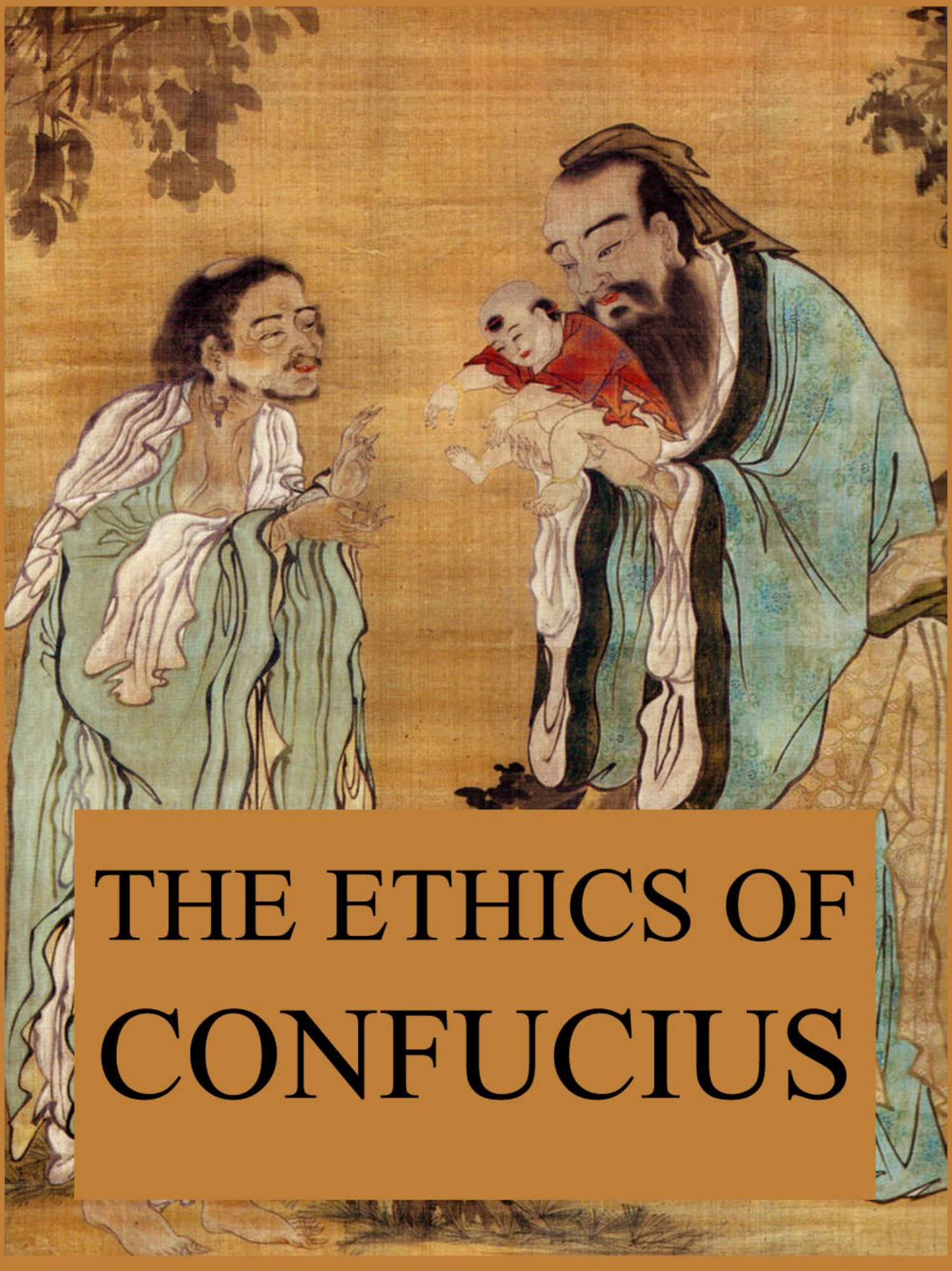

THE ETHICS OF CONFUCIUS

The Ethics of Confucius

THE SAYINGS OF THE MASTER AND HIS DISCIPLES

CONFUCIUS

MILES MENANDER DAWSON

The Ethics of Confucius, Confucius

Jazzybee Verlag Jürgen Beck
86450 Altenmünster, Loschberg 9
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ISBN: 9783849653378

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FOREWORD

When Confucius died, it is recorded that his last words were regrets that none among the rulers then living possessed the sagacity requisite to a proper appreciation of his ethical philosophy and teachings. He died unhonoured, —died in his seventy-third year, 479 bc, feeling in the flickering beats of his failing heart that his inspiring pleas for truth and justice, industry and self-denial, moderation and public duty, though then without having awakened men's impulses, would yet stir the depths of the social life of his land.

Only the future will tell how far his staunch guide-ropes to correct conduct will be extended within China, and even be threaded through the dark and dangerous passages of existence in the lands of the Occident to lead humanity safely to that elevated plane which the lofty ideals of the philosopher aimed at establishing. Not yet has the world, sagacious as it is, appreciated the wealth of gentleness, the profound forces for good, the uplifting influences embodied in the teachings of the ancient sage, whose aim, reduced to its simplest definition, was to show "how to get through life like a courteous gentleman."

A great step forward in the dissemination of the doctrine in foreign lands is taken in "The Superior Man." Lofty as appear the ideals, in the usual translations, they lose the effect on the average [vi] reader that the application which Mr. Dawson has now given them must create. Driving home the principles by careful compilation under different headings, the author causes the scheme of ethical conduct to attract and appeal; and the blessings it has bestowed in the vast expanses of China may yet give comfort to many people in many other lands.

Confucius strove to make the human being good—a good father, a good mother, a good son, a good daughter, a good

friend, a good citizen. Though his truths were unpalatable at the time of their enunciation, they have lived to bear good fruit, despite the desperate efforts of Emperor Tsin Shi-hwang to destroy them by fire, and it is gratifying to see that a still wider sphere is being more and more developed for them in the West.

The movement that is now being energized in China to make the doctrine more familiar to the people, may also find reflection in foreign lands. “The Superior Man” will surely help the struggler in the mire of complexity to find his way out to the clean, substantial foothold of manliness and integrity.

Shanghai, China,

January 29, 1912.

INTRODUCTION

WORKS OF CONFUCIUS AND CHIEF FOLLOWERS

The ethical and political precepts of Confucius are not well known in Occidental countries, even to most of those who give special attention to these subjects; and of what is known, much, indeed most, is confused with the notion that Confucius taught a religion in our sense of that term.

Yet these ethical teachings, which are almost purely secular, have for more than 2000 years been accepted by a larger number of human beings than those of any other teacher. This, also, notwithstanding that the peoples who so receive Confucian morals as their guide are of the most various views concerning religion, *i. e.,* for instance, are Buddhists, Mahometans, Taoists, Shintoists, etc. No other ethical system, whether of religious origin, or of secular, has ever been acceptable to persons professing religious convictions so diverse.

And his political maxims have been regarded as fundamental, and knowledge of them, as well as of his ethics, has been insisted upon as a prime essential to political preferment, in a nation which, despite the not infrequent shifting of ruling dynasties, has the unparalleled record of continuing from prehistoric times to the present without a single break.

In view of their obvious importance and of the availability of translations of the Chinese classics, the question naturally arises: Why the prevailing want of information

concerning the works of Confucius, his disciples and followers?

Though due in part, no doubt, to Confucianism not being a religion and so receiving but scant attention from students of comparative religions, to the relatively small interest of Occidentals, until very recently, in things Chinese, and to the comewhat expensive editions in which alone the best translation is available, the want of information concerning these teachings is, in my opinion, chiefly due to this: They are found in large volumes consisting of ancient Chinese classics which Confucius edited, of a collection of his sayings, of certain books by his disciples that purport to give his precepts accurately, in one book by his great apostle, Mencius, who more than a century later led the revival of Confucian ethics which has continued to this day, and in certain books by later followers; and these books consist, in varying proportions, ranging from a minimum of more than half to a maximum of at least nineteen-twentieths, of discourses upon ceremonies, customs, and the like, possibly of great interest to dwellers in China or Japan, but almost absolutely devoid of interest to most Occidentals.

These ceremonies and customs, already firmly intrenched when Confucius was born, doubtless constitute a very rich and expressive language, crystallized into conduct; but it is one which is wholly unintelligible and even repellent to persons of Western origin.

The only form, other than this, in which the ethical teachings of Confucius and his followers have been presented, is through books *about* these teachings, *i. e.,* presenting, in the language of these modern authors, what they consider Confucius and his followers have taught.

The aim in preparing this book is to put before Occidental readers, in the words of the Chinese sage and his followers, as translated, everything concerning ethics and statecraft contained in the Confucian classics which is likely to

interest them, omitting nothing of importance. This has been undertaken in the following fashion:

Every such passage has been extracted from all the works comprising the Confucian classics and several from the more important works of early Confucian scholars.

These have been arranged by topics in accordance with a scheme laid down as that of Confucius himself in “The Great Learning.”

The passages, so quoted, have been thrown into the order deemed most effective to demonstrate and illustrate the doctrine of Confucius.

To sustain the interest unbroken, the passages quoted are connected by a running narrative, showing briefly the relationship of one with the other, stating from what book taken and by whom enunciated, and most sparingly accompanied by quotations from other moralists, ancient or modern.

This book makes no claim to be an exhaustive study of the text, or of the commentaries on the text, of the Chinese sage; and much less to epitomize a critical investigation and collation of original texts. It accepts the generally received canon of the sayings and writings of Confucius as authentic, and deals exclusively with their significance as viewed scientifically in these days. Thus considered, the sayings of Confucius are seen to exhibit wonderful foresight and insight.

Indeed, it is a continual marvel that, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, Confucius should have come so near to laying down, formally, the lines which scientific investigation must pursue; and yet that, as generation after generation passed away, the attitude of many of the disciples of each of these should have become more and more that of blind and even superstitious imitation of the great teacher, and almost scrupulous avoidance of the application of his principles in the never-ending search for truth. This seems to have commenced with the immediate disciples of the sage,

and by the time of Mencius it was already a species of idolatry, expressed in such sayings as this:

"Since first there were living men until now, there has never been another Confucius." (Bk. ii., pt. i., c. ii., v. 23.)

"From the birth of mankind till now, there has never been another like our Master." (Bk. ii., pt. i., c. ii., v. 27.)

So also, among the Greeks and Romans, the very name, "philosopher," *i. e.,* "lover of wisdom," which Socrates gave to himself as one who did not pretend to be wise already, but who merely sought wisdom earnestly, soon lost its true meaning, as veneration for Socrates, Plato, or Aristotle took the place of the child-like, simple, open-minded search for truth which they inculcated as the obvious duty of intelligent beings. In other words, the positive teaching of these great minds became in due time prescriptive authority in the view of their followers, while the essential factor in the thought of each of the great teachers, that the mind should be open—should, in the words of St. Paul, "try all things and hold fast that which is good"—gave way to a prohibition against questioning any declaration of the Master, and later against questioning any of the accepted derivations and corollaries of the authoritative sayings.

It is to be remembered that Confucius never made claim to be inspired; to be sure, he said of himself, "If Heaven had wished to let this cause of truth perish, then I, a mortal yet to be born, should not have got such a relation to that cause," but this was rather a declaration of the universality of divine providence than a claim of special inspiration.

Later, however, the commentators virtually claimed it for him, *i. e.,* that he was "divinely sent," as in the Annotation of Kung-Yang quoting the Adjunct of the Spring and Autumn and also in the Adjunct of the Hsiâo King, in which Confucius is represented as reporting to Heaven the completion of his writings and as receiving divine approval in the form of a red rainbow arching down and becoming transformed into yellow jade with words carved upon it.

This book is written to afford others opportunity for the same inspiring understanding of the true nature of the Confucian conception of good conduct as an encouragement of independent, clear thinking concerning the purposes of life and what may be done with it, which met so warm a welcome in my own mind when I first fortunately chanced upon a really good translation of the Analects of Confucius. What is here attempted is but an unworthy recognition of the great benefit, which, across twenty-five centuries, the Chinese sage conferred upon me.

My thanks are due to various persons who have aided me with criticisms and suggestions; but very especially to Chen Huan Chang, Ph.D. (Columbia), Chin Shih of 1904 ad (*i.e.,* winner of the prize in the highest competitive examination in China on the teachings of Confucius), formerly Secretary of the Grand Secretariat at Pekin, now President of the Confucian Society in China and leader of the successful movement there to restore public recognition of Confucian ethics and observances. Dr. Chen has looked up for me all doubtful interpretations of texts, advising me of the variant views and enabling me to choose among them. In general, and with almost no exceptions, the commonly accepted meaning is given.

THE WORKS OF CONFUCIUS, HIS DISCIPLES, AND MOST IMPORTANT FOLLOWERS

Including Ancient Books Edited by Him, Books of His Sayings, and Accounts of His Teachings by His Disciples and by Early Apostles and Commentators.

Confucius was born in 552 bc and died in 479 bc His name was K‘ung Ch‘in Chung-ni, of which K‘ung was the family name, Ch‘in the personal (*i.e.,* what we call Christian) name, and Chung-ni the special name given upon reaching full age. He was called K‘ung Fu Tse later, the appellation Fu Tse meaning “Master”; and this has been Latinized into Confucius.

1. The actual authorship of but one book is ascribed to him, viz: Ch‘un Ch‘in, “Spring and Autumn” (English Edition, vol. v., “Chinese Classics”).

This book is said to have been written by Confucius himself, in his seventy-second year, and to have been designed by him to serve as an epitome of his teachings upon all ethical, social, and religious subjects. At least, Mencius so speaks of it. The book, in a different form and known as “The Annals of Lu,” was in existence before Confucius, and his task seems, after all, to have been to edit and amplify it. The work as it has come down to us, however, undoubtedly unchanged since the Han dynasty, is a bare record of events, almost utterly devoid of instruction and even of interest.

2. A collection of conversations with Confucius, containing many of his most important sayings, was made by his disciples after his death. It is known as:

Lun Yü, “The Analects,” translated by James Legge, and published in “The Sacred Books of the East.”

Several important books or collections of books, already ancient when Confucius was born and regarded as classics, were edited by Confucius and further edited by his early disciples. These are:

3. Yi King, the “Book of Changes.”
4. Hsiâo King, the “Book of Filial Piety.”
5. Shu King, the “Book of History.”
6. Shi King, the “Book of Poetry,” also called “The Odes.”
7. Li Ki, the “Book of Ceremonies.”

All of these were translated by James Legge and published in “The Sacred Books of the East.”

The last mentioned is also often called “Younger Tai’s Record of Rites,” and it is affirmed that the “Li-Ching,” said to be an older and greatly variant edition, should be accepted instead. In this book or collection of books are comprised two of very special importance:

8. “The Great Learning,” said to have been committed to writing by Tse-Tse, the grandson of Confucius, from his recollections of the teachings of his grandfather and from reports of the same by his father and other disciples of Confucius. His text is elucidated by commentaries in the “Li Ki.” This book has also come down separately.

9. “The Doctrine of the Mean,” also the work of disciples of Confucius and their early successors. This has also come down separately.

There is also the very valuable volume of the sayings of Meng Tse, the great apostle of Confucianism in the second century later—whose name is Latinized into:

10. Mencius.

This Book of Mencius was also translated by James Legge and is published in “The Sacred Books of the East.”

“The Four Books,” meaning thereby the elements and very core of Confucian doctrine, is the name given to “The Analects,” “The Great Learning,” “The Doctrine of the Mean,” and “Mencius.”

"The Five Classics" or "The Five Canons" is the name applied to the "Yi King," "Hsiâo King," "Shu King," "Shi King," and "Li Ki" (or "Li-Ching"), collectively. The word "King" means "classic" or "canon."

Other works of Confucian commentators and scholars which are occasionally quoted from, are:

11. Shuo Yüan ("Park of Narratives").
12. Hsun Tze.
13. Ku-liang Chuan ("Ku-liang's Commentary").
14. "Many Dewdrops of the Spring and Autumn."
15. Pan-Ku.
16. "History of Han Dynasty."
17. "History of Latter Han Dynasty."
18. "Narratives of Nations."
19. Kung-Yang Chuan ("Kung-Yang's Commentary").

The citations of this book are for the most part given by the name of the work, the name or number of the chapter and other grand division of the work and the verse, to the end that any edition in Chinese or any translation into English or into another language may be conveniently referred to.

M. M. D.

CONFUCIUS

K‘ung Fu-tsze, “the philosopher K‘ung,” whose name has been Latinized into Confucius, was born in the year 550 (or 551) bc His father, Shuh-liang Heih was an officer in charge of the district of Tsow in the State of Lu and had been famous for his strength and daring; he was of the K‘ung family and lineally descended from Hwang-Ti, an almost legendary character of ancient China.

At the age of seventy, Shuh-liang Heih, the father of ten children of whom but one was a son and he a cripple, sought a wife in the Yen family where there were three daughters. The two elder of them demurred when apprised by their father of the old man’s suit; but the youngest, Ching-tsai, only seventeen years of age, offered to abide by her father’s judgment. The following year Confucius was born and three years later she was a widow.

Confucius was married, in accordance with Chinese custom, at nineteen and accepted public employment as a keeper of stores and later as superintendent of parks and herds. At twenty-two, however, he commenced his life-work as a teacher, and gradually a group of students, eager to be instructed in the classics and in conduct and government, gathered about him.

He was a contemporary of Lao-tsze, the founder of Taoism, who, however, was of the next previous generation. Confucius is said to have had several interviews with him about 517 bc

Up to the age of fifty-two, he was not much in public life. He was then made chief magistrate of the city of Chung-tu, which so thrived and improved under his care, that the Duke of Lu appointed him minister of crime which resulted

in a great reduction of wrongdoing. The Duke accepting a present of female musicians and giving himself over to dissipation, Confucius withdrew and wandered among the various states, giving instruction as opportunity offered.

His disciples during his lifetime rose to three thousand and of these some seventy or eighty were highly esteemed by him.

Confucius when he set forth on his wanderings was fifty-six; it was thirteen years before he returned to Lu.

In 482 bc, he lost his only son; in 481 bc, his favourite student, Yen Hwuy, and in 478 bc Tsze-lu, another of his favourites, passed away, and the same year Confucius himself died at the age of seventy-two.

He was buried in the K‘ung cemetery outside the gates of K‘iuh-fow, where most of his descendants, said to number more than forty thousand, still live. His tomb is yet preserved and is annually visited by vast numbers of his followers.

The Ethics of Confucius

CHAPTER I: WHAT CONSTITUTES THE SUPERIOR MAN

The central idea of Confucius is that every normal human being cherishes the aspiration to become a superior man—superior to his fellows, if possible, but surely superior to his own past and present self. This does not more than hint at perfection as a goal; and it is said of him that one of the subjects concerning which the Master rarely spoke, was “perfect virtue.” (Analects, bk. ix., c. i.) He also said, “They who know virtue, are few” (Analects, bk. xv., c. iii.), and was far from teaching a perfectionist doctrine. It refers rather to the perpetually relative, the condition of being superior to that to which one may be superior, be it high or low,—that hopeful possibility which has ever lured mankind toward higher things.

This accords well with the ameliorating and progressive principle of evolution which in these days offers a substantial reward, both for a man and for his progeny, if he will but cultivate higher and more useful traits and qualities. The aim to excel, if respected of all, approved and accepted by common consent, would appeal to every child and, logically presented to its mind and enforced by universal recognition of its validity, would become a conviction and a scheme for the art of living, of transforming power and compelling vigour.

In various sayings Confucius, his disciples, and Mencius present the attributes of the superior man, whom the sage adjures his disciples to admire without ceasing, to emulate

without turning, and to imitate without let or hindrance. These are some of them:

Purpose: "The superior man learns in order to attain to the utmost of his principles." (Analects, bk. xix., c. vii.)

Poise: "The superior man in his thought does not go out of his place." (Analects, bk. xiv., c. xxviii.)

Self-sufficiency: "What the superior man seeks, is in himself; what the ordinary man seeks, is in others." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xx.)

Earnestness: "The superior man in everything puts forth his utmost endeavours." (Great Learning, ii., 4.)

Thoroughness: "The superior man bends his attention to what is radical. That being established, all practical courses naturally grow up." (Analects, bk. i., c. ii., v. 2.)

Sincerity: "The superior man must make his thoughts sincere." (Great Learning, vi., 4.) "Is it not his absolute sincerity which distinguishes a superior man?" (Doctrine of the Mean, c. xiii., 4.)

Truthfulness: "What the superior man requires is that in what he says there may be nothing inaccurate." (Analects, bk. xiii., c. iii., v. 7.)

Purity of thought and action: "The superior man must be watchful over himself when alone." (Great Learning, vi., 2.)

Love of truth: "The object of the superior man is truth." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxxi.) "The superior man is anxious lest he should not get truth; he is not anxious lest poverty come upon him." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxxi.)

Mental hospitality: "The superior man is catholic and not partisan; the ordinary man is partisan and not catholic." (Analects, bk. ii., c. xiv.) "The superior man in the world does not set his mind either for anything or against anything; what is right, he will follow." (Analects, bk. iv., c. x.)

Rectitude: "The superior man thinks of virtue; the ordinary man thinks of comfort." (Analects, bk. iv., c. xi.) "The mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the ordinary man is conversant

with gain." (Analects, bk. iv., c. xxi.) "The superior man in all things considers righteousness essential." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xvii.)

Prudence: "The superior man wishes to be slow in his words and earnest in his conduct." (Analects, bk. iv., c. xxiv.)

Composure: "The superior man is satisfied and composed; the ordinary man is always full of distress." (Analects, bk. vii., c. xxxvi.) "The superior man may indeed have to endure want; but the ordinary man, when he is in want, gives way to unbridled license." (Analects, bk. xv., c. i., v. 3.)

Fearlessness: "The superior man has neither anxiety nor fear." (Analects, bk. xii., c. iv., v. 1.) "When internal examination discovers nothing wrong, what is there to be anxious about, what is there to fear?" (Analects, bk. xi., c. iv., v. 3.) "They sought to act virtuously and they did so; and what was there for them to repine about?" (Analects, bk. vii., c. xiv., v. 2.)

Ease and dignity: "The superior man has dignified ease without pride; the ordinary man has pride without dignified ease." (Analects, bk. xiii., c. xxvi.) "The superior man is dignified and does not wrangle." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxi.)

Firmness: "Refusing to surrender their wills or to submit to any taint to their persons." (Analects, bk. xviii., c. viii., v. 2.) "The superior man is correctly firm and not merely firm." (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxxvi.) "Looked at from a distance, he appears stern; when approached, he is mild; when he is heard to speak, his language is firm and decided." (Analects, bk. xix., c. ix.)

Lowliness: "The superior man is affable but not adulatory; the ordinary man is adulatory but not affable." (Analects, bk. xiii., c. xxiii.)

Avoidance of sycophancy: "I have heard that the superior man helps the distressed, but he does not add to the wealth of the rich." (Analects, bk. vi., c. iii., v. 2.)

Growth: “The progress of the superior man is upward, the progress of the ordinary man is downward.” (Analects, bk. xiv., c. xxiv.) “The superior man is distressed by his want of ability; he is not distressed by men’s not knowing him.” (Analects, bk. xv., c. xviii.)

Capacity: “The superior man cannot be known in little matters but may be entrusted with great concerns.” (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxxiii.)

Openness: “The faults of the superior man are like the sun and moon. He has his faults and all men see them. He changes again and all men look up to him.” (Analects, bk. xix., c. xxi.)

Benevolence: “The superior man seeks to develop the admirable qualities of men and does not seek to develop their evil qualities. The ordinary man does the opposite of this.” (Analects, bk. xii., c. xvi.)

Broadmindedness: “The superior man honours talent and virtue and bears with all. He praises the good and pities the incompetent.” (Analects, bk. xix., c. iii.) “The superior man does not promote a man on account of his words, nor does he put aside good words on account of the man.” (Analects, bk. xv., c. xxii.)

Charity: “To be able to judge others by what is in ourselves, this may be called the art of virtue.” (Analects, bk. vi., c. xxviii., v. 3.)

Moderation: “The superior man conforms with the path of the mean.” (Doctrine of the Mean, c. xi., v. 3.)

The Golden Rule: “When one cultivates to the utmost the capabilities of his nature and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path. What you do not want done to yourself, do not do unto others.” (Doctrine of the Mean, c. xiii., v. 3.)

Reserve power: “That wherein the superior man cannot be equalled is simply this, his work which other men cannot see.” (Doctrine of the Mean, c. xxxiii., v. 2.)

THE ART OF LIVING.

“The practice of right-living is deemed the highest, the practice of any other art lower. Complete virtue takes first place; the doing of anything else whatsoever is subordinate.” (Li Ki, bk. xvii., sect. iii., 5.)

These words from the “Li Ki” are the keynote of the sage’s teachings.

Confucius sets before every man, as what he should strive for, his own improvement, the development of himself,—a task without surcease, until he shall “abide in the highest excellence.” This goal, albeit unattainable in the absolute, he must ever have before his vision, determined above all things to attain it, relatively, every moment of his life—that is, to “abide in the highest excellence” of which he is at the moment capable. So he says in “The Great Learning”: “What one should abide in being known, what should be aimed at is determined; upon this decision, unperturbed resolve is attained; to this succeeds tranquil poise; this affords opportunity for deliberate care; through such deliberation the goal is achieved.” (Text, v. 2.)

This speaks throughout of self-development, of that renunciation of worldly lusts which inspired the cry: “For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”; but this is not left doubtful—for again in “The Great Learning” he says: “From the highest to the lowest, self-development must be deemed the root of all, by every man. When the root is neglected, it cannot be that what springs from it will be well-ordered.” (Text, v. 6, 7.)

Confucius taught that to pursue the art of life was possible for every man, all being of like passions and in more things like than different. He says: “By nature men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart.” (Analects, bk. xvii., c. ii.)

Mencius put forward this idea continually, never more succinctly and aptly than in this: “All things are already complete in us.” (Bk. vii., pt. i., c. iv., 1.)

Mencius also announced that the advance of every man is independent of the power of others, as follows: “To advance a man or to stop his advance is beyond the power of other men.” (Bk. i., pt. ii., c. xvi., 3.)

It has already in these pages been quoted from the “Analects” that “the superior man learns in order to attain to the utmost of his principles.”

In the same book is reported this colloquy: “Tsze-loo asked ‘What constitutes the superior man?’ The Master said, ‘The cultivation of himself with reverential care’ ” (Analects, bk. xiv., c. xlv.); and in the “Doctrine of the Mean,” “When one cultivates to the utmost the capabilities of his nature and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path.” (C. xiii., 3.).

In “The Great Learning,” Confucius revealed the process, step by step, by which self-development is attained and by which it flows over into the common life to serve the state and to bless mankind.

“The ancients,” he said, “when they wished to exemplify illustrious virtue throughout the empire, first ordered well their states. Desiring to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated themselves. Wishing to cultivate themselves, they first rectified their purposes. Wishing to rectify their purposes, they first sought to think sincerely. Wishing to think sincerely, they first extended their knowledge as widely as possible. This they did by investigation of things.

“By investigation of things, their knowledge became extensive; their knowledge being extensive, their thoughts became sincere; their thoughts being sincere, their purposes were rectified; their purposes being rectified, they cultivated themselves; they being cultivated, their families were regulated; their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed; their states being rightly governed, the empire was thereby tranquil and prosperous.” (Text, 4, 5.)

Lest there be misunderstanding, it should be said that mere wealth is not to be considered the prosperity of which he speaks, but rather plenty and right-living. For there is the saying: “In a state, gain is not to be considered prosperity, but prosperity is found in righteousness.” (Great Learning, x., 23.) The distribution of wealth into mere livelihoods among the people is urged by Confucius as an essential to good government, for it is said in “The Great Learning”: “The concentration of wealth is the way to disperse the people, distributing it among them is the way to collect the people.” (X., 9.)

The order of development, therefore, Confucius set forth as follows:

Investigation of phenomena.
Learning.
Sincerity.
Rectitude of purpose.
Self-development.
Family discipline.
Local self-government.
Universal self-government.

The rules of conduct, mental, spiritual, in one’s inner life, in the family, in the state, and in society at large, which will lead to this self-development and beyond it, Confucius conceived to be of universal application, for it is said in the “Doctrine of the Mean” (c. xxviii., v. 3): “Now throughout the empire carriages all have wheels with the same tread, all writing is with the same characters, and for conduct there are the same rules.”

How this may be, is set forth in the same book (c. xii., v. 1, 2): “The path which the superior man follows extends far and wide, and yet is secret. Ordinary men and women, however ignorant, may meddle with the knowledge of it; yet, in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage does not discern. Ordinary men and women, however below the average standard of ability, can carry it into practice;

yet, in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage is not able to carry into practice."

It is, indeed, a true art of living which is thus presented, a scheme of adaptation of means to ends, of causes to produce their appropriate consequences, with clear and noble purposes in view, both as regards one's own development and man's, both as regards one's own weal and the common weal.

For the completion of its work, it requires, also, the whole of life, every deflection from virtue marring by so much the perfection of the whole. Its saintliness lies not in purity alone, but in the rounded fulness of the well-planned and well-spent life, the more a thing of beauty if extended to extreme old age. Confucius thus modestly hints how slowly it develops at best, when he says: "At fifteen I had my mind bent on learning. At thirty I stood firm. At forty I was free from doubt. At fifty I knew the decrees of Heaven. At sixty my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy I could follow what my heart desired without transgressing what was right." (Analects, bk. ii., c. iv.)

That it is not finished until death rings down the curtain upon the last act, is shown in the "Analects" by this aphorism attributed to his disciple, Tsang: "The scholar may not be without breadth of mind and vigorous endurance. His burden is heavy and his course is long. Perfect virtue is the burden which he considers it his to sustain; is it not heavy? Only with death does his course stop; is it not long?" (Analects, bk. viii., c. vii.)

MENTAL MORALITY.

"When you know a thing, to hold that you know it, and when you do not know a thing, to acknowledge that you do not know it—this is knowledge." (Analects, bk. ii., c. xvii.)

In these words Confucius set forth more lucidly than any other thinker, ancient or modern, the essential of all