

not the Man-in-the-Moon of Western sky-gazers, but Chang O and the hare standing under the cassia tree with the toad beneath the latter's roots. It is a favourite subject on the backs of T'ang period bronze mirrors. Indeed, the hare is definitely associated in Chinese mythology with the Moon, which is often referred to as the Jade Hare. The hare is also a symbol of longevity. Amongst country folk in China the hare is not greatly favoured, however, and to call a man a *t'u-tze*, the common name for this animal, is an insult. It is not polite even to use this word, and the hare is more often referred to as *yeh-mao*, meaning wild cat. Bredon and Mitrophanow say in their "Moon Year" that hare stew is recommended as a dish for the Tenth Moon, although it has been my experience that the hare in any form is not greatly esteemed by the Chinese as food. The hare is the fourth animal in the Twelve-year Cycle, and represents the Second Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. It, therefore, is the animal of the present year, 1939.

The deer, usually, the beautiful spotted deer or sika (*Sika mandarinus*, M.-Edw.), is a sacred animal with the Chinese, and is the symbol of good fortune and official advancement. It is often associated with the crane, always appearing on the flanking spirit walls outside the gates of official buildings, the main spirit wall being adorned with a painting of the *chi-lin* or unicorn. Shou Hsing (壽星), the God of Longevity, is often depicted riding on a deer or accompanied by one of these animals. The Hundred Deer, *Pai Lu* (百鹿), represent the Hundred Good Fortunes, also *Pai Lu* (百祿), the sounds of the characters being the same in each case, and this group of animals sometimes forms the subject of Chinese paintings. The horns of deer in the velvet stage are ground up for medicine and are believed to have aphrodisiacal properties. They command a high price in native drug stores.

The horse is an animal that is frequently mentioned in Chinese legends, usually as a creature of great prowess, capable of travelling enormous distances in a day. One such steed was Red Hare, the charger ridden by Kuan Ti (關帝), the God of War, who is usually shown in images in temples dedicated to him with his favourite mount beside him. Then there are the eight famous chariot horses of the Emperor Mu Wang (穆王) of the Chou Dynasty, and also the six chargers of T'ai Tsung of the T'ang Dynasty, sculptures of which have survived from that period, and which formed a favourite subject with Sung and other painters. Their exploits are told in legends. The Hundred Colts, *Pai Ma* (百馬), also form a favourite subject with Chinese artists and art craftsmen. The horse is the seventh animal of the Twelve-year Cycle, and represents the Fifth Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. Ma Wang (馬王), King of the Horses, is worshipped by grooms and carters, and his worship used to be part of the official ritual in China. *Pai Ma* (白馬), the White Horse, was given by the Emperor to Hsuan Tsang, the hero of the Hsi Yu Chi, to carry him on his journey to the Western Paradise.

The donkey occurs less frequently than the horse in Chinese legends. Chang Kuo Lao (張果老), one of the Eight Immortals, is described as possessing a white donkey, on which he could travel

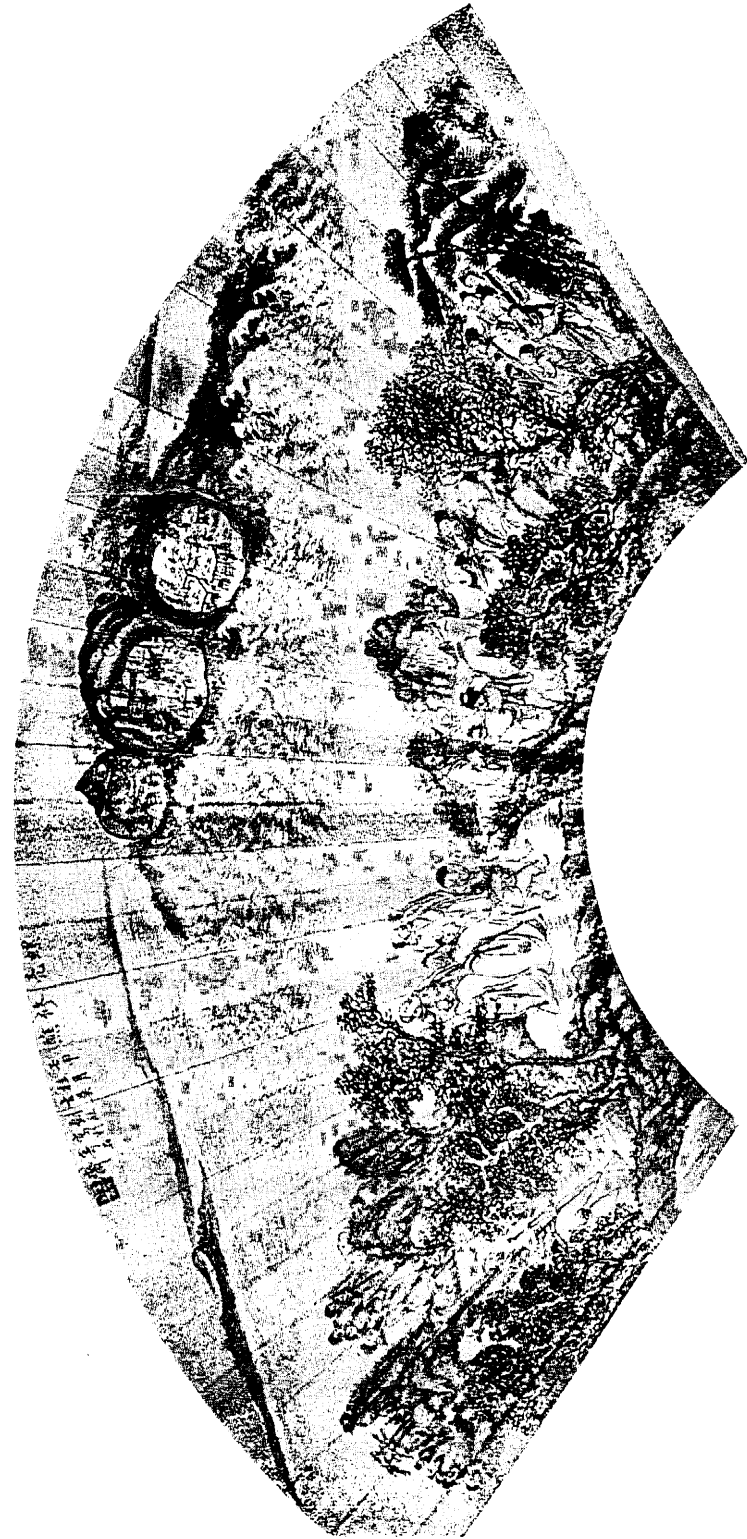


1000 *li* a day. When he did not need its services he could fold it up like a piece of paper and put it in his pocket.

The bat, *pien fu* (蝙蝠), is an emblem of felicity and good fortune and occurs everywhere in Chinese decorative art. The hedgehog is a spirit or *Shên*, and in some districts is worshipped, miniature shrines being erected in its honour in various places adjacent to the farmers' fields. Iron images of oxen are placed on river banks to avert floods, it being believed that they can swallow the angry waters as they rise and so keep down their levels. The ox and the water buffalo are often shown in paintings and sculptures as the mounts for various deities. Interchangeably, they symbolize spring and agriculture, and, as emblems of these, are depicted being led by a small boy, or carrying him on their backs. The ox is the second animal in the Twelve-year Cycle and represents the Twelfth Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. Many legends and stories are told about the dog. One of the most interesting of these involves the ancestry of the San Taks, or aborigines of Fukien in the mountainous areas of that province, who claim to be descended from a Princess who married a dog which had changed into a man, all but its head; hence they are known as the dog-headed people. As already stated, the Chinese poodle or pug has become mixed up with the fabulous Chinese lion. It is often called *shih-tze-kou* or lion dog. In the Twelve-year Cycle the dog takes the eleventh place, and represents the Ninth Moon in the Zodiac. It is an emblem of fidelity and a guardian of the home. One of the superstitions of the Chinese is that when an eclipse of the Moon takes place it is the Heavenly Dog trying to swallow it. Others maintain that it is the three-legged toad. Expectant mothers hang up on the walls of their homes the picture of an archer shooting at the Heavenly Dog with his cross-bow and pellets. This is to ensure that their children will live.

There are also many legends and folk tales about the sheep. Canton is known as the City of Rams because of a legend involving these animals and the city's prosperity. The story goes that five magicians, each riding a ram of different colour with a six-eared stalk of grain in its mouth, once visited the city, presenting the grain stalks to the people and pronouncing a blessing to the effect that never would the city's markets suffer scarcity. The sheep or goat, it may here be mentioned, is eighth in the Twelve-year Cycle and represents the Sixth Moon in the Chinese Zodiac. A child riding a goat or a ram is a favourite *motif* with Chinese artists and art craftsmen.

Although the wolf is common enough in most parts of China, it plays a very minor rôle in the folklore and legends of the country. This is the more remarkable since it figures so prominently in European legends and fairy tales, while amongst the Mongols it is a most important animal and was even more so to the ancient Huns. Indeed, in China the wolf enters into the superstitions of the country only in regard to the alleged medicinal properties of various parts of its body. The same applies to the leopard, except that this creature may sometimes be found depicted as a mount for some deity instead of the tiger. It also appeared in early hunting scenes



Old a Buddhist Festival in a Snail Shell" is a Chinese Proverb signifying Over-crowding. Here is shown a Painting on a Fan depicting River Snail Shells with Table and Chairs set inside their Mouths for a Feast, while the Guests stand outside because there is no Room for them within.

By Courtesy of *The China Journal*.

on clay tomb tiles and bronzes. It is an emblem of courage and the martial spirit. Many other animals are similarly only met with in the *Materia Medica*s of the Chinese, although common in the country. In these works a few animals from foreign countries also are mentioned.

The elephant is often shown in the art and handicrafts of China, but has only a small place in this country's mythology, and even so mainly in connection with the Buddhist religion. Known from Shang times, when, apparently it occurred in a wild state as far north as the middle reaches of the Yellow River in Honan, it has always been important to the Chinese because of the value they have set on ivory from the earliest times. It is a symbol of power and strength. At an early period the Chinese received mammoth ivory from Siberia, but they did not know that this valuable commodity came from an animal like an elephant. They believed it was derived from a monster rat-like animal that burrowed in the ground. Doubtless this belief was the result of the fact that mammoth ivory is usually found more or less buried in the edges of the tundras along the shores of Northern Siberia or the banks of the great Siberian rivers.

The tapir, which, as already indicated, represents the twenty-fourth of the Twenty-eight Constellations, also finds a place in the Chinese *Materia Medica*s, and is believed to possess many remarkable characteristics and medicinal properties.

The domestic cat is sometimes spoken of as the guardian of silkworms, because it keeps away the rats, which devour these insects; but the advent of a strange cat in a household is believed to be a portent of approaching poverty.

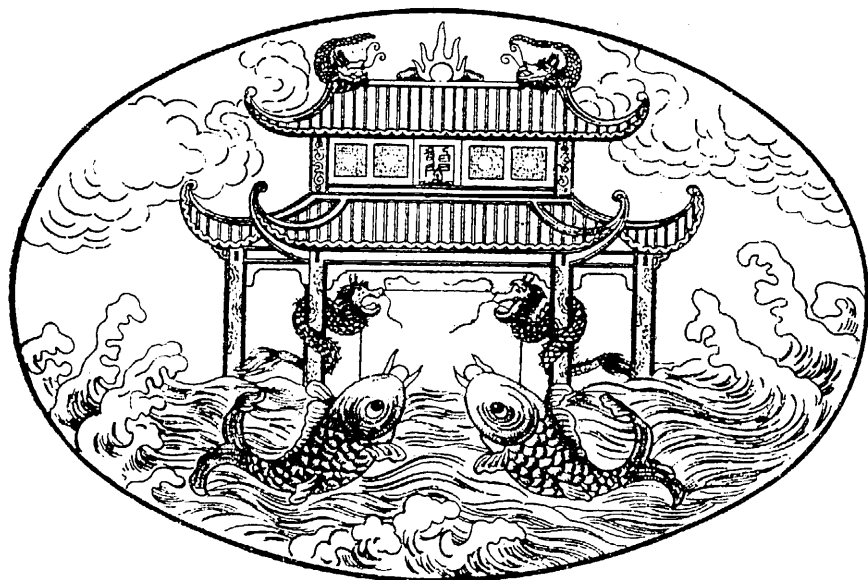
The alligator under the name of *t'o lung* (龍) is described as a kind of dragon in Chinese *Materia Medica*s, the *chiao lung* (蛟龍), which has been identified by Western sinologues as the crocodile, being another. It may be suggested, however, that descriptions of the latter better fit the monitor lizard (*Varanus salvator* Laurenti), which occurs in the extreme south-west. The alligator (*Alligator sinensis* Fauvel) is found to-day only in the lakes and marshes of the Lower Yangtze, but was probably more widely distributed in ancient times. The estuarine crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus* Schneider) occurs in the extreme south.

Birds, too, occur extensively in Chinese myths and folklore. Thus the white or Manchurian crane (*Megalornis japonensis*, Muller) is a sacred bird about which there are innumerable legends. The magpie is known as the bird of happiness, *hsi ch'iao*, and was the sacred bird of the Manchus because of its connection with the origin of the founders of their Imperial family. The legend is that a heavenly maiden conceived after eating a fruit placed on her clothes by a magpie while she was bathing in a pool in the Great White Mountain, the source of the Sungari River in South-eastern Manchuria, and subsequently gave birth to Aisin Gioro, from whom the Manchus are descended. Aisin Gioro was murdered by his own people, but his youngest son, Fancha, escaped. He was helped by a magpie, which perched on his head as he ran, thus making his pursuers think he was a tree. The owl is an evil bird, connected

with death, being anathema to the Chinese because it is believed to devour its own parents. The swallow and the Mandarin teal are emblems of conjugal felicity. The domestic cock, as already stated, is the chief emblem of *Yang*, the male principle, and a cock always accompanies the body of a dead man, when being transported to his ancestral home for burial, to harbour his soul on the journey and to frighten away evil spirits along the road. There are many legends involving the domestic goose, which is also an emblem of conjugal felicity, while the wild goose is the symbol for a messenger, hence its appearance on certain Chinese postage stamps.

The tortoise is one of the Four Sacred Animals, being almost as important in Chinese mythology as the dragon and the *feng-huang*, and is known as the Black Warrior and the Guardian of the Northern Quadrant. There is a curious association between the tortoise and the snake in Chinese folklore, based on the belief that the former only exists as a female, and, therefore, must seek the latter as a mate. The snake, although one of the Five Poisonous Creatures, is often worshipped by the Chinese. For this reason they will not willingly harm it. As already indicated, it is the symbol of sycophancy and cunning, is the sixth animal of the Twelve-year Cycle and represents the Fourth Moon in the Chinese Zodiac.

As previously stated, the fish occurring in Chinese mythology and folklore is almost invariably the common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*, L.). Two carps together form the Chinese equivalent to the cornu-copia of the West, being the emblem of abundance. In art the goldfish, usually the big-eyed butterfly-tailed grotesque cultivated form derived from the wild fish, *Carassius auratus*, L., a close relation of the



Carp trying to leap through the Dragon Gate and so become Dragons, symbolical of a Scholar taking his Han Lin Degree.

common carp, often takes the latter's place. There is a close association between the carp and the dragon in Chinese mythology, as it is believed that the former sometimes changes into the latter. This is said to take place when the carp successfully ascends the rapids in swift-flowing rivers. As these rapids usually occur in narrow defiles in hilly or mountainous regions such places are often called Lung Men (龍門), or Dragon's Gates. The carp trying to ascend the rapids symbolises the scholar attempting to pass his final examination for the *Han-lin* (翰林) degree. If he succeeds, he is said to have passed through the Dragon's Gate. Pictures of this are shown in paintings or as a decoration on porcelain plates, a carp being depicted leaping from the raging waters, and above it in a spiral cloud the form of a dragon floating off into space. Sometimes a gateway is shown with the carp actually leaping through it. In the *Hsi Yu Chi*, it is told how Ch'en Kuang-jui (陳光蕊), the father of the priest Hsuan Tsang (玄奘), the leading character in the epic, owed his life to having purchased from a fisherman a carp which he returned to the waters of the Yangtze River. This fish happened to be Lung Wang (龍王), the Dragon King, in disguise, and later, when Ch'en Kuang-jui was stabbed and thrown into the river by a usurper, it miraculously brought him back to life, causing his body to rise to the surface of the water, float to the river's bank and there revive. This episode is often depicted in Chinese art, when an old man, the fisherman, sometimes accompanied by a child, is shown struggling with a large carp.

Amongst insects and other lower forms of animal life there are many which take their place in Chinese legends and folklore. For instance, there is the story of a famous general, who, while in command of a besieged city, was so occupied that he had no time to change his clothes, thus becoming infested with lice, which drank his blood like the swords of the enemy. He was afterwards worshipped as the God of the Lice. The cicada since Shang times has been an emblem of immortality or resurrection from the dead. A jade carving of this insect was in Han times placed in the mouth of the deceased at burial. Butterflies and moths are emblems of joy, as well as of conjugal happiness, and appear everywhere in paintings, carvings, ceramic decorations and embroidery. The cricket is the emblem of courage, based upon its well-known pugnacity, of which the Chinese take advantage in the use of this little insect in their famous cricket fights. Together with the butterfly the cricket is a symbol of summer. There are legends involving silkworms, notably that of Lei Tsu (嫫祖), wife of Huang Ti, who is credited with having discovered the use of silk spun by these little creatures. The centipede, the scorpion and sometimes the spider, as already stated, are amongst the Five Poisonous Creatures. Along with the *Yang-Yin* symbol and the Eight Trigrams, pictures of these five creatures are stuck on the cross-beams of houses on the Fifth Day of the Fifth Moon to protect the inmates against such pests. The mosquito is considered symbolical of evil. Small Chinese newspapers of the yellow press variety are known as "Mosquito" newspapers. A Buddhist legend, derived from India, tells of snails which crawled

on to the head of Buddha, forming a cap to protect him from the sun. These are the little round objects on the crown of many images of Buddha, thought by some to represent curls. The conch-shell is a sacred emblem of the Buddhists. A certain female figure in Chinese mythology is always shown within the two valves of a gigantic fresh-water mussel. The Chinese have a saying, "To hold a Buddhist festival in a snail shell," which signifies over-crowding. This is illustrated in paintings showing tables and chairs arranged for a feast inside the mouth of a snail's shell, while the guests wait outside because there is no room for them inside. The shells thus shown are usually those of the large river-snail (*Vivipara*).

Chinese folklore includes many little rhymes about animals, the children capturing various insects and the like and repeating these rhymes as they play with them. One such may be given here in conclusion. It is from Shansi Province, where the writer spent his childhood, and it has to do with the peculiar long-headed grasshopper known to science as *Truxalis chinensis*. The children used to catch these grasshoppers and hold them by their long hind legs, when they would swing backwards and forwards. This motion on the part of the grasshoppers would be accompanied by the children with the rhyme:

*Ku-ku nien-er,*  
*Po-po ch'i,*  
*Kuo-la san nien*  
*Tsai fang ni!*

which may be rendered freely:

Silly old grasshopper,  
Bob up and down;  
In three years I'll free you,  
You funny old clown!

## THE DRAGON IN CHINESE MEDICINE\*

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### INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the place of the dragon in Chinese medicine some consideration must be given to its place in old folklore, what it stands for as a symbol, and its relationship to ideas which prevailed in other parts of the world.

What is a dragon? It is defined as a fabulous monster usually conceived as a huge winged fire-breathing lizard or snake. In the Near East where snakes are large and deadly (Chaldæa, Assyria, Phœnicia and to a less degree in Egypt) the serpent or dragon was symbolic of the principle of evil. Thus Apophis, in the Egyptian religion, was the great serpent of the world of darkness vanquished by Ra, while in Chaldæa the goddess Tiamat, the female principal of primeval chaos, took the form of a dragon. In the Hebrew sacred books also the serpent or dragon is the source of death and sin, and as such passed on into Christian symbolism.<sup>1</sup> In the Garden of Eden the tempter was a serpent, and the term dragon or serpent was used metaphorically for Satan in the book of Revelations. Jewish mythology repeatedly uses the serpent or a dragon as symbolic of a deadly subtle malicious enemy. Dragon myths of the old world took new shapes in later legends of the victories of St. Michael and St. George, and the slaying of dragons as the crowning achievement of the old heroes, Siegmund, Beowulf, Sigurd, Arthur, Tristram and Lancelot. In medieval Europe Satan was depicted as a figure with clawed hands and feet, winged, horned, aggressive, and with the general attributes of a bad dragon. Dante's *Inferno* describes the same sort of thing and the various editions of that classic are often illustrated with dragons, embodying the spirit of evil. They were considered a reality, for in the works of the older naturalists such as the *Historia Anima* of Conrad Gesner (d. 1564) they figure as part of the fauna known to science, and in the Far East in the same

\* Lecture given before the Royal Asiatic Society (N.C.B.), May 18, 1939.

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, 14th Edition, "Dragon."