

CHAO SHU-LI

The Tale of Li Youcai's Rhymes

Chinese Text with Introduction and Notes by

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An advanced reader in modern Chinese, giving a text in modern written Chinese, reproduced photographically from an original Chinese edition, together with an introduction, a bibliography and notes on difficult points of language and on allusions to the cultural and historical context.

Chao Shu-li, born in 1907 in Shansi province of poor parents, became first a village teacher and journalist and then a popular author. In the 1940s 'Study and learn from Chao Shu-li' became a slogan among activist literary people, and he became a model writer of the cultural front formed in response to a call by Mao Tse-tung. In the Cultural Revolution, however, Chao was severely criticized.

Chao's writing is simple, popular and un-literary, deliberately aimed at a mass readership. The central theme of this tale is the contrast between the approach of two political workers. 'Some enthusiastic young colleagues who did not understand the real situation in the rural villages were misled by some superficial achievements: so I wrote the Tale ...'

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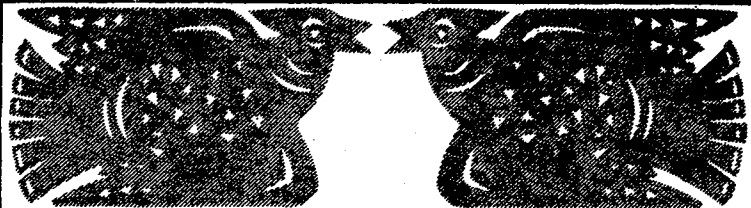


趙樹理

THE TALE OF
LI YOUCAI'S RHYMES
BY CHAO SHU-LI

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
SUSAN S. H. MACDONALD

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李有才板話

趙樹理 著



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一 書名的來歷

閻家山有個李有才，外號叫『氣不死』。

這人現在有五十多歲，沒有地，給村裏人放牛，夏秋兩季捎帶看守村裏的莊稼。他只是一身一口，沒有家眷。他常好說兩句開心話，說是『吃飽了一家不飢，鎖住門也不怕餓死小板櫂』。村東頭的老槐樹底有一孔土窯還有三畝地，是他爹給留下的，後來把地押給閻恒元，土窯就成了他的全部產業。

閻家山這地方有點古怪：村西頭是磚樓房，中間是平房，東頭的老槐樹下是一排

二三十孔土窰。地勢看來也還平，可是從房頂上看起來，從西到東却是一道斜坡。西頭住的都是姓閻的；中間也有姓閻的也有雜姓，不過都是些在地戶；只有東頭特別，外來的開荒的佔一半，日子過倒霉了的雜姓，也差不多佔一半，姓閻的只有三家，也是破了產賣了房子才搬來的。

5 李有才常說：『老槐樹底的人只有兩輩——一個「老」字輩，一個「小」字輩。』這話也只是取笑：他說的『老』字輩，就是說外來的開荒的，因為這些人的名字除了閻長派差派款在條子上開一下以外，別的人很少留意，人叫起來只是把他們的姓上邊加個『老』字，像老陳、老秦、老常……等。他說的『小』字輩，就是其餘的本地人，因為這地方人起乳名，常把前邊加個『小』字，像小順、小保……等。可是西頭那些大戶人家，都用的是官名，有乳名別人也不敢叫——比方老村長閻恒元乳名叫『小園』，別人對上人家不只不敢叫『小園』，就是該說『穀園』也只得說成『穀倉』，誰還好意思說出『園』字來？一到了老槐樹底，風俗大變，活八十歲也只能叫小什麼，小什麼，你就起上個官名也使不出去——比方陳小元前幾年請柿子窪老

先生給起了個官名叫『陳萬昌』，回來雖然請閻長在閻賬上改過了，可是老村長看賬時候想不起這『陳萬昌』是誰，問了一下閻長，仍然提起筆來給他改成陳小元。因為有這種關係，老槐樹底的本地人，終於還都是『小』字輩。李有才自己，也只能算『小』字輩人，不過他父母是大名府人，起乳名不用『小』字，所以從小就把他叫成『有才』。5 在老槐樹底，李有才才是大家歡迎的人物，每天晚上吃飯時候，沒有他就不熱鬧。他會說開心話，雖是幾句平常話，從他口裏說出來就能引得大家笑個不休。他還有個特別本領是編歌子，不論村裏發生件什麼事，有個什麼特別人，他都能編一大套，唸起來特別順口。這種歌，在閻家山一帶叫『圪溜嘴』，官話叫『快板』。

10 比方說：西頭老戶主閻恒元，在抗戰以前年年連任村長，有一年改選時候，李有才給他編了一段快板道：

村長閻恒元，一手遮住天，

自從有村長，一當十幾年。

年年要投票，嘴說是改選，

選來又選去，還是閻恒元。

不如弄塊板，刻個大名片，

每逢該投票，大家按一按，

人人省得寫，年年不用換，

用他百把年，管保用不爛。

5

恒元的孩子是本村的小學教員，名叫家祥，民國十九年在縣裏的簡易師範畢業。這人的像貌不大好看，臉像個葫蘆瓢子，說一句話睜十來次眼皮。不過人不可以貌取，你不要以為他沒出息，其實一肚骯髒計，誰跟他共事也得吃他的虧。李有才也給他編過一段快板道：

10

鬼睜眼，閻家祥，

眼睫毛，二寸長，

大腮蛋，塌鼻梁，

說句話兒眼皮忙。

兩眼一忽閃，

肚裏有主張，

強佔三分理，

總要沾些光。

便宜佔不足，

氣得臉皮黃，

眼一擠，嘴一張，

好像母猪打哼哼！

5

像這些快板，李有才差不多每天要編，一方面是他編慣了覺着口順，另一方面是老槐樹底的年輕人吃飯時候常要他唸些新的，因此他就越編越多。他的新快板一唸出來，東頭的年輕人不用一天就都傳遍了，可是想傳到西頭就不十分容易。西頭的人不論老少，沒事總不到老槐樹底來閑坐，小孩們偶而去老槐樹底玩一玩，大人知道了往往罵道：『下流東西！明天就要叫你到老槐樹底去住啦！』有這層隔閡，有才的快板就很不容易傳到西頭。

抗戰以來，閻家山有許多變化，李有才也就跟着這些變化作了些新快板，又因為

作快板遭遇過難。我想把這些變化談一談，把他在這些變化中作的快板也抄他幾段，給大家看看解個悶，結果就寫成這本小書。

作詩的人，叫『詩人』；說作詩的話，叫『詩話』。李有才作出來的歌，不是『詩』，明明叫做『快板』，因此不能算『詩人』，只能算『板人』。這本小書既然是說他作快板的話，所以叫做『李有才板話』。

二 有才窩裏的晚會

李有才住的一孔土窩，說也好笑，三面看來有三變：門朝南開，靠西牆正中有個炕，炕的兩頭還都留着五尺長短的地面。前邊靠門這一頭，盤了個小灶，還擺着些水缸、菜甕、鍋、匙、碗、碟；靠後牆擺着些筐子、籬頭，裏面裝的是村裏人送給他的核桃、柿子（因為他是看莊稼的，大家才給他送這些）；正炕後牆上，就炕那麼高，打了個半截套窩，可以鋪半條蓆子；因此你要一進門看正面，好像個小山菓店；扭轉

頭看西邊，好像石菩薩的神龕；回頭來看窗下，又好像小村子裏的小飯館。

到了冷凍天氣，有才好像一爐火——只要他一回來，愛取笑的人們就圍到他這土窩裏來閑談，談起話來也沒有什麼題目，扯到那裏算那裏。這年正月二十五日，有才吃罷晚飯，鄰家的青年後生小福，領着他的表兄就開開門走進來。有才見有人來了，就點起牆上掛的麻油燈。小福先向他表兄介紹道：『這就是我們這裏的有才叔！』有才在套窩裏坐着，先讓他們坐到炕上，就向小福道：『這是那裏的客？』小福道：『是我表兄！柿子窪的！』他表兄雖然年輕，却很精幹，就謙虛道：『不算客，不算客！我是十六晚上在這裏看戲，見你老叔唱焦光普唱的那樣好，想來領領教！』有才笑了一笑又問道：『你村的戲今年怎麼不唱了？』小福的表兄道：『早了貨不下箱，明天才能唱！』有才見他說起唱戲，勁上來了，就不客氣的講起來。他講：『這焦光普，雖說是個丑，可是個大脚色，唱就得唱出勁來！』說着就舉起他的旱煙袋算馬鞭子，下邊雖然坐着，上邊就掄打起來，一邊掄着一邊道：『一出場：噹噹噹噹噹令×令噹令×令……噹令×各拉打打噹！』他煞住第一段傢伙，正預備接着打，門『拍』一

聲開了，走進來個小順，拿着兩個軟米糕道：『慢着老叔！防備着把鑼打破了！』說着走到炕邊把胳膊往套窩裏一展道：『老叔！我爹請你嚐嚐我們的糕！』（陰曆正月二十五，此地有個節叫『添倉』，吃黍米糕）有才一邊接着一邊謙讓道：『你們自己吃吧！今天煮的都不多！』說着接過去，隨便讓了讓大家，就吃起來。小順坐到炕上

5 道：『不多吧總不能像啓昌老婆，過個添倉，派給人家小旦兩個糕！』小福道：『僱不起長工不僱吧，僱得起管不吃？』有才道：『啓昌也還罷了，老婆不是東西！』小福的表兄問道：『那個小旦？就是唱國舅爺那個？』小福道：『對！老得貴的孩子給啓昌住長工。』小順道：『那麼可他爹那人強一百二十分！』有才道：『那還用說？』小福的表兄悄悄問小福道：『老得貴怎麼？』他雖說得很低，却被小順聽見了，小順道：『那是有歌的！』接着就唸道：

張得貴，真好漢，

跟着恒元舌頭轉：

恒元說個「長」，

得貴說「不短」；

恒元說個「方」，

得貴說「不圓」；

恒元說「砂鍋能搗蒜」，

得貴就說「打不爛」；

恒元說「公雞能下蛋」，

得貴就說「親眼見」。

要幹啥，就能幹，

只要恒元嘴動彈！

10 他把這段快板唸完，小福聽慣了，不很笑。他表兄却嘻嘻哈哈笑個不了。

小順道：『你笑什麼？得貴的好事多着哩！那是我們村裏有名的吃烙餅幹部。』

小福的表兄道：『還是幹部啦？』小順道：『農會主席！官也不小。』小福的表兄道：『怎麼說是吃烙餅幹部？』小順說：『這村跟別處不同：誰有個事到公所說說，先得十幾斤麵五斤豬肉，在場的每人一斤麵烙餅，一大碗菜，吃了才說理。得貴領一

份烙餅，總得把每一張烙餅都挑過。」小福的表兄道：「我們村裏早二三年前說事就不興吃喝了。」小順道：「人家那一村也不行了，就這村怪！這都是老恒元的古規，老恒元今天得個病死了，明天管保就吃不成了。」

5 正說着，又來了幾個人：老秦（小福的爹）、小元、小明、小保。一進門，小元喊道：「大事情！大事情！」有才忙道：「什麼？什麼？」小明答道：「老哥！喜富的村長撤差了！」小順從炕上往地下一跳道：「真的？再唱三天戲！」小福道：「我也算數！」有才道：「還有今天？我當他這飯碗是鐵箍箍住了！誰說的？」小元道：「真的！章工作人員來了，帶着公事！」小福的表兄問小福道：「你村人跟喜富的仇氣就這麼大？」小順道：「那也是唱歌的：

10

一隻虎，鬪喜富，
吃吃喝喝有來路；
嘗過兵，賣過土，
又偷牲口又放賭，

魯牙行，賣寡婦……
什麼事情都敢做。
惹下他，防不住，
人人見了滿招呼！

5 你看仇恨大不大？」小福的表兄聽罷才笑了一聲，小明又攔住告訴他道：「柿子窪客你是不知道！他唸的那還是說從前，抗戰以後這東西趁着兵荒馬亂搶了個村長，就更了不得了，有恒元那老不死給他撐腰，就沒有他幹不出來的事，屁大點事弄到公所，也是桌面上吃飯，袖筒裏過錢，錢淹不住心，說捆就捆，說打就打，說教誰傾家敗產誰就沒法治。逼得人家破了產，老恒元管「賤錢二百」買房買地。老槐樹底這些人，10 進了村公所，誰也不敢走到桌邊。三天兩頭出款，誰敢問問人家派的是什麼錢；人家姓閻的一年四季也不見走一回差，有差事都派到老槐樹底，誰不是荒着地給人家支？……你是不知道，壞透了壞透了！」有才低聲問道：「爲什麼事撤了的？」小保道：「這可還不知道，大概是縣裏調查出來的吧？」有才道：「光撤了差放在村裏還

是大害，什麼時候毀了他才能算乾淨，可不知道縣裏還辦他不辦？」小保道：「只要把他弄下台，攻他的人可多啦！」

遠遠有人喊道：「明天到廟裏選村長啦，十八歲以上的人都得去……」一連聲叫喊，聲音越來越近，小福聽出來了，便向大家道：「是得貴！還聽不懂他那賤噪？」

5 進來了，就是得貴。他一進來，除了有才是主人，隨便打了個招呼，其餘的人都沒有說話，小福小順彼此擠了擠眼。得貴道：「這裏倒熱鬧！省得我跑！明天選村長啦，凡年滿十八歲者都去！」又把嗓子放得低低的：「老村長的意思叫選廣聚！誰不在這裏，你們碰上告訴給他們一聲！」說着抽身就走了，他才一出門，小順搶着道：「吃烙餅去吧！」小元道：「吃屁吧！章工作員還在這裏住着啦，餅恐怕烙不成！」老秦埋怨道：「人家聽見了！」小元道：「怕什麼？就是故意叫他聽啦。」小保道：「他也學會打官腔了：「凡年滿十八歲者」……」小順道：「還有「老村長的意思」。」

小福道：「假大頭這回要變真大頭啦呀！」小福的表兄問小福道：「誰是假大頭？」小順搶着道：「這也有歌：

劉廣聚，假大頭：

一心要當人物頭，

抱粗腿，借勢頭，

拜認恒元乾老頭。

大小事，強出頭，

說起話來歪着頭。

從西頭，到東頭，

放不下廣聚這顆頭。

5

一唸歌你就清楚了。」小福的表兄覺着很奇怪，也沒有顧上笑，又問道：「怎麼你村有這麼多的歌？」小順道：「提起西頭的人來，沒有一個沒歌的，連那一個女人臉上有麻子都有歌。不只是人，每出一件新事，隔不了一天就有歌出來了。」又指着有才道：「有我們這位老叔，你想聽歌很容易！要多少有多少！」

小元道：「我看咱們也不用管他「老村長的意思」不意思，明天偏給他放個冷砲，攬上一夥人選別人，偏不選廣聚！」老秦道：「不妥不妥，指望咱老槐樹底人誰

得罪起老恒元？他說選廣聚就選廣聚，瞎惹那些氣有什麼好處？」小元道：「你這老漢真見不得事！只怕柿葉掉下來碰破你的頭，你不敢得罪人家，也還不是照樣替人家支差出款？」老秦這人有點古怪，只要年輕人一發脾氣，他就不說話了。小保向小元道：「你說得對，這一回真是該扭扭勁！要是再選上個廣聚還不是仍出不了恒元老傢伙的手嗎？依我說咱們老槐樹底的人這回就出頭，就是辦不好也比搓在他們腳板底強得多！」小保這麼一說，大家都同意，只是決定不了該選誰好。依小元說，小保就可以辦；老陳覺得要是選小明，票數會更多一些；小明却說在大場面上說個話還是小元有兩下子。李有才道：「我說個公道話吧：要是選小明老弟，管保票數最多，可是他老弟恐怕不能辦；他這人太好，太直，跟人家老恒元那夥人鬥個什麼事恐怕沒有人家的心眼多。小保領過幾年羊（就是當羊經理），在外邊走的地方也不少，又能寫能算，辦倒沒有什麼辦不了，只是他一家五六口子全靠他一個人吃飯，真也有點顧不上。依我說，小元可以辦，小保可以幫他記一記賬，寫個什麼公事……」這個意見大家贊成了。小保向大家道：「要那樣咱們出去給他活動活動！」小元道：「對！宣傳

宣傳！」說着就都往外走。老秦着了急，叫住小福道：「小福！你跟人家還什麼能？給我回去！」小順拉着小福道：「走吧走吧！」又回頭向老秦道：「不怕！丟了你小福我包賠！」說了就把手福拉上走了。老秦趕緊追出來連聲喊叫，也沒有叫住，只好領上外甥（小福的表兄）回去睡覺。

5 窩裏丟下有才一個人，也就睡了。

三打虎

第二天吃過早飯，李有才放出牛來預備往山坡上送，小順攔住他道：「老叔你不要走了！多一票算一票！今天還許弄成，已經給小元弄到四十多票了。」有才道：「誤不了！我把牛送到椒窪就回來。這時候又不怕吃了誰的莊稼！章工作員開會，一講話還不是一大晌？誤不了！」小順道：「這一回是選舉會，又不是講話會。」有才道：「知道！不論什麼會，他在開頭總要講幾句「重要性」啦，「什麼的意義及其價

prising items characterised by a distinct pattern of structure. The four morpheme parallel type of the so-called *chēngyǔ* are a typical example.

vii *PN* (Proper Names). The names of specific persons or places, actual or fictitious.

* An asterisk is affixed to the label of given expressions which exemplify the peculiarities of Chao Shu-li's literary style discussed in the introduction.

4. *Explanation*. A brief statement presented either when a translation and label of stylistic level cannot be given or when they do not provide sufficient information on the given item.

1.1 *Lǐ Yǒucái PN*.

bǎnhuà '[a book] On *kuàibǎn*', author's innovation which, as is explained later, is structurally based on *shǐhuà* '[a book] On poetry' (see 6.2 and 6.4). (For *kuàibǎn* see 3.8.)

1.3 *Yánjiashān, PN*. Names of villages commonly consist of two components, the latter denoting a broad characteristic of the locality (here *shān* 'hills, 'hilly region'), and the former giving a specific feature (here, *Yánjia* 'Yán family', indicating that locally the surname of the largest number of families is *Yán*).

qǐbusǐ 'Unflappable', *M*. Derived from resultative verb *qǐsǐ* 'to be extremely angered, to make [someone] extremely angry' (see introduction).

1.4 *shāodài kānshǒu zhuāngjiā* 'to use the opportunity to keep an eye on crops', *M**. *Shāodài* 'to use the opportunity' belongs to the colloquial level of *báihuà* (see introduction).

1.5 *kāixīnhuà* 'joke', *M*. Words used with the intention of cheering up, comforting, or soothing both speaker and listener.

1.6 *èsǐ xiǎobǎndèng* 'to starve the wooden stool to death', *M**. The whole direct speech passage is a typical example of a style of folksy peasant humour (see introduction).

lǎo huáishùdī 'under the old locust tree', *M*.

yì kǒng tǔyáo 'a cave-house', *D*. *Kǒng* is a rare Measure.

Tǔyáo 'cave-house' refers to the cave dwellings typical of the loess area in the Yellow River basin.

1.7 *bǎ dì yāèi . . . A . . .* 'to mortgage land to . . . A . . .', *M*.

Borrow money from . . . A . . . and use land as guarantee.

Yán Héngyuán, PN.

1.8 *gǔguài* 'to be strange', *M**.

zhuān lóufáng 'brick-built, two [or more] storied houses', *M*.

Houses with more than two stories are very rare in northern Chinese villages.

píngfáng 'one-storied houses', *M*.

2.2 *zaidìhù* 'local families', *D*.

2.3 *wàiláid kāihuāngd* 'tillers of [originally] virgin land from outside [the village]', *M*. People who came to settle in the village within memory of the local inhabitants.

rìz guò dǎoméi le 'to fall on bad days', *M*.

2.5 *lǎo zì bèi* 'the "old" generation', *M*. On the one hand, this refers to the custom of giving to the members of each generation in each family personal names which have something in common; where the names comprise two morphemes, one morpheme is common to all the names in that generation, so that that morpheme (and the character which represents it) identifies that generation, e.g. *Zhōu Shùrén* (Lu Hsün) *Zhōu Zuòrén*. *Zhōu Jiànrén*, are members of the '*rén*' *zì bèi* 'the "rén" generation' in the *Zhōu* family. On the other hand, the given expression *lǎo zì bèi* can also be translated as 'the "old" lot'—an innovation of the author based on the commonly used phrases *wú néng zhī bèi* 'the useless lot' or *yīngxióng zhī bèi* 'the heroic sort' in nineteenth century popular novels. Intentional ambiguity is a common word-play device in both written style and speech.

2.6 *qūxiào* 'to make a joke', *M*.

2.7 *lǔzhǎng* 'the *lǔ* head', *M*. A *lǔ* could be a street, an alley, or a cluster of houses depending on the size and the topography of the village.

Lǔ was one of the terms used for the smallest administrative unit in a village before 1949.

pàichāi 'to send runners', *M*. Refers to doing public services such as delivering documents or tax-grain to the county town. The *lǔ* head had the power to pick from his *lǔ* the person or persons for this kind of job.

pàikuǎn 'to levy cash', *M*. Public expenditure, e.g. on local celebrations and entertaining country officials, was levied from the villagers.

zài tiáozishàng kāi yìxià 'to write [them] out occasionally on a chit', *M*. (The chit would state who was being ordered to do what.)

2.9 *qǐrǔmíng* 'to give a milkname', *M*. Refers to the name which is given to a baby at birth by its parents. In rich families this first name of the baby was intended only for the child's

infancy and at schooling age the child would be given its formal name (see 2.10). In poor families this name was usually the only name of the child for life.

2.10 *dàhù rénjiā* 'well-to-do families', *M*.

guānmíng 'a formal name', *O*. Refers to the name which was given to a child when it was no longer to be considered as an infant, usually when it learnt to write.

cūnzhǎng 'the village head', *M*.

2.11 *Xiǎodùn* 'Little Bin', *PN*. Refers to the milkname of *Yán Héngyuán* (see 1.7).

Dùn 'a grain bin', is a gigantic wicker basket measuring up to eight feet in diameter, used for storing grain. The use of this expression in the milkname is meant to indicate the derived meaning of 'wealth'.

rénjia 'him', *M**. *Rénjia* is one of the common colloquial expressions which have different meanings in different contexts. It occurs 20 times in the story. When it is to be understood in one of its common meanings the context usually helps the reader to choose the appropriate one, e.g. whether *rénjia* is to be understood by: he, him, they, them, others, people, us. Notes are given only for uncommon usages.

jiùshì gāishuō ... A ... *yě zhǐdé shuōchéng* ... B ... 'even if one needed to say ... A ... one could only say ... B ... instead', *M*.

gǔ dùn 'a millet bin', *M*.

gǔ cāng 'a granary', *M*.

2.12 *shéi hái hǎoyìsi shuōchū* ... A ... *zì láii* 'who would be so impertinent as to use the word ... A ...', *M*.

According to the traditional moral code, it was considered offensive to use in conversation the words used in an older or prominent person's name, especially when doing so in their presence.

Hái is an integral part of this highly colloquial expression.

Hái occurs one hundred times in this story. When it stands as a part of an expression like this item a note is given; when it is

to be understood in one of its common meanings e.g. among others 'still, again, also, yet, shall, will, should, would'; the context usually helps the reader to choose the appropriate one.

fēngsú dà biàn '[this] custom is changed a great deal', *M*.

2.13 *shībuchūqù* 'cannot make use of', *M**.

qǐng ... A ... *gěi qǐle ge guānmíng* 'to ask ... A ... to make up a formal name for [him]', *M*.

A formal name is best composed by a literate person since various characteristics (e.g. euphony, meaning, written appearance) have to be taken into account. A village teacher would usually be consulted.

Shiziwā, *PN*.

3.1 *lǚzhàng* 'the *lǚ* account book', *M*, (cf.2.7).

3.4 *Dà míng fǔ*, *PN*. The former name of *Dà míng* city—a county town in Hopei province. A *fǔ* 'a prefectural city' controlled ten counties (*xiàn*) under the administrative system of the Ch'ing Dynasty. People kept this old name of the place alive partly from habit, partly because it was rather complimentary.

3.5 *Chīfān shíhou*, *méiyǒu tā jiù búrènao* 'at mealtimes there was no fun when he was not there', *M*. The evening mealtime was a leisurely social occasion in Chinese villages. People would take their bowl of food (i.e. the whole simple meal) out and gather together, under a tree in the summer, or under some friendly neighbour's roof in the winter, to enjoy a bit of social life.

3.6 *xiào ge bùxiū* 'to keep on laughing', *M*.

3.7 *biān gēz* 'to compose rhymes', *M*.

yí dàtào 'a whole series [of]', *M*.

niànqilai shùnkǒu 'to be easy to recite', *M*. Pattern: *X*

qilai shùn Y, e.g. *kànqilai shùnyǎn* 'to be pleasant to look at';

yòngqilai shùnshǒu 'to be easy to use'.

3.8 *gēliuzǒu* 'patter-song', *D*.

kuàibǎn 'rhymes', *M*, (see introduction).

3.9 *hùzhǔ* 'the head of a family', *M*.

liánrèn 'to be in office continually', *M*.

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3.11 *yìshǒu zhēzhù tiān* 'to cover the sky with one hand', *Id**. The *tiān* here refers to justice and law.

3.12 *yì dāng shǐjiǎ nián* 'once in office [hold on] for over ten years', *M*.

4.1 *Xuǎnlái yòu xuǎnqù* 'election after election', *M*. *Yòu* is inserted in the pattern 'x lái x qù' (the action x is repeated over and over again) so as to maintain the rhythm.

4.5 *bǎibanián* 'a hundred years or so', *M*.

yòngbulàn 'will not wear out', *M**.

4.6 *Jiāxiáng*, *PN*.

xiànli 'in the county town', *M*.

jiǎnyì shīfān 'a junior teachers' training college', *M*. Before 1949 this kind of college provided two years training to turn out junior school teachers. *Jiǎnyì* indicates the shorter and simpler course of that kind of college.

4.7 *liǎn xiàng ge húlu piáoz* 'a face like a gourd cut in half', *M**. Refers to a face with a narrow forehead and fat round cheeks. *Húlu piáoz* 'a ladle' is made by cutting a dried gourd vertically into two halves.

jiǎ yǎnpí 'to blink the eyelids', *M*.

rén bùkě yǐ mào qǔ 'don't judge people by [their] appearance', *Id*. This *Id* also occurs in the following variants: *bùkě yǐ mào qǔ rén*, *bùkě qǔ rén yǐ mào*, *qǔ rén bùkě yǐ mào*.

4.8 *méi chūxi* 'to be good for nothing', *M*.

yìdù āngzāng jì 'a bellyful of dirty tricks', *M**.

gēn ... A ... *gòngshì* 'to have anything to do with ... A ...', *M*.

chū ... A ... *de kuī* 'to be done down by ... A ...', *M*.

4.10 *guǐ jiǎ yǎn* 'the blink-eyed devil', *M*. A very rare expression; the author probably borrowed it from Lu Hsün's essay *Autumn Night*.

4.11 *yǎnjiémáo* 'eyelashes', *M*.

4.12 *sāidàn* 'cheeks', *D*.

tā bǐliáng 'sunken bridge of the nose', *M*.

4.13 *yǎnpí máng* 'the eyelids get flustered', *M*.

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- 4.14 *hūshan* 'to flutter; to flop', *M**.
- 5.1 *dùli yǒu zhǔzhāng* 'to have a plot in [his] mind', *M**.
Unlike in *M* where *zhǔzhāng* 'to advocate' is normally used as a verb, e.g. *tā zhǔzhāng píngděng* 'he advocates equality'; in *M** it is used as a noun meaning 'an idea' or 'a plan'. The context of *dùli yǒu zhǔzhāng* here suggests that the 'idea' is of a suspicious nature.
- 5.2 *qiǎngzhàn sānfēnlǐ* 'to get the upper hand regardless', *M*.
- 5.3 *zhān xié guāng* 'to gain something', *M*.
- 5.4 *piányì zhānbùzú* 'unable to get the best of the bargain', *M*.
- 5.8 *biānguānlè* 'to be used to composing', *M*.
juézhe kǒushùn 'to feel [that the] words come easily', *M*,
(see 3.7).
- 5.10 *chuánbiàn* 'to spread all over the place', *M*.
- 5.12 *xiàliú dòngxi* 'scum', *MN*.
- 6.2 *gěi ... A ... jiě ge mèn* 'to relieve some boredom for ... A ...', *M*.
- 6.3 *shīhuà* '[a book] on poetry' *C*. A book comprising critical reviews of poems, or discussions of poets and their work, or stories about poets, was usually entitled 'so and so's *shīhuà*' (i.e. the author's name plus *shīhuà*) in classical Chinese literature: e.g. *Sufuán Shīhuà* 'Súiyuán on Poetry'.
- 6.4 *bǎnrén* 'a rhymester'. Author's innovation which, as is explained here, is structurally based on *shīrén* 'poet'.

II

- 6.7 *Lǐ Yǒucái zhù de yìkǒng túyáo, shuō yě hǎoxiào* 'it makes you laugh to talk about the cave-house that *Li Youcai* was living in', *M*.
sānniàn kànlai yǒu sānbìan 'to have three different views when looking from three different directions', *M*.
- 6.8 *pánle ge xiǎozào* 'a small stove was built', *M*. *Pán* 'to build' is a rare verb. *Zào* 'cooking-stove' refers to the low, brick or mud-brick, stove used in the country in China.

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- 6.8 *shuǐgāng* 'a water jar', *M*. A *gāng* is a barrel-shaped earthenware jar, glazed inside, on average two to three feet in diameter and three to four feet in height. When used for storing water it is called *shuǐgāng*; it is also used for storing pickles, salted fish and other food.
- 6.9 *càiwèng* 'a pickle jar', *M*. *Wèng* is interchangeable with 'gāng' (see 6.8)
kuāngz 'a wicker crate', *M*. A *kuāngz*, which is shaped like a pail, varies in size; the largest holds about thirty pounds of fruit.
luótou 'a shallow basket'. *M*. A *luótou* is commonly used for drying out foodstuffs such as fruit, fish, vegetables. It is shaped like a gigantic saucer of two to three feet in diameter.
- 6.11 *dǎle ge bànjié tàoyáo* 'a half-sized inner cave had been dug out', *D*. The word *dǎ*, 'to dig', is a rare verb used of a cave-house as the word 'to build' is used of a house. *Tàoyáo* 'an inner cave' is structurally based on *tàojiān* 'a dressing-room'—a small room opening off a larger one.
shānguǒdiàn 'a fruit and nut shop', *M**.
- 7.1 *shéncān* 'a niche for a religious effigy', *M*.
fānpù 'an eating-house', *M*.
- 7.3 *chě* 'to gossip', *M**.
- 7.4 *chībà ...* 'to finish eating ...', *O*.
qīngnián hòusheng 'a young man', *D*.
biǎoxiōng 'a cousin', *M*. An elder male first cousin on the mother's side.
- 7.7 *jīngàn* 'to be smart', *M*.
qiānxū 'to be modest', *M*.
- 7.8 *nǐlǎoshù* 'you', *M**. Politeness requires avoiding the sole pronoun *nǐ* in direct address to an older person. This is an example of one of the polite forms of direct address which consists of *nǐ* and a word or a phrase indicating the seniority of the older person. e.g. *nǐlǎo*; *nǐlǎorénjia*; *nǐlǎogē*.
Jiāo Guāngpù, *PN*.
- 7.9 *nǐ cūn de xī jīnnián zěnme búchàngle*, 'why is the opera not being performed in your village this year?', *M*. The custom of

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