

Kong. I tried the chair coolies with all kinds of explanations and equivalents of "theatre" without success. At last I stopped and got an old resident to explain. He simply said "singsong walkey," and off went the coolies to the theatre at once. As is well known, many of the words in Pigeon English are Portuguese of ancient date; comparatively few are Chinese, though the grammatical construction is all more or less Chinese.

The ordinary visitor using the strange words derived from Portuguese usually imagines that he is employing a Chinese word; but if he asks a Chinaman who can understand him well he will in return tell him to his astonishment that the word is English. The Chinaman using Portuguese thinks he is talking English, and the Englishman using the same thinks he is speaking Chinese.

It is not only the uninstructed who misapprehend the words of the "Business English." I have often been amused in looking at a specimen of a book full of engravings of various Eastern deities, which is exposed amongst the manuscript treasures in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and labelled in Pigeon English "Pictures of various Josses." Joss is a Chinese corruption of the Portuguese "Deos" ("God"). Most persons suppose it is a sort of Chinese equivalent of the word Idol.

People going from China to Japan usually try to force Pigeon English into the heads of the Japanese. The Japanese language and its construction is of course utterly different from the Chinese. Hence, Pigeon English is probably more difficult for a Japanese to understand than English itself, and the language is really not current in Japan.

I found my servant, on arrival at Japan, attempting to make the washerman understand a series of instructions, in what he rather prided himself was good Pigeon English, though it bore little resemblance to the real article. The Japanese could not understand a word, but he at once comprehended a few words of plain English from me.

The marked feature which renders Chinese and Japanese towns and interiors different from all others, and strikingly peculiar, is due to the vertical method of writing employed. All the flags, all the sign-posts, posters, and shop-signs, and all the texts decorating the walls of the interiors, all the streaks of bright colour in the various views, are drawn out into length vertically, to accommodate the characters, instead of horizontally, as with us.

We are apt to regard the Chinese method of writing as utterly different from our own, because the characters express