

**THE MISERIES OF FO
HI, A CELESTIAL
FUNCTIONARY**

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The miseries of Fo Hi, a celestial functionary by Francisque Sarcey & H. R. H.

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FRANCISQUE SARCEY & H. R. H.

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FUNCTIONARY**

THE MISERIES OF

FOHI.

A CELESTIAL FUNCTIONARY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
FRANCISQUE SARCEY,

BY H. K. H.

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PREFACE.

This story comes straight from China like the vases and images with which we decorate our mantels. The manuscript was found by a brave French officer in the sack of an imperial palace, and was brought home in his valise as one of the curiosities of that remarkable country. The officer sent it to a number of gentlemen, learned in Chinese, all of whom translated it at sight with the greatest ease. It is true that no two of them made it read alike; but that matters little. These slight differences are of frequent occurrence among the profound scholars who have studied Chinese in our colleges. From these various versions I have chosen the one which seemed to me the most diverting, and now give it to the public.

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THE MISERIES OF FO HI.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH IT IS DECIDED THAT FO HI'S SON
SHALL BE A MANDARIN.

"WHATSOEVER will become of us with a third daughter on our hands?" said Mrs. Fo Hi, abruptly, to her husband.

"A daughter!" answered Mr. Fo Hi, with becoming dignity, "you don't know what you are talking about, my good woman. Why should it be a girl rather than a boy?"

"Because"—

"Because what?"

"Because I am sure of it."

"That is the way women reason in China,

is it? Well, for my part, dearest soul of my eyes, I don't pretend to be certain that it won't be so. The wise man is never certain of anything. But I think it will be a boy."

"And why do you think so?"

"I think so for the simple reason that I do think so."

"What a difference there is, to be sure! But may the Great Changhti hear you, my dear. A boy would be just the thing for us. We are both young yet, but twenty years from now we shall begin to grow old, and it will soon be time for us to step aside. We can then give up the business, and our son will succeed us just as you succeeded your father."

"What! My son a tradesman! My son sell rice, and pepper, and spices! A descendant of Fo Hi! Are you dreaming, Madame?"