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THE

POLITICAL PRINCIPLES OF MENCIUS

BY

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SHANGHAI

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FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I undertake to write a Foreword to Mr. Wei's Essay. The pleasure arises first on personal grounds. I have watched the progress of Mr. Wei's education and work from the time he entered Boone Preparatory School as a youth of fourteen. It is a great satisfaction to a missionary educator to observe the onward progress and development of his students, and he realizes something of St. John's feeling when he wrote, "Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth." Mr. Wei is a genuine son of Boone, and it is indeed a personal pleasure to me as President of Boone during the whole course of his education, to write this Foreword to his thesis. But my pleasure is more than personal. It is a matter of encouragement to see a Chinese Christian student engaged in such studies as are represented in this Essay. We hear a great deal about the need of a Christian Apologetic for China. Such an Apologetic will have to be written by Chinese students, and I think it will necessarily be by students who can read other books than those written in the Chinese language. To me it seems futile to talk for example about Chinese lecturing or writing on the subject of "The Comparative Study of Religions" who can read only their own language. If we are going to compare anything we must at least have means of knowing the things we are to compare. The lack of literature dealing with such subjects in the Chinese language is well known and it will probably be a long time before this lack can be supplied. Hence arises the importance of our Chinese Christian young men having an acquaintance with Western literature, if they are to do anything effectively towards supplying a Christian Apologetic. It has been thought by many that in order to obtain the necessary equipment young men must go abroad for study.

This does not seem to me to be either necessary or the best way of equipping young men to be the Origens of the Chinese Church. A long residence abroad seems to have the effect of causing young men to lose touch with the life and thought of their own people, and to lose interest in Chinese literature. A thorough knowledge of the latter is as essential for doing the work we have in mind as is a knowledge of Western literature. Mr. Wei is a competent Chinese scholar. Our missionary educational institutions are able to offer facilities for the study of Chinese which cannot be offered in foreign countries, while at the same time giving facilities for acquiring a sufficient education in Western subjects. I feel sure that the work Mr. Wei now sends forth to the public will meet with a hearty welcome. Some missonaries will recall Mr. Wei's previous thesis submitted for his B. A. degree and publised in the pages of the *Chinese Missionary Recorder* in the year 1911. We hope that further contributions will come from his pen which will help Chinese readers to a better understanding of the Christian religion, Western thought, and Western institutions, and which will also help foreign students of Chinese to realize that the Eternal Word, the candle of the Lord in the spirit of man has cast His bright beams of light upon the path of Chinese thought and civilization, thus preparing the way for His fuller manifestation in the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, when the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us, giving to mankind, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

JAS. JACKSON.

BOONE UNIVERSITY,

Trinity Season, 1916.

PREFACE

The treatise now presented to the public was originally a thesis written a year and a half ago in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at Boone University, Wuchang.

Quotations from the text of Mencius as well as from other Chinese Classics are taken from Dr. Legge's translation. As the present treatise may fall into the hands of many who either cannot have access to the oreginal Chinese or do not have sufficient time to spend on the Chinese Classics, the writer has thought it advisable to insert a large number of quotations.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Rev. T. R. Ludlow, of Boone University, under whose direction all his work in the field of Political Science has been done: and to the Rev. E. Walker, who has been kind enough to read the manuscript and suggest improvements in its language.

F. C. M. W.

BOONE UNIVERSITY,
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Măng-tze, better known to Europeans by his latinized name Mencius, occupies, in the minds of the Chinese, a position next only to that occupied by Confucius. K'ung and Măng are two names which always go hand in hand, and the expression K'ung-Măng is one which signifies to the Chinese scholar the whole of the orthodox teaching of his country, and is everywhere received with the highest respect.

Mencius was not a personal disciple of Confucius, but is always regarded as the chief expounder of his doctrines, and is worshipped in the Confucian Temples as one of the Four Assessors, being thus ranked with the two most illustrious disciples and the famous grandson of the great sage of China. Indeed, Mencius' relation to Confucius is of such importance that he has been aptly called the St. Paul of Confucianism.

At the present time, when every thoughtful mind in China is more or less occupied with political questions the political principles of Mencius ought to receive the close attention which they deserve. Four years ago, when China had just emerged from the Revolution, and when her radical sons were intoxicated with the most extreme democratic ideas, many held the opinion that Mencius should be given the place of honour in place of Confucius. This was, of course, an outcome of the radicalism of the time, and was never seriously considered by the sober-minded. But, at the same time, this opinion does testify to an important aspect of the teaching of Mencius, because his writings certainly do breathe a democratic spirit, and, in this respect, provide a great contrary to the ideas of his predecessor, Confucius.

Mencius has left to the world no such systematic political treatise as Plato's "Republic" or Aristotle's "Politics," but a careful study of his works will enable us to say of his political opinions what Dr. Legge says of his philosophy,—even his great contemporaries in Greece Mencius could look in the face, and not need to hide a diminished head.

CHAPTER II.

LIFE OF MENCIUS.

The name Măng-tze, according to Châu Ch'î[1], his first commentator, is composed of Măng[2], the surname, and Tze[3], the common designation of males. His personal name was K'o[4], but when grown up he was styled Tze-chü[5] or, according to some authorities, Tze-yü[6]—*Chü* and *Yü* being two characters in Chinese similar in meaning as well as in sound.

Châu Ch'î, in the preface to his commentaries, perpetuates the tradition that Mencius was a descendant of the Măng-sun[7] family, one of the noble families in the principality of Lu[8] during the Châu[9] Dynasty. This not only claims for him a noble origin, but makes him a descendant of kings, since the Măng-sun family sprang from a Duke of the Principality of Lu, who himself was descended from King Wen[10], father of the founder of the Châu Dynasty.

When the three powerful families of Lu dwindled into insignificance, so continues the tradition recorded by Châu Ch'î, their descendants were scattered among the neighbouring states, and the Măng-sun family found its abode in Tsâu[11] where Mencius was born. Whether this Tsâu was the Principality of Tsâu or the District Tsâu in the Principality of Lu, is a disputed question, with learned scholars enlisted on both sides. The Principality of Tsâu was adjacent to the Principality of Lu, and history records that Tsâu was afterwards absorbed by Lu. This, however, does not satisfy those who like to believe that Mencius was born in the same district as his master and prototype Confucius. To connect K'ung and Măng by a common birthplace is an idea fondly cherished by many scholars, and Tsao Tze-sen's[12] argument upholding this view seems to be convincing and conclusive.

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1 趙岐. 2 孟. 3 子. 4 軻. 5 子車. 6 子輿. 7 孟孫 8 魯 9 周 10 文王. 11 鄒 12 曹之升.

As the issue of the question has more interest than real significance, the reader is referred to that interesting work of Tsao in Chinese, entitled "A Collection of Supplemental Observations on the Four Books."[13] Suffice it to say that the birthplace of Mencius is generally believed to be in the Principality of Tsâu, not the district of the Principality of Lu, known by the same name, and that it is now identified with the present District of Tsâu in Shantung.

The date of Mencius' birth is also a matter of dispute. Different chronologies of his life are given by different scholars, each having his arguments to advance, and each having some important authorities to quote. When all of them are carefully examined and compared, one is almost at a loss to know which to follow. The Genealogical Register[14] of the Măng Family seems to be the authority upon which most of the current chronologies have been constructed. According to this authority, Mencius' life covers a period of eighty-four years. The year of his death is put as the twenty-sixth year of the sovereign Nan[15] (288 B.C.), while the year of his birth is put as the thirty-seventh year of the sovereign Ting[16] (569 B.C.). The latter date is evidently a mistake, and is abandoned by all scholars. The Genealogical Register is, however, generally taken as authoritative in regard to the fact that Mencius lived to the age of eighty-four years. Thus reckoning back eighty-four years from the twenty-sixth year of the sovereign Nan, the chronologers fix the fourth year of the sovereign Leih[17] (372 B.C.) as the date for Mencius' birth.

Of the chronologies constructed in this way, two are worth mentioning. One is by Hwang Bun-chi[18], a scholar of the Ching Dynasty, and occurs in his book entitled "Records of Observations in the Land of the Sage."[19] The other is by Tsao Tze-sen and is found in his work, "A Collection of Supplemental Observations on the Four Books." The latter

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13 四書攗餘說 14 孟氏譜. 15 赧王. 16 定王. 17 烈王. 18 黃本驥. 19 聖域述聞.

is closely followed by the celebrated translator of the Chinese Classics, Dr. James Legge, in the Prolegomena to his translation of the Works of Mencius.

According to Hwang's Chronology, Mencius came to Liang, the capital of the Principality of Wei, in the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien[20] (336 B.C.), and then had the conversation with King Hui[21], the Duke of Wei, which is recorded in the first chapter of the Works. This date is very unlikely. In the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien, Mencius was only thirty-seven years of age, yet in the conversation above mentioned, he is addressed by the Duke as "Seou"[22], "Venerable Sir," which is a form of expression only used when addressing a man of advanced age.

There is another point in the chronology which appears to us to be an error. It is recorded that Mencius went to Wei a second time in the 44th year of the sovereign Shien (325 B.C.), when the new prince, known by the name of King Hsiang[23], succeeded his father, King Hui; and that he did not leave Wei till the 2nd year of the sovereign Shên Tsing[24] (319 B.C.), thus making Mencius' second stay in Wei extend over a period of several years, which is, in our opinion, far from being likely. We read in Book I of the Works of Mencius, that on coming out from an interview with King Hsiang, Mencius thus said to others: "When I looked at him from a distance, he did not appear like a sovereign; when I drew near to him, I saw nothing venerable about him" (Bk I. Pt. I. Chap. 6.) This is too severe a criticism of the prince for Mencius to have made after his first interview with him. On the other hand, we are told by the chronology in question that Mencius lingered for several years in the country in spite of his dissatisfaction with the prince. It is hard to see how these facts can be reconciled with the cautious character of Mencius, and the chronology of the learned

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20 顯王. 21 惠王. 22 叟. 23 襄王. 24 愼靚王.

author of the "Records of Observations in the Land of the Sage" is open to grave doubts.

The chronology of Tsao Tze-sen also gives grounds for questioning its accuracy. According to this chronology, Mencius, at the age of forty-one, commenced his public career in the 37th year of the sovereign Shien (332 B.C.) as a counsellor to the prince of the Principality of Ch'î, with the rank of a minister. Thus Mencius went first to Ch'î and then to Wei, although his conversation with King Hui of Wei is placed in the very first chapter of his works. The mere fact that his conversation with King Hui comes at the beginning of his works does not of course by itself amount to a disproof of his having gone to Ch'î before Wei. Indeed, pains have been taken by enthusiastic scholars to show that this conversation was put as the first chapter, not because it was first in order of time, but because it was on the topic of benevolence and righteousness, a topic which the philosopher never failed to dwell upon and to emphasize in his conversations with the princes of his time. But it should be carefully noticed that in the 37th year of the sovereign Shien, Mencius was according to the chronology in question only in his forty-first year, and yet he is said to have held the position of a minister. Considering the rigidity with which the ancient worthies in China tried to comply with the rules of propriety in all their actions, we should be surprised to find that Mencius occupied a position of the rank of a minister at the age of forty-one. The ancient rule was that a man should begin his career of public services in his fortieth year, but should not accept appointment as minister till he came to the age of fifty (The Book of Rites, Bk. V). It is true that Confucius took his first public employment as keeper of the granaries in the Principality of Lu, when he was only about twenty years old; but this was an exceptional case, and the breach of the rule of propriety was allowed only by the pressure of poverty, when a low position of small importance might be taken. Thus

Mencius himself says, "Office is not sought on account of poverty, yet there are times when one seeks office on that account. . . . . He who takes office on account of his poverty must decline an honorable situation, and occupy a low one." Again, in reference of the same incident, Mencius says, "Confucius was once keeper of stores, and he then said, 'My calculations must all be right. That is all I have to care about.'" But even though we could show that Mencius was forced into public service by poverty at the age of forty, yet to be counsellor to a prince was certainly not a low position, and its duties must have been heavier than mere mechanical calculation of numbers.

There is another date in the chronology of Tsao which cannot very well be accepted as correct. It is recorded that Mencius first came to Wei in the 1st year of the sovereign Shên Tsing (320 B.C.). This disagrees with the Comparative Chronological Tables of the Six Principalities[25] prepared by the great historian Sze-mâ Ch'ien[26] for his "Historical Records."[27] According to Sze-mâ Ch'ien, Mencius came to the Principality of Wei in the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien, not the 1st of the sovereign Shên Tsing. Now Sze-mâ Ch'ien based the statements in his Tables upon the records of the different principalities, which we have every reason to trust not only because they were taken as authoritative by such a widely read and scrutinizing scholar and historian as Sze-mâ Ch'ien, but also because they were the only source of information in regard to the events of the period synchronous with the life of Mencius.

The chronology that we propose to adopt in this essay is based chiefly upon the "Historical Records" of Sze-mâ Ch'ien. Much information is derived from the chronology of Mencius' life prefixed to Seou's edition of the Works of Mencius[28], and prepared by a scholar of the Ching Dynasty, namely Peun Tê Hui[29]. Many suggestions are also taken

25 六國年表. 26 司馬遷. 27 史記. 28 蘇批孟子. 29 彭德輝.

from Tseng Sheou Ku's[30] "A Supplemental Commentary and Literary Discussions on the Four Books."[31] But there are many points for which the writer of this essay alone is responsible.

Mencius was born in the 17th year of the sovereign Ngan[32] (385 B.C.), and died in the 25th year of the sovereign Nan (289 B.C.). His life thus extended over a period of ninety-six years and may be divided into three portions. The first, from his birth to his appearance in the Principality of Wei in the 33rd year of the sovereign Shien (336 B.C.), may be called Mencius' contemplative period. In this long period of fifty years we find Mencius a teacher in his native place. The second period, from his appearance in Wei to his retirement in the 3rd year of the sovereign Nan (312 B.C.), may be called the Period of Public Services. During these twenty-four years, Mencius travelled from one principality to another endeavouring to carry out his noble ideals of an imperial government. The last period, the Period of Retirement, covered the rest of his life till his death in the 26th year of the sovereign Nan (289 B.C.). This period of twenty-three years was spent in his native place, busy with the editing of the ancient classics and the composition of his own works.

Little is known about the first period. Tradition says that Mencius lost his father when he was only three years old, and this tradition has the support of Châu Ch'i, who, in the preface to his commentaries on the works of Mencius, says, "He lost his father at an early age." It contradicts, however, Liu Hsiang,[33] who wrote the Memoir of Mencius' mother, and it also contradicts the text of Mencius. Liu Hsiang says: "When Mencius was young, he returned home one day from school, and found his mother weaving. She asked him how he was getting on with his studies. 'Just as usual,' was the answer given in an indifferent manner. On hearing this, the

30 鄭小谷. 31 四書翼註論文. 32 安. 33 劉向.

dispirited mother took up a knife and cut through the web which she was weaving. The boy was greatly alarmed and asked what she meant. His mother said, 'Your neglecting your study is just like my cutting through my web. The superior man studies with an aim to establish a good name, and inquires in order to widen his knowledge. He therefore lives in safety when he stays at home, and is free from harm when he is abroad. Now, since you have neglected your study, it is certain that you will live only the life of a menial servant, and have no means of escaping from injuries. What difference is there from my case, when, seeing that weaving is my means of livelihood, I put aside my work before it is finished, and forget that in doing this I shall be unable to supply my husband and my son with clothes and shall be reduced to absolute poverty in the long run.'"[34] Here Mencius' mother distinctly mentions her husband, which shows clearly that the father was still living, while Mencius was attending school.

A still stronger evidence that Mencius' father did not die till the son reached maturity is found in Bk. I, Pt. II, Ch. 16 of the works, where Mencius was charged with having interred his mother in a more elegant manner than he had interred his father. Mencius would not have been held responsible for his father's burial if he had died while the son was a mere infant.

Possibly the father was a man of no extraordinary parts, and was therefore eclipsed in history by the celebrated mother. Or perhaps he was seeking his livelihood far from home, and the son was left to the care of the mother, who was undoubtedly a lady of virtue and ability, one whose way of educating her son has become a model of motherhood in China. The anecdotes embodied in the Memoir of Mencius' mother in Liu Hsiang's "A Collection of the Memoirs of Eminent Women,"[35] especially that one popularized by the Three Character Classic, telling how the virtuous mother thrice changed her residence

34 劉向列女傳. 35 列女傳.

for the sake of her son's education, have become so familiar that there in no necessity to repeat them here. It will be sufficient to observe that the influence of the good mother had a great effect upon the later life of her son, and that history has not failed to acknowledge its debt to her by giving her due credit in memoirs and records.

The next question we raise is, was Mencius a pupil of Confucius' grandson, Tze Sze ?[36] Châu Ch'i would answer in the affirmative; and this view is endorsed by K'ung Fu,[37] in a book entitled K'ung Ts'ung Tze,[38] Pan Koo,[39] author of the Book of the Former Han Dynasty,[40] and Yin Shiao,[41] author of the interesting book called "A Rational Explanation of Traditions and Legends."[42] Support is also claimed from a comparison between the "Doctrine of the Mean" and the Works of Mencius, which reveals so many points of similarity in teaching as to suggest the conclusion that the two philosophers must have stood to each other in the relation of master and pupil. Indeed, one eminent scholar of the Classics says: "Mencius gets the real spirit of the teaching of Tze Sze, and as this could not have been transmitted to him by any of Tze Sze's pupils, none of whom was a distinguished scholar, we must believe that Mencius learned directly from Tze Sze." This line of argument can easily be refuted. A careful examination of the Works of Mencius would rather incline one to the belief that Mencius had no personal connection whatever with Tze Sze. He mentions Tze Sze several times in his works, but never in any case indicates that he has been his pupil. Chü Hsi's[43] remark is very suggestive :—"One would wonder why there is no record of a single conversation between Tze Sze and Mencius, if they were master and pupil."

Before we dismiss this question, let us again refer briefly to the dates. According to the most reliable records, Confucius' death was in the forty-first year of the sovereign

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36 子思. 37 孔鮒. 38 孔叢子. 39 Pan Koo. 40 前漢書. 41 應劭. 42 風俗通義. 43 朱熹.

Tsin[44] (479 B.C.). At that time Tze Sze was at least four years old, for his father died three years before Confucius did and some authorities hold that Tze Sze at the death of his grandfather was mature enough to manage the morning ceremony, being then seventeen years of age. Sze-mâ Ch'ien records that Tze Sze lived to the age of sixty-two, while other scholars contend that he must have lived till at least the age of eighty-two, in order to make his service at the court of Duke Muh of Lu consistent with history. The latest date, then, that can be assigned to Tze Sze's death is the second year of the sovereign Ngan (400 B.C.), which is still sixteen years before the birth of Mencius. Some people are born great, and there is no necessity to make a sage the teacher of Mencius. The statement of the historian Sze-mâ Ch'ien that he studied under a disciple of Tze Sze is more probably correct.

As we have seen, the first period of the life of Mencius was a comparatively long one, extending over fully half a century. Much the greater part of this period was spent in Tsâu as a teacher of morals, attracting to himself multitudes of students from far and near. Tsao Chia come from a distant land to get his opinion on human nature, and Uh-lû would take one day's travel to see the master in order to answer a knotty question on practical ethics (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Ch. 1 and 2). His counsel was sought by the Duke of Tsâu even during his years of obscurity. Thus we read in Bk. I, Pt. II, Ch. 12 :—" There had been a brush between Tsâu and Lu, when the Duke Muh of Tsâu[45] asked Mencius, saying, ' Of my officers there were killed thirty-three men, and none of the people would die in their defence . . . . How is the exigency of the case to be met.' "

Mencius was diametrically different from the " wandering scholars " of his time, who travelled from one court to another, endeavouring to win the favour of the princes with their aggressive or defensive schemes. He lived in a period of con-

44 敬王. 45 鄒穆公.

fusion, a period generally known in Chinese History as the Period of the Contending States,[46] covering the last one hundred and fifty years of the Châu Dynasty. This dynasty practically came to an end some forty years after the death of Mencius, but the degeneration of political conditions in the country seems to have reached a climax in his life-time. "The five chiefs of the princes were sinners against the three kings. The princes of the present day are sinners against the five chiefs. The great officers of the present day are sinners against the princes" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Ch. 7). Those in authority were given up entirely to luxuries, such as "halls several times eight cubits, with beams projecting several cubits, food spread out over ten cubits square and attendant girls to the amount of several hundreds, pleasure and wine, and the dash of hunting, with thousands of chariots" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Ch. 34). The ambition of the ministers of the different principalities was "to enlarge the limits of the cultivated ground for their respective sovereigns, to fill their treasuries and arsenals, and to form alliances with other principalities so that their battles must be successful" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Ch. 9). All these were secured at the expense of the poor people. "The rulers of the principalities rob their people of their time, so that they cannot plough and weed their fields, in order to support their parents. Their parents suffer from cold and hunger. Brothers, wives, and children are separated and scattered abroad" (Bk. I, Pt. I, Ch. 5). Thousands, nay, myriads, of precious lives were sacrificed to the warlike, selfish ambition of the princes. "When contentions about territory are the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the fields are filled with them. When some struggle for a city is the ground on which they fight, they slaughter men till the city is filled with them" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Ch. 14.)

These were the evils of the time, and Mencius was fully alive to them. When we turn to the moral life of the people,

46 戰國.

we find a picture equally dark and gloomy. The cultivation of virtue was neglected, and the principles of benevolence and righteousness set at naught. More importance, as Mencius puts it, was attached to a deformed and abnormal finger than to an abnormal mind (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 12). People knew how to nourish a plant, but were ignorant of the right way of cultivating themselves (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 13). Honour and gain were everywhere sought, but it was forgotten that in men themselves was found that which was truly honourable and valuable (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 17). "Men of antiquity," said Mencius, "cultivated their nobility of Heaven, and the nobility of man came to them in its train. The men of the present day cultivate their nobility of Heaven in order to seek for the nobility of man, and when they have obtained that they throw away the other" (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 16). In the view of the superior man as to the ways by which men seek for riches, honour, gain, and advancement, there are few of their wives and concubines who would not be ashamed and weep together on account of them (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 33).

Then, again, heretical teachings were prevalent. The faith, which had been shown in the doctrines of Prince Châu and Confucius for hundreds of years, was now shaken to the very foundations. The great Doctrine of the Mean, the creed of orthodox Confucianism, was severely attacked by the school of Mih Te[47], while in another field the standard of "utilitarianism," equally formidable to orthodoxy, was raised by Yang Chü[48]. The problems which Socrates and his school faced in another part of the world were confronting simultaneously the philosophers in the Far East. Thus Mencius had a two-fold responsiblity to bear—that of the Greek philosophers after the fall of Athens, to defend the basis of morality; and that of Machiavelli in Italy in the sixteenth century, to unite a shattered empire. Mencius summed up the conditions

47 墨翟。 48 楊朱。

of his time in the following passage (Bk. III, Part II, Chap. 9) :—

"Sage emperors cease to rise, and the princes of the states give the reins to their lusts. Unemployed scholars indulged in unreasonable discussions. The words of Yang Chü and Mih Te fill the empire. If you listen to people's discourses, you will find that throughout it they have adopted views either of Yang or of Mih. Now, Yang's principle is 'each one for himself,' which does not acknowledge the claims of the sovereign. Mih's principle is 'to love all equally,' which does not acknowledge the peculiar affection due to a father. But to acknowledge neither king nor father is to be in the state of a beast. Kung-ming E said, 'In their kitchens, there is fat meat. In their stables, there are fat horses. But their people have the look of hunger, and on the wilds there are those who have died of famine. This is leading on beasts to devour men.' If the principles of Yang and Mih are not stopped, and the principles of Confucius not set forth, then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men, and men will devour one another."

Mencius was conscious of the seriousness of the situation. He realized, indeed, his responsibility and his obligations. "The whole empire is drowning," was a simile aptly used by Shun-yü Kwan[49]. Mencius was not at all blind to his duty of stretching out a helping hand to rescue it. "I am alarmed by these things," he said, "and address myself to the defence of the doctrine of the former ages, and to oppose Yang and Mih. I drive away their licentious expressions, so that such perverse speakers may not be able to show themselves" (Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9). He was also ready to enter into active service in order to rescue

49 淳于髡.

the drowning empire. Did he not say some years afterwards: "But Heaven does not yet wish that the empire should enjoy tranquillity and good order. If it wished this, who is there besides me to bring it about?" (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 13). He was only waiting for the opportunity of rescuing the country with right principles, for to attain a good end by evil means was no method of his. He cherished no idea of spending his life entirely in contemplation. The aim of the great man was to "obtain his desire for office in order to practise his principles for the good of the people." Mencius would never take such a selfish attitude as "to attend to his own virtue in solitude." His ideal was to make the whole empire virtuous.

His hesitation in entering into public service, however, greatly roused the curiosity of his disciples. "Did superior men of old time take office?" "What is the point of righteousness involved in your not going to see the princes?" These were some of their questions. Mencius' demeanour was so very different from the spirit of his time, that his disciple Ch'in Tae thought that he was rather carrying his principles to an extreme. "Master," said the disciple Ch'in, "you seem to me to be standing on a small point in not going to wait upon any of the princes. If now you were once to wait upon them, the result might be so great that you would make one of them emperor, or, if smaller, that you would make one of them chief of all the other princes." For Mencius to approach one of the princes was to his puzzled disciples only "bending one cubit in order to make eight cubits straight." It was a thing worth doing. But the philosopher would hold rigidly to his principle. To him, "to go to get office by an improper way is of a class with young people's boring holes to steal a sight of the loved one. A man who bends himself can never make others straight," he said.

At last the opportunity seemed to come when Mencius was drawing nigh to his fiftieth year. King Hui of the

Principality of Wei, a prince of high ambition, was making an especial effort to set his principality upon a stronger basis. His schemes of aggrandisement had been frustrated; his warriors, in whom he took so much pride, had been repeatedly put to rout; the Principality of Ch'î had inflicted upon his army a disastrous defeat; his eldest son was taken prisoner and died a captive, and his famous general, Pau Chuen[50] was killed, while the rising principality of Ch'in on the west captured another of his sons in battle, and he found himself unable to resist the encroachment of the Principality of Ch'ŭ on the south. Strong desires for renovation then took possession of his mind, and he invited to his court men of virtue and talent, among whom was Mencius.

The predominant desire of the prince, however, was military success. His first question addressed to Mencius was, "Venerable Sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand *li*, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my principality?" It was profit that he was aiming at, and his selfish motive was a shock to the philosopher, whose only principle in politics was benevolence and righteousness. "Why must your majesty use the word 'profit'?" was the reply.

The principles of a benevolent government were then set forth for the prince, but the prince considered them impracticable and indifferently put them aside, his warlike spirit seeking more satisfaction in military success than in the welfare of his people. Even the hope of imperial dignity failed to make him forego his vainglory. His selfishness made a lasting impression upon Mencius, who years after his death, still recalled the folly of the prince of Wei, and said, "The opposite indeed of benevolence was King Hui of Liang! The benevolent, beginning with what they care for, proceed to what they do not care for. Those

50 龐涓.

who are the opposite of benevolent, beginning with what they do not care for, proceed to what they care for. The King Hui of Liang, for the matter of territory, tore and destroyed his people, leading them to battle. Sustaining a great defeat, he would engage again, and afraid lest they should not be able to secure the victory, urged his son whom he loved, till he sacrificed him with them."

Mencius occupied no actual office in Wei, and remained there only about two years. He left the country on the death of the prince, having found that his successor was a man of but small parts.

Some scholars hold the view that Mencius returned to Tsâu, when he left Wei. But a close study of the text indicates that he proceeded from Wei directly to Ch'î. In Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 12, we read of Yin Shih[51] having remarked in reference to Mencius' journey to Ch'î that "he came a thousand *li* to wait upon the king. . . ." If he had come from Tsâu, his journey could not have covered one thousand *li*, but if from Wei it would have been fully that distance.

The motive which induced Mencius to come to Ch'î is a matter of conjecture. His faithful disciple Kung-sun Ch'âu[52] was a native of Ch'î, and might it not be that he was diverted from his journey home by his disciple asking him to visit the principality which was then in the zenith of its power?

His arrival in Ch'î created a great sensation. The then prince of the principality, known in history by the name of King Hsüan,[53] must have heard of the venerable teacher whose arrival was evidently reported to him, and he sent persons to spy out whether the renowned teacher was really different from other men (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 32). But we may be sure that Mencius asked for no interview with the prince without having first received an invitation. These are

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51 尹士. 52 公孫丑. 53 宣王.

his words : "What was it in the forester that Confucius thus approved? He approved his not going to the duke when summoned by the article which was not appropriate to him. If one go to see the princes without waiting to be invited, what can be thought of him?" Before long the invitation seems to have come. The duke was certainly anxious to make acquaintance with the philosopher, about whom he felt so curious. Mencius was satisfied with the etiquette of the prince's invitation, obtained an audience with him, and became hopeful of what might be accomplished with this ambitious ruler. Unlike King Hui, who would sacrifice his people and his beloved sons, to his selfish whims, King Hsüan of Ch'î was too compassionate to witness the death of an ox, which was to be killed in order to consecrate a bell with its blood. Mencius accepted a position as an unsalaried minister or counsellor. This was in the year 334 B.C. He had a bright prospect before him, and had evidently some desire of establishing himself in Ch'î, for we find that before long his family came to join him. For the first year or two, King Hsüan's attention was engrossed by an expedition against the principality of Yen, of which Mencius approved. "Now the ruler of Yen was tyrannizing over his people, and your Majesty went to punish him. The people supposed that you were going to deliver them out of the water and the fire, and brought baskets of rice and vessels of congee to meet your Majesty's host." The disposal of the conquered territory, however, roused the jealousy of the other princes, so an alliance was formed, and steps were taken to rescue the principality of Yen from the hands of Ch'î. The march of the allied army seemed to have been stayed only by a timely turn of policy on the part of Ch'î, urged by Mencius. The captives, old and young, were restored, the removal of the precious vessels from the conquered land was ordered to stop, and, with the consent of the people of Yen, a ruler for the principality was appointed. Thus Ch'î was saved from the

threatened attack, much to the credit of the good counsels of Mencius.

Just as Mencius was thus gaining the confidence of the prince, the death of his mother forced him to leave Ch'î. According to an ancient custom of the Châu Dynasty the deceased must be buried at the ancestral home, and consequently Mencius went to the home of his ancestors in the principality of Lu to bury his mother. He then returned to his native Tsâu, where he remained throughout the period of mourning, which was three years.

At the expiration of the mourning period, he started again for Ch'î, where his great hopes seemed to lie. His disciples were in high spirits, and looked forward to great things. On their way, Kung-sun Ch'âu asked Mencius, saying, "Master, if you were to obtain the ordering of the government in Ch'î, could you promise to accomplish anew such results as those realized by Kwan Chung and Yen?" Again, the same curious disciple asked, "Master, if you were to be appointed a high noble and the prime minister of Ch'î, so as to be able to carry your principles into practice, though you should thereupon raise the ruler to the headship of all the other princes, or even to the royal dignity, it would not to be wondered at. In such a position would your mind be perturbed or not?" Mencius seemed to have shared the hopefulness of his disciples, for in reply to a question why he would think it as easy to raise Ch'î to the royal dignity as to turn his hand, he said, "The people of Ch'î have a saying—'A man may have wisdom and discernment, but that is not like embracing the favourable opportunity. A man may have instruments of husbandry, but that is not like waiting for the farming seasons.' The present time is one in which the royal dignity may be easily obtained. In the flourishing periods of the Hsia, Yin, and Châu dynasties, the royal domain did not exceed a thousand *li*, and Ch'î embraces that much territory. Cocks crow and dogs bark to one another, all the way to the

four borders of the state—so Ch'î possesses the people. No change is needed for the enlarging of its territory: no change is needed for the collecting of a population. If its ruler will put in practice a benevolent government, no power will be able to prevent his becoming sovereign'' (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 2). And it was a benevolent government that Mencius tried to urge upon the prince of Ch'î. Speaking on one occasion to the prince, he said,'' You wish to enlarge your territories, have Chiu and Ch'û wait at your court, to rule the Middle Kingdom, and to attract to you the barbarous tribes that surround it. But doing what you do (by sheer brute force) to seek for what you desire is like climbing a tree to seek for fish. . . . . and so it is certain that a small country cannot contend with a great one, that few cannot contend with many, that the weak cannot contend with the strong. The territory within the four seas embraces nine divisions, each of a thousand *li* square. All Ch'î together is but one of them. If with one part you try to subdue the other eight, what is the difference between that and Tsâu (a small principality) contending with Ch'û (one of the most powerful principalities of the time)? With such a desire, you must turn back to the proper course for its attainment.'' He then set forth the great principles of a benevolent government, and foretold what results would ensue. ''This will cause all the officers in the kingdom to wish to stand in your Majesty's court, and all the farmers to wish to plough in your Majesty's fields, and all the merchants, both travelling and stationary, to wish to store their goods in your Majesty's market-place, and all the travelling strangers to wish to make their tours on your Majesty's roads, and all throughout the kingdom who feel aggrieved by their rulers to wish to come and complain to your Majesty. And when they are so bent, who will be able to keep them back?'' Mencius' eloquence, we read, had great effect upon the prince. ''I am stupid,'' said the prince, ''and not able to advance to this. I wish you, my Master, to assist my intentions. Teach me

clearly ; although I am deficient in intelligence and vigour, I will essay and try to carry your instructions into effect.'' Mencius must have tried hard to make the best of the king's good intentions. Strict moralists as were the great Confucian teachers, we see how in this case Mencius, carried away by his own enthusiasm, stooped to win the prince over to benevolent government by his very vices. He told the prince that the love of music, the love for parks and hunting, and the love of valour, nay, even the greed of wealth and the love of woman—in short, all the vices which intoxicated the minds of the rulers of the time, might be made subservient to good government, if proper regard to the welfare and interests of the people were maintained.

Notwithstanding these concessions on the part of Mencius, however, the prince still considered a benevolent government impracticable, or at least too slow in working, and he began to lose interest in the lectures of Mencius. He was aspiring indeed to the imperial dignity, which, to use his own words, was his great desire. But his way of attaining it was different from that of Mencius. After listening to a lecture of the philosopher on inter-state ethics, the prince said, " Yours is a great saying. But I have an infirmity—I love valour.'' Military success was so enticing to him that it sounded somewhat ludicrous that one should "with a great state serve a small one.'' The philosophy of the "Will to Power'' of Friedrick Nietzche would have been more acceptable to him. And no wonder. He lived in a warlike period, and represented only the spirit of his age. Moreover, the censorious attitude of Mencius was more or less repulsive. The philosopher would tell him that he had no longer any intimate minister ; for those whom he had advanced yesterday were gone to-day, and that he knew nothing about it (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 7). He was accustomed to flattery, and the way in which Mencius spoke to him was certainly not very flattering. Having exacted from the prince, by a kind of

Socratic dialectic, the answer that a friend unworthy of a trust should be deserted and that an incompetent chief criminal judge should be dismissed, Mencius immediately put the question: "If within the four borders of your principality there is no good government, what is to be done?" This brought home at once to the prince his ailment, and must have hit him hard. We are told that he was much embarrassed; he looked to the right and left, and spoke of other matters (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 6).

Mencius soon become conscious of the growing indifference of the prince toward his teaching, and one day said to him: "If you are going to build a large mansion, you will surely cause the master of the workmen to look out for large trees. . . . . If you have a gem unwrought in the stone, although it may be worth 240,000 taels, you will surely employ a lapidary to cut and polish it. But when you come to the government of the state, then you say: 'For the present put aside what you have learned, and follow me.'"

Mencius could not put aside what he had learned and follow the Prince of Ch'î. He could not possibly yield to his fancies. It was impossible for him to abandon his principles, and so he left the principality as soon as he felt that his principles could not be carried out there. He took his leave of the country early in the year 324 B.C., the 35th year of the sovereign Shien. He left it with lingering steps; for, after all, the Prince of Ch'î was the most promising ruler of the time. Immersed as he was in pleasures, the spark of nobility in him was not entirely extinguished. "How can it be said," he asked, "that I give up the king? The king is one who may still be made to do what is good. If he were to use me, would it be for the happiness of the people of Ch'î only? It would be for the happiness of the people of the whole empire. I am hoping that the king will change. I am daily hoping for this."

Mencius, however, hoped in vain. The prince was drawing nigh to the end of his days, and he died soon after Mencius' departure. Mencius never saw King Hsüan of Ch'î again.

Whether Mencius returned to Tsâu from Ch'î or proceeded directly to the principality of T'ăng[54] is a point which cannot very well be settled. There are no records in history, nor can any light be found in the text. All that is known is that about the year 334 B.C., the 45th year of the sovereign Shien, we find Mencius already in T'ăng. If he did return to Tsâu from Ch'î, he must have stayed at home for a very short time—a few months at the most.

His coming to T'ăng must have been welcome to the duke of that principality, who was acquainted with the philosopher and his teachings. Some fifteen years before, while the duke was still a crown prince, Mencius had two visits from him, and had unfolded to him his great doctrine on human nature and the principles of the government of the illustrious ancient Emperors Yaou and Shun. Later, while Mencius was in Tsâu during his period of mourning for his mother, the duke sent a special messenger to consult him upon the funeral service of the Duke Ting of T'ăng.[55]

In Bk. III, Pt. I, we find a long chapter in which Mencius expounded to the duke, known by the title of Duke Wen, the great principles of benevolent government. Nowhere else do we find a more detailed description of the views of the philosopher on this topic. It seems that the duke did have the intention to give Mencius' principles a fair trial and we may wonder what results would have ensued, had the experiment not been interfered with and put a stop to by the appearance in T'ăng of the "physiocrats," Hsü Hsing[56] and his followers, who taught the strange doctrine that princes and peasants alike should cultivate the ground and eat the fruit of their own labour. Against this doctrine, Mencius maintained

54 滕. 55 滕定公. 56 許行.

his position with great dignity and success. His subtle logic left the enemy absolutely helpless upon the field. He effectively vindicated the principle of division of labour, and proved historically the necessity of a governing class. He enunciated exactly what his great contemporary Aristotle taught in Greece, that some should govern and others be governed. "The government of the empire cannot be carried on along with the practice of husbandry." "The longing for a return to nature, such as was embraced in the eighteenth century by political philosophers in Europe, appeared to Mencius to be a mere fancy of the doctrinaire, dangerous to good government. To him, the idea was contrary to nature, and practical experience he held would prove it an absurdity. The rise of the governing class marked a distinct step forward in the progress of civilization, and Mencius showed clearly the impossibility of going backwards in the programme of the world's advancement. His disappointment with his political experiment in T'ăng was, however, not due primarily to the teaching of the speculators in political economy. They seem indeed to have been patronized by the Duke of T'ăng. But this was not so much for their teaching as for the flattering words with which they addressed him, saying that they had heard of his benevolent government and desired to become his people. The real cause of Mencius' disappointment lay deeper than this. The duke had a small territory to protect against two aggrandising neighbours, the Principality of Ch'î and the Principality of Ch'û, the most formidable powers of his time. "T'ăng is a small state, and lies between Ch'î and Ch'û. Shall I serve Ch'ĭ or shall I serve Ch'ŭ?" This was his question. On another occasion, when international politics assumed a grave aspect, he asked of the philosopher, "The people of Ch'ĭ are going to fortify Sĕĕ. The movement occasions me great alarm. What is the proper course for me to take in this case?" It was a question of life and death. It was not sufficient for Mencius to tell the duke that if he would

do good there should be, among his descendants, one who would attain to imperial dignity. It was some suggestion in practical politics that the duke required, not any abstract political ethics. But Mencius, however wise and lofty he was as a political philosopher, lacked subtlety as a practical politician. Or, what might sound better, his moral principles did not allow him to go into the political intrigues of his time. He had no practical suggestions to make as to how to save the helpless Principality of T'ăng from Ch'î and Ch'û. He, indeed, admitted that the plan was entirely beyond him (Bk. I, Pt. II, Ch. 13). "If you will have me counsel you," he said, "there is one thing I can suggest. Dig deeper your moats; build higher your walls; guard them with your people. In case of attack, be prepared to die in your defence, and have the people so that they will not leave you; this is a proper course." But if it should be asked how the people could be made so that they would not leave their ruler, Mencius' answer would again be—"by a bevevolent government," which would scarcely satisfy the Duke of T'ăng. At any rate, this course of acting was practical only to a state that could rely upon its own material strength, not to a small and weak state like T'ăng.

Mencius was in T'ăng for about five years, and in the year 319 B.C., the second year of the sovereign Shên Tsing, he is foundagain in Ch'î. How and why he left T'ăng, and how and why he came to Ch'î the second time, can only be conjectured, for we are left almost entirely in the dark. A new ruler had mounted the throne in Ch'î. With this ruler, Mencius might have made acquaintance during his former stay in the principality. Bk. II, Pt. II, Ch. 10 suggests that Mencius came to Ch'î by the invitation of the prince, and Chap. 14 in the same book indicates that he had his first audience with him in a place by the name of Ch'ung.[57] The first interview was so unsatisfactory that Mencius planned to make only a short stay in the country. Circumstances, however, prevented his

57 崇.

immediate departure. He even accepted office in Ch'î, though as before without salary. It seems that he commanded the respect of the prince, since he was once sent as chief commissioner on a mission of condolence to T'ăng, at the death of his old friend, Duke Wen, Wang Hwan,[58] the governor of Kâ and the prince's favourite, being appointed his assistant. But his deportment towards this new ruler of Ch'î was quite different from that towards King Hsüan. There was absent the former tone of familiarity and hopefulness, and their intercourse savoured of indifference on the part of one, and of suspicion on the part of the other. In Bk. II, Pt. II, except in two places, *i.e.*, chapter 11 and chapter 12, which seem to find their proper places in another part of the works, all references to "the king" of Ch'î are evidently to King Min.[59] Mencius never referred to him by his posthumous name as he did his predecessor, for he died several years after Mencius, namely in the year 284 B.C., and therefore his posthumous name was not known when Mencius compiled his works, or even when his disciples finally edited them, which appears to have been two or three years after the death of the master. Between King Min and Mencius, we find hardly a single lengthy conversation. Probably Mencius did not see this prince so frequently as he saw King Hsüan. One day Mencius was about to go to court to see the prince, when a messenger came saying that the prince was unable to call on the philosopher on account of illness, and that he would be glad to have the philosopher come to him. Mencius at once changed his plan of going to the prince, and undertook an elaborate procedure to make it understood that it was slighting him for a prince to summon him by a messenger.

The gulf then separating the prince of Ch'î and Mencius became wider in course of time, and in the year 314 B.C., the first year of the sovereign Nan, there happened an event which hastened the philosopher's departure. The neighbouring

58 王驩. 59 滑王.

Principality of Yen was suffering from some internal trouble, and King Min seized the opportunity for an expedition into the principality. He would not consult Mencius directly for he knew that the philosopher would oppose the plan. But the opinion of the venerable philosopher was too important to be disregarded. A messenger was sent to him, and the question was so put that Mencius could not give other than the required answer (Bk. II, Pt. II, Ch. 8). The prince proceeded to send his army to Yen, and took its capital with little difficulty. The expedition, however, turned out to be unpopular, and Mencius was charged with having initiated it. But he, with his usual ingenuity, repudiated the accusation, saying, "Shăn T'ung asked me whether Yen might be smitten, and I answered him, 'It may.' They accordingly went and smote it. If he had asked me—'Who may smite it?' I would have answered him, 'He who is the minister of Heaven may smite it.' . . . . But now with one Yen to smite another Yen: how should I have advised it?"

Mencius' prediction that one Yen substituted for another would not satisfy the people was fulfilled, and the inhabitants of Yen rebelled. As a result the Prince of Ch'î felt much ashamed before his counsellor, and drew still farther away from him; till at last Mencius offered his resignation, and left Ch'î the second time at the advanced age of 72.

After this, the movements of the philosopher are hard to trace. He may have gone to Sung again, and it is believed by some scholars that the conversation with his disciple Wan Chang, recorded in Bk. III, Pt. II, Ch. 5, took place while he was in that principality. But this view is not supported by any historical records. The last glimpse we have of him is in Lu where his disciple Yo-chang K'o was prime minister, and it is possibly by the invitation of this disciple, that he came to the principality. Arrangements were made for the duke to make his call upon the philosopher and everything looked as though the aged philosopher would have his final

chance to put his principles into practice. But the duke was diverted from his good purpose by the slander of a favourite named Tsang Ts'ang,[60] and the last hope of Mencius was blighted. His disappointment must have been bitter, but he made no complaint, and, in a calm and dignified manner, accepted his fate as the will of Heaven. "A man's advancement," he said, "is effected, it may be, by others, and the stopping him is, it may be, by efforts of others. But to advance a man or to stop his advance is really beyond the power of other men. My not finding in the Prince of Lu a ruler who would confide in me, and put my counsels into practice, is from Heaven. How could that scion of the Tsang family cause me not to find the ruler that would suit me?"

With these words, Mencius seems to have closed his public career, this being probably in the year 312 B.C. Thus for a quarter of a century he toiled and persevered to find a ruler "who had no pleasure in killing men," so that through him his noble principles of government might be put into practice, and the shattered empire united, thus bringing peace and good order again to the "black-haired race." But the times in which he lived were unfavorable. A warlike spirit took possession of every ambitious prince. Tactical schemes and political intrigues gained the ears of the rulers sooner than the principles of benevolence and righteousness. The day belonged to the "wandering scholars" such as Kung-sun Yen[61] and Chang Î,[62] "whose anger was feared by all the princes," and who were everywhere regarded as truly great men. Mencius held an idea too lofty for his time. It was:—"To dwell in the wide house of the world, to stand in the correct seat of the world, and to walk in the great path of the world; when he obtains his desire for office, to practise his principles for the good of the people; and, when that desire is disappointed, to practise them alone; to be above the power of riches and honours to make dissipated, of poverty and mean condition to

60 臧倉. 61 公孫衍. 62 張儀.

make swerve from principle, and of power and force to bend:—these characteristics constitute the great man."

The rulers of his day were inclined to make the same complaint in the field of politics that his disciple Kung-sun Châu and, perhaps, many others did in the field of ethics: "Lofty and admirable are your principles, but to apply them in actual practice may well be likened to ascending the heavens,—something which cannot be reached" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Ch. 41). He was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, but he had not even the privilege of preparing the path for a greater than he to come. After him, just as for some years immediately before him, brute force reigned supreme. The Châu Dynasty was approaching its end. This was the Dark Age in Chinese History so far as politics and morality were concerned. Might was right, and Mencius yielded submissively to his fate. He retired from the turmoil of the world, and spent the rest of his long life in the society of his disciples; engaged in lecturing to a select few and in putting on record his sentiments and teachings, which have been handed down to us as the seven books of his famous Works. Tradition says, and tradition now is our only source of information, that the year 288 B.C., the 26th year of the sovereign Nan, the last sovereign of the Châu Dynasty, marked the end of the life of the great teacher of China. His was a life nobly lived, but a life, like the lives of many other great men of antiquity, of which we have but meager records.

CHAPTER III.

THE WRITINGS OF MENCIUS.

The writings of Mencius are generally supposed to be all contained in the seven books now in our possession known as "The Works of Mencius." Various evidences are, however, found in history and in other sources suggesting the hypothesis that there were once four additional books of Mencius, besides the present seven. Ying Shao of the Han Dynasty, who lived in the second century of the Christian era, says in his book entitled "A Rational Explanation of Traditions and Legends," that Mencius wrote eleven books. Châu Ch'î in the preface to his commentaries on the Works of Mencius makes the statement that there are also four additional books, entitled "On the Goodness of Man's Nature," "Terms Discriminated," "An Exposition of the Classic of Filial Piety," and "The Practice of Government." In Pau Koo's work, "The Book of the Former Han Dynasty," we find in the volume entitled "Records of Arts and Literature"[63] this entry: "The Works of Mencius in eleven books." Coming to the time of the Sung Dynasty, Sun Shih (孫奭 A.D. 962-1033), in his exposition of the Works of Mencius, upholds the view of Châu Ch'î, and cites Liu Chin's "Eleven Books of Mencius"[64] in circulation during the Han Dynasty, as including the four additional books. The book on the Goodness of Man's Nature, one of these four additional books, is mentioned by Wang Ch'ung[65] (A.D. 27-97) in his great work, the Lun-hêng. Quotations from Mencius which are not found in the seven extant books also occur in the writings of Hsun Ching[66] who lived in the third century before Christ, not many years after the time of Mencius, and in the writings of Tung Chung-shu[67] in the second century before Christ.

63 藝文志. 64 劉歆孟子九十種. 65 王充. 66 荀卿. 67 董仲舒.

These four additional books are entirely lost to us at the present day. They were rejected as spurious by Châu Ch'î, when he annotated the Works of Mencius. So also by Chai Huao Chin (翟灝情), a scholar in the early years of the Ching Dynasty, who made a careful investigation into their history in his interesting work entitled "An Examination of the Discrepancies connected with the Four Books;"[68] and he points out that in the Catalogue of Books in the History of the Sui Dynasty[69], is found the entry of nine books of Mencius annotated by Chi Wu Sui[70]. He admits the possibility that by the time of the Sui Dynasty (A.D. 589-617) two of the four additional books of Mencius still remained, and quotes a passage from the Diary of Liu Chang She[71], a scholar in the Sung Dynasty, showing that in Liu's time there was found a copy of Mencius' book on the Goodness of Man's Nature. But he also observes that as the T'ang Dynasty come in between the Liang and the Sung Dynasties, and as no trace of the four books is found in the copious writings of the T'ang scholars, the authenticity of the books is somewhat doubtful. The truth seems to be that Mencius' works were not much known before the notorious burning of the ancient books in the reign of Shih Huang Ti, the first emperor of the Chin Dynasty[72]. A study of the essay on Human Nature by Hsun Ching shows not only that the author had an inadequate idea of the position of Mencius, but also that he probably only knew his teaching from hearsay. Indeed, Mencius' writings were so little known that they were entirely overlooked when the ancient books were searched out and burnt by the drastic order of the tyrannical Emperor in the year 213 B.C. But in the early years of the Han Dynasty, which succeeded the short-lived Chin Dynasty, patrons of literature were found in the Emperor Shao Wên[73] and in Prince Shên of Ho Ts'eng[74]. "In the reign of the

68 四書攷異. 69 隋書經籍志. 70 綦毋邃孟子注九卷. 71 劉昌詩. 72 秦. 73 孝文帝. 74 河間獻王.

Emperor Shao Wên (178-155 B.C.)," says Châu Ch'î in his preface to Mencius, "doctors were appointed to take charge of the classics and the writings of the ancient worthies, and the works of Mencius were numbered among the latter class." In the Book of the Former Han Dynasty, we read, that in the thirteenth year of the Emperor Shao Ching (143 B.C.), the Prince of Ho Ts'eng obtained a large number of ancient books which had been hidden away since the time of the Chin Dynasty, and the books of Mencius were among them. But we have seen that the Works of Mencius were known before this in the reign of the Emperor Shao Wên; and the books of Mencius brought into light again in the time of the Emperor Shao Ching must have been the so-called additional books.

To Châu Ch'î, the spuriousness of these books was so evident, that he did not hesitate to say that they had been palmed off upon the world by persons who imitated the writings of Mencius. It is true that many valuable discoveries were made in the early part of the Han Dynasty by diligent scholars in their search for the literary remains of the writers of the ante-Chin period, the classical period of Chinese literature and philosophy; but at the same time the patronage of the emperors and the enthusiasm of the time brought about many literary forgeries. Since the days of Châu Ch'î, only the names of the four additional books of Mencius have been handed down by tradition, and they are known only to students of antiquities. In the Sui Dynasty, these four traditional books made their appearance again. But scholars found them to be merely another attempt at forgery, and they were soon lost in oblivion.

Our study of the teaching of Mencius is thus confined to the seven books. That these seven books were the production of Mencius himself is a view held by Sze-mâ Chien, Châu Ch'î, and Ying Shao, three important authorities on the life and the writings of the philosopher. For more than

a millennium after the death of Mencius, scholars seemed to be unanimous in upholding this view. Han Yü[75] in the eighth century of the Christian era was the first to question its correctness. In one of his letters we read: "The books of Mencius were not written by Mencius himself. They were merely his sayings put on record after his death by his disciples Wân Chang and Kung-sun Châu." Han gave no reasons for his opinion, but he was followed by Ling Shân-sze[76] of the T'ang Dynasty and Ching E-chuen[77] of the Sung Dynasty. Ling Shân-sze wrote a book entitled "Continuation of Mencius," and in his preface to the book, intimates that the seven books did not give a full representation of the teachings of Mencius, as they were written by his disciples, and therefore a continuation was necessary. The weightiest argument sustaining this view is, however, that of Chaou Shwô-tze[78], who pointed out that all the princes mentioned in the Works of Mencius were referred to by their posthumous names. Hence, he drew the conclusion that the books of Mencius could not have been written by the philosopher himself, as it was improbable that he survived all those princes. Yen Jo-chü[79] (A.D. 1636-1704) author of the "Topography of the Four Books," and a great scholar and acute critic of the Classics, answered this argument by the hypothesis that the Works of Mencius were edited by his disciples after Mencius' death. But we learn from the "Historical Records" of Sze-mâ Chien that Mencius did outlive all the princes mentioned in his works, except King Min of Ch'î, who is always referred to merely as "the king."

More light, perhaps, will be thrown upon this question of authorship by a careful examination of the Works themselves. This has been done by several eminent scholars, among whom is Yen Jo-chü, who makes the statement in his "Examination of the Dates of the Birth and the Death of

75 韓愈. 76 林愼思. 77 程伊川. 78 晁說之. 79 閻若璩.

Mencius''[80] that, ''the Analects were compiled by Confucius' disciples, therefore the manners of the master were minutely recorded. The seven books of Mencius were, however, written by the philosopher himself, hence only the sayings and their occasions were recorded.'' Every student, indeed, cannot but notice a uniformity of style throughout the seven books. Unlike the Confucian Analects, they give no impression of being compiled by many hands. Chü Hsi[81], perhaps the greatest student of the classics and the most qualified to give the final word as to the authorship of the Works of Mencius, makes the remark in his writings: ''A thorough study of the seven books of Mencius will show that the style is so uniform throughout, that the whole composition seems to be blended together and indicates no sign of patchwork whatever.'' In another place he says: ''I am rather inclined to think that the Works of Mencius were written by the philosopher himself. There is a uniformity of style throughout the whole without a single blemish. If they were not written by the hand of Mencius, they could not have been so well composed.'' This view of Chü Hsi is probably nearest the truth, if we add to it the modification of Yen Jo-chü that the Works were edited by his disciples after the death of the philosopher.

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80 孟子生卒年月考. 81 朱熹.

CHAPTER IV.

MENCIUS' TEACHING IN GENERAL.

In the seven books of the Works of Mencius, we find that the philosopher dwells chiefly on four main topics: (1) Man's Nature; (2) the Development of the Moral Constitution; (3) the Principles of Benevolent Government; and (4) Orthodox Confucianism as opposed to the heresies of the time.

The foundation of his whole system of philosophy is, however, laid in his doctrine of man's nature. That man's nature is originally good is the basic principle. Nearly the whole of the sixth book is occupied with the exposition of this important doctrine, and it is in this book that we find all the ingenuity of Mencius as a philosopher and all of his subtlety as a dialectician.

As to what is meant by man's nature, Mencius gives us no formal definition. He seems to think that man's nature is one of those things that can be comprehended but cannot be very well defined. It can be discerned only through its various manifestations. "All who speak about the nature of things," he says, "have in fact only the phenomena to reason from" (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 26). But he takes great care to make it clear that the phenomena of life in general are not to be confounded with those particular phenomena through which man's nature may be discerned and ascertained. As the whiteness of a white feather is not like the whiteness of white snow, and the whiteness of white snow not like the whiteness of white jade,—so the phenomena of life, which may be, in some cases, the very perversions of man's nature, are different and must be distinguished from those phenomena of life which reveal the true nature (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 3). There are phenomena of life appertaining to the higher self of man, and there are others which the higher self would condemn. "Let a man not do what his true self would not

Men mind let him not desire what his true self would not desire; dis- to act thus is all he has to do" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 17). re But difficult as it is to define man's nature, its structure is certain, and is by no means incomprehensible. The following passage is quoted by Mencius from the Book of Poetry:—

"Heaven in producing mankind
Gave them their various faculties and
relations with their specific laws."

These laws are manifested in the feelings proper to man. The sight of a child about to fall into a well rouses a feeling of commiseration in every human mind. In the same way, we find inherent in man the feeling of shame and of dislike, of reverence and of respect, of approving and of disapproving. These feelings imply respectively benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and knowledge, and these qualities are, therefore, natural to man. Indeed, they are as essential to man as his four limbs,—all men being furnished with them as an integral part of their moral constitution (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 6; Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 6).

Men being thus equally endowed with all the necessary moral principles, it naturally follows that they are each one capable of the same attainment. "The sage and all men are of the same kind," Mencius says, and hence, "all men may be Yâos and Shuns" (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 6; Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2). Men's failure to reach the goal is not due to a want of capacity, but to their own negligence in developing what is innate in them (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 8). "All things are already complete in us," he says (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 4). Constant effort on our part is the only requisite. "Seek and you will find them. Neglect and you will lose them" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 3). "The course of Yâo and Shun was simply filial piety and fraternal love" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 2). But filial piety and fraternal love are man's intuitive abilities. Children carried in the arms all know

what it is to love their parents, and when they grow up a little, they all know what it is to love their elder brothers" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 15). These natural virtues when completely developed are sufficient to set the whole empire in order, for "the great man is he who does not lose his child's heart" (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 12). According to Mencius, therefore, the complete development of one's nature is both the Summum Bonum and the Categorical Imperative. "He who has exhausted all his mental constitution knows his nature. Knowing his nature, he knows Heaven. To preserve one's mental constitution and nourish one's nature is the way to serve Heaven" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 1). We have in this passage Mencius' whole system of Ethics in a nutshell.

The process of developing man's own nature is described by Mencius in more than one place in his Works. He teaches that man's moral constitution is made up of two parts, the will and the passion-nature, or, in the terminology of modern Western Ethics, the conscience and the appetites and affections. In Bk. II, we find this passage: "The will is the leader of the passion-nature. The passion-nature pervades and animates the body. The will is first and chief, and the passion-nature is subordinate to it. Therefore I say,—Maintain firm the will and do no violence to the passion-nature" (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 2). In this doctrine, Mencius anticipates Bishop Butler's great Sermons on Human Nature. The conscience is the first and chief, and the appetities and affections are subordinate to it. As a part of the moral nature of man, conscience is different from the other parts not only in degree but in kind. Thus: "Some parts of the body are noble, and some ignoble; some great, and some small. The great must not be injured for the small, nor the noble for the ignoble. He who nourishes the little belonging to him is a little man, and he who nourishes the great is a great man" (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 14). Again:

"I like life, and I also like righteousness. If I cannot keep the two together, I will let life go, and choose righteousness (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 10). But at the same time Mencius emphasizes the point that virtue is no affectation. "There is no need to do violence and injury to man's nature in order to fashion from it benevolence and righteousness" (Bk. VI, Pt. I, Chap. 1). Anything contrary to nature is not desirable. Virtue does not require the suppression of the natural appetites and affections. It only requires that the appetites and affections be placed under the proper regulation of the ruling principle, the conscience. To use the language of the modern psychologists, the predominating desire moves the man, and it is absolutely important that this predominating desire be in the right path. Indeed, the aim moulds the character and makes the man. "He who rises at cock-crow and addresses himself earnestly to the practice of virtue is a disciple of Shun. He who rises at cock-crow and addresses himself earnestly to the pursuit of gain, is a disciple of Chih. If you want to know what separates Shun from Chih, it is simply this—the interval between the thought of gain and the thought of virtue" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 25). In a word, virtue is the destiny of man, the purpose for which he has been created. Swerve ever so little from this purpose, "this right path," as Mencius puts it, and the goal can never be reached.

But self-cultivation is not the sole aim of man. Man is not self-contained. He is a part of a community, a social animal, and is born not only with certain faculties, but also with certain relationships. His virtue is therefore not complete without the social side, and his duty towards Heaven is not fulfilled till he has responded to Heaven's call in making the whole world virtuous by the influence of his own virtue. Thus Confucius begins his teaching in the Great Learning with this wonderful sentence: "What the Great Learning teaches is—to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people and

to rest in the highest excellence." "It is Heaven's plan in the production of mankind," says Î Yin, "that they who are first informed should instruct those who are later in being informed, and they who first apprehend principles should instruct those who are slower to do so" (Bk. V, Pt. I, Chap. 1). That this is the right sentiment for the superior man, is also the idea of Mencius. The superior man should feel that "if among the people in the country there be any who do not enjoy such benefits as Yâo and Shun conferred, it is as if he himself pushed them into a ditch." Mencius agrees with Plato, 'that the philosopher should rule through the sovereign.' Nay, it is his duty to rule, for to exert adequately his influence, he must unite virtue with authority. Politics is thus identified with Ethics in Mencius' philosophy.

Even in politics the same moral principles implanted in man's nature will prove sufficient, when they are properly developed. To Mencius, as to Plato, the state is merely the individual magnified. All men are created on the same pattern, and therefore it follows that the state, being the sum total of the individuals within it, is similarly constituted. Thus Mencius says: "All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others. The ancient kings had this commiserating mind, and they, as a matter of course, had likewise a commiserating government. When with a commiserating mind was practised a commiserating government, to rule the kingdom was as easy a matter as to make anything go round in the palm" (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 6).

The interdependent nature of Politics and Ethics in Mencius' system is further seen in his teaching that it is the function of the state to facilitate the moral development of the people; and that a good government is a requisite to the people in general in their cultivation of virtue. We see how Mencius in his teaching advocates state education and urges the need of a benevolent government, not indeed, as prudent steps for the ruler to take, but as constituting the very

essentials of a state. We shall have occasion to dwell at greater length on this point later on, but one or two quotations may be given here. "Scholars distinguished from the mass," he says, "rouse themselves even without a King Wên, but the mass of men wait for a King Wên, and then they will receive a rousing impulse" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 10). The influence of the ruler is such that "if he is benevolent and righteous, all will be benevolent and righteous" (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 11). The ideal state is the state where the king and the philosopher are united in the same person. Here again we find a counterpart of Plato's teaching in Mencius.

Finally, in Mencius there is found a very distinctly intolerant spirit towards any doctrine that diverges the least bit from the orthodox Confucianism, of which he is an avowed advocate. He justifies his intolerance by the necessity of the time. Speaking about the heretical teachings of Yang Chû and Mo Tî, he says, "Their delusions spring up in men's minds, and do injury to their practice of affairs. Shown in their practice of affairs, they are pernicious to their government . . . . . In former times, Yü repressed the vast waters of the great inundation, and the country was reduced to order. Châu-Kung's achievements extended even to the barbarous tribes of the east and north, and he drove away all ferocious animals, and the people enjoyed repose. Confucius completed the 'Spring and Autumn,' and the rebellious ministers and villainous sons were struck with terror. . . . . I also wish to rectify men's hearts, and to put an end to these perverse doctrines, to oppose their one-sided actions and banish their licentious expressions ;—and thus to carry on the work of the three sages" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 9). Even in being intolerant, Mencius has still his eyes fixed upon a good government.

Thus the central idea of Mencius' system is a benevolent government used as a means to facilitate the development of

man's nature, which is originally good, so that every individual with all his faculties and relations may rest in the highest excellence. He has, indeed, made no systematic attempt to formulate a system of political philosophy, or at least he has left the world no system. A close study of his works will enable us to glean a sufficient number of his sentiments, expressed on various occasions, so that when we put them together, we shall have some idea of the political ideals which the philosoper has held up before the eyes of the many generations of Chinese since his time. This, then, will be our next and our main task; to inquire what Mencius' conception of the state is; how the state is constituted; what function it has to fulfill. Then to show what influence Mencius has exerted upon Chinese life and Chinese politics; what contribution he has made to Chinese thought, and last of all, how the China of the present day may still be benefited by Mencius' teaching, for his is a teaching which not only China herself but the world at large will not willingly let die.

CHAPTER V.

MENCIUS' CONCEPTION OF THE STATE.

In the last chapter it was seen that, according to Mencius the need for political organization arises from the very nature of man. We are now in a position to enter into a fuller discussion of this point.

In the first place, man is born with certain relations. Throughout the Chinese Classics we find the teaching that man cannot live apart from the five relations, the five constants as they are sometimes called. These five constants are, according to the order given in the Classics, the relation of sovereign and minister, father and son, elder brother and younger brother, husband and wife, friend and friend. The second, third, and fourth represent the family ties; the fifth indicates social intercourse; and the first expresses man's position in the state. The state is, therefore, as natural to man as his family relations. "To acknowledge neither father nor sovereign is to be in the state of a beast," says Mencius. Indeed, the state natural to man. It is necessitated by man's moral and economic needs, and that it is sufficient to satisfy these needs justifies amply its existence.

Moreover, man, as we have tried to make clear, has for his highest aim the development of his own moral nature. That is his primary duty to Heaven and to himself. It is his destiny. But, Mencius says, "They are only men of education, who without a certain livelihood, are able to maintain a fixed heart. As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do, in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license. When they thus have been involved in crime, to follow them up and punish them—this is to entrap the people. How can

such a thing as entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man?" In other words, the mass of people cannot talk about virtue and self-cultivation with an empty stomach. Ethics and politics must rest upon an economical basis. It is an accepted principle of modern moralists and philanthropists that to improve the moral conditions of men reformation must begin by improving their economical conditions. And this, in Mencius' opinion, can best be brought about by the state. "Therefore," continues the philosopher, "an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people, so as to make sure that, for those above them, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and for those below them, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of perishing. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good, for in this case the people will follow after it with ease." The philosopher then proceeds to explain how each family should plant mulberry-trees, keep its live stock, and do its farming so that it may be well supplied with food and clothing. This being done, education comes next in importance. "Let careful attention be paid to education in schools, the inculcation in it especially of the filial and fraternal duties, and grey-haired men will not be seen upon the roads, carrying burdens on their backs or on their heads." Material welfare and education are, therefore, two essential factors in developing man's moral nature, so as to enable him to rest in the highest excellence. And since the state is the most efficient agency to affect this, the need for it is evident. Thus the state not only has its origin in human nature, but it is necessitated by human needs.

But what does Mencius understand by the state? In Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 28, he sums up the essential elements of a state in the brief statement, "The precious things of a prince are three;—the territory, the people, and the

government." It is remarkable to notice that this statement of Mencius is upheld by most of the modern political scientists such as Bhentschli in Germany, Sidgwick in England, and Burgess in America. That there can be no state without the people goes without saying. But the people alone will not make a state: they must occupy a definite territory. According to Mencius' teaching a nomad tribe cannot be considered a state, for the people must at least have reached the agricultural stage in civilization before the state is possible. Finally a state is not a mere assemblage of people occupying a particular portion of the earth's surface. It must be an organized unit, with an organized government. There must be governors in contradistinction to the governed. Thus Mencius says in one place: "With but few potters a kingdom cannot subsist;—how much less can it subsist without men of a higher rank than others" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 10).

To recapitulate, we have seen that the state is necessitated by man's nature, that it is resting upon a physical basis, and finally that it is completed by man's agency. But in Mencius' philosophy, the state is not a mere accident in history. It is not a convenient means of satisfying man's needs just hit upon by mere chance. It is destined by Heaven, and is a part of God's plan in creating the universe. This idea is clearly shown by the following passage quoted by Mencius from the Book of History: "Heaven having produced the inferior people, made for them rulers and teachers, with the purpose that they should be assisting to God, and therefore distinguished them throughout the four quarters of the land."

It is clear from this that in Mencius' conception of the state there is a distinct idea of the divine right of the ruler. The ruler is the vicegerent of Heaven on earth. This, however, does not mean that the ruler is infallible and can be absolute. It is true that, according to Mencius, the state is established by divine order, and the ruler occupies his place by divine sanction. But, at the same time, Mencius equally

teaches the doctrine that the state is given to the charge of the ruler, not as a private possession, but as a public trust. In this, Mencius faithfully follows the idea of the Book of History, of which he was apparently a great student, and from which he frequently quotes in his Works. In the Book of History, it is said: "The decree indeed may not always rest on us." This means to say that the decree rests with the merits of the ruler, and will be cancelled so soon as the ruler proves himself incompetent for its execution. Mencius once went to Ping-lû and addressed the governor, saying, "If one of your spearsmen should lose his place in the ranks three times in one day, would you, Sir, put him to death or not?" "I would not wait for three times to do so," was the reply. Mencius said, "Well, then, you, Sir, have likewise lost your place in the ranks many times. In bad calamitous years and years of famine, the old and feeble of your people, who have been found lying in the ditches and water channels, and the able-bodied, who have been scattered about the four quarters, have amounted to several thousands" (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 4).

A place of authority is a post of public duty, and when the duty is not properly discharged, it is only natural that the place be vacated and a new incumbent appointed. This principle is applied by Mencius not only to the ministers, but also to the sovereign himself with equal force. This is shown in one of his conversations with King Hüan of Ch'î (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 6), to whom he said, "Suppose that one of your Majesty's ministers entrusted his wife and children to the care of his friend, while he himself went to Ch'û to travel, and that, on his return, he should find that the friend had let his wife and children suffer from cold and hunger; how ought he to deal with him?" The king said, "He should cast him off." Mencius proceeded, "Suppose that the chief criminal judge could not regulate the officers under him, how would you deal with him?" The king said, "Dismiss him." Mencius

again said, "If within the four borders of your kingdom there is not good government, what is to be done?" The king looked to the right and left, and spoke of other matters. By the first two questions, Mencius established his major premise that any one who proved himself unworthy of a trust was to be put out of his place. The logical conclusion was then forced upon the king, and he averted it only by ignoring it altogether.

It is Mencius' teaching that all authority comes from God. Whether he be the sovereign, or a prince, or an officer in the government, a man has no right to rule over his fellow-men except in so far as it is given to him by Heaven. But the question naturally arises, How can the will of God be known? In Bk. V, Pt. I, Chap. 5, we find the answer given by Mencius. Wân Chang, one of his disciples, asked him one day, saying, "Was it the case that Yâo gave the throne to Shun?" The reply was, "No. The sovereign cannot give the throne to another," "Yes," the disciple said, "but Shun had the throne. Who gave it to him?" "Heaven gave it to him," answered the master. "'Heaven gave it to him':—did Heaven confer its appointment on him with specific injunctions?" Mencius replied, "No, Heaven does not speak. It simply showed its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs." "'It showed its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs':—how was this?" to which Mencius replied, "The sovereign can present a man to Heaven, but he cannot make Heaven give that man the throne. A prince can present a man to the sovereign, but he cannot cause the sovereign to make that man a prince. A great officer can present a man to his prince, but he cannot cause the prince to make that man a great officer. Yâo presented Shun to Heaven, and Heaven accepted him. He presented him to the people, and the people accepted him. Therefore I say, 'Heaven does not speak. It simply indicated its will by his personal conduct and his conduct of affairs.'" Chang said, "I presume to ask

how it was that Yâo presented Shun to Heaven, and Heaven accepted him; and that he exhibited him to the people, and the people accepted him." Mencius replied, "He caused him to preside over the sacrifices, and all the spirits were well pleased with them; thus Heaven accepted him. He caused him to preside over the conduct of affairs, and affairs were well administered, so that the people reposed under him; thus the people accepted him. Heaven gave the throne to him. The people gave it to him. Therefore, I said, 'The sovereign cannot give the throne to another.' Shun assisted Yâo in the government for twenty and eight years;—this was more than man could have done, and was from Heaven. After the death of Yâo, when the three years' mourning was completed, Shun withdrew from the son of Yâo to the south of the south river. The princes of the kingdom, however, repairing to court, went not to the son of Yâo, but they went to Shun. Litigants went not to the son of Yâo, but they went to Shun. Singers sang not the son of Yâo, but they sang Shun. Therefore, I said, 'Heaven gave him the throne.' It was after these things that he went to the Middle Kingdom and occupied the seat of the Son of Heaven. If he had, before these things, taken up his residence in the palace of Yâo, and had applied pressure to the son of Yâo, it would have been an act of usurpation, and not the gift of Heaven. This sentiment is expressed in the words of the Great Declaration (in the Book of History),—'Heaven sees according as my people see; Heaven hears according as my people hear.'"

The gist of this long and interesting chapter may be summed up thus: No sovereign reigns in his own right. He is chosen by Heaven and is installed by the consent of the people. His authority is entrusted to him for some end other than his own. It is not transferable, and, therefore, cannot be given by him to another person of his own accord.

The same principle holds good with regard to succession to the throne. In the Golden Age of Chinese History, from

which Mencius got his inspiration for his political ideals, the practice was that the emperor chose his own successor. But the successor thus chosen was a mere candidate, and before he succeeded to the throne, he must secure the sanction of Heaven and the approval of the people. According to Mencius' theory, then, the emperor did not succeed to the throne by the right of primogeniture in the male line, as a superficial study of the Chinese History seems to indicate; he must comply with the will of Heaven and follow the opinion of the people. Mencius did not ignore the hereditary principle in practice during the Châu Dynasty under which he lived. He only endeavoured to show that the emperor had no absolute claim to any hereditary right in the throne. The throne became hereditary and continued to be so just so long as it was the will of Heaven and the desire of the people. In a word, no one is born a king. Wân Chang one day asked the philosopher, saying, "People say, 'When the disposal of the kingdom came to Yü, his virtue was inferior to that of Yâo and Shun, and he transmitted it not to the worthiest, but to his son.' Was it so?" Mencius replied, "No. It was not so. When Heaven gave the kingdom to the worthiest, it was given to the worthiest. When Heaven gave it to the son of the preceding sovereign, it was given to him. Shun presented Yü to Heaven. Seventeen years elapsed, and Shun died. When the three years' mourning was expired, Yü withdrew from the son of Shun to Yang-ch'ang. The people of the kingdom followed him, just as after the death of Yâo, instead of following his son, they had followed Shun. Yü presented Yi to Heaven. Seven years elapsed, and Yü died. When the three years' mourning was expired, Yi withdrew from the son of Yü to the north of Mount Ch'î. The princes, repairing to court, went not to Yi, but they went to Ch'î (Yü's son). Litigants did not go to Yi, but they went to Ch'î, saying, 'He is the son of our sovereign; the singers did not sing Yi, but they sang Ch'î, saying, 'He is the son of our sovereign.'

Following this principle, Mencius naturally sanctions the dethronement of a bad sovereign. Nay, he even considers tyrannicide in some cases justifiable. Once the King Hüan of Chî asked him, saying, "Was it so that T'ang banished Chieh, and that King Wu smote Châu?" The philosopher replied, "It is so in the records." The king said, "May a minister then put his sovereign to death?" Mencius said, "He who outrages the benevolence proper to his nature, is called a robber; he who outrages righteousness, is called a ruffian. The robber and ruffian we call a mere fellow. I have heard of cutting off of the fellow Châu, but I have not heard of the putting a sovereign to death in his case."

This is a clear statement not only of the right of revolution, but of the justifiable nature of tyrannicide. The sole end for which kingship is created is the welfare of the people, and when kingship is not conducive to this end, it forfeits its existence.

According to Mencius, then, the judgment whether a sovereign, at a given time, is or is not sustaining his right to royalty rests entirely with the opinion of the people. *Vox populi vox dei* is his principle. To the question of King Hüan as to whether he should take possession of the principality of Yen, which he had conquered, Mencius gave the reply: "If the people of Yen will be pleased with your taking possession of it, then do so. Among the ancients there was one who acted on this principle, namely, King Wû. If the people of Yen will not be pleased with your taking possession of it, then do not do so. Among the ancients there was one who acted on this principle, namely, King Wên" (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 10).

But the people, when understood as the masses, are incapable of concerted action. "The monster of many heads," as some political thinkers in Europe have called popular government, cannot carry into effect the will of Heaven, though it is expressed through the public opinion of the country. Who,

then, is to carry it into effect? Given an abominable tyrant having forfeited his right to royalty, the problem as to who is to remove him from the throne, is a difficult one. Mencius seems to think that the duty devolves first upon those ministers who are also relatives of the ruler. With Mencius the patriarchal idea of the state is still very strong. He follows faithfully the Confucian teaching set forth in the Doctrine of the Mean that one of the nine standard rules of government is to show affection to the members of the royal family, so that among the relatives of the ruler there may be no grumbling nor resentment (Doctrine of the Mean, Chap. 20). But these relatives of the sovereign besides being entitled to special favours, they are also under special obligations, one of which is the duty of seeing that the ruler is following the right principles, to remonstrate with him, when he goes astray, and to dethrone him as a last resort, when the state is endangered by his faults. Thus, when King Hsüan Ch'î asked about the office of the high minister, Mencius said, "Which high minister is your Majesty asking about?" "Are there differences among them?" inquired the king. "There are," was reply. "There are the high ministers who are nobles and relatives of the prince, and there are those who are of a different surname." The king said, "I beg to ask about the ministers who are nobles and relatives of the prince." Mencius answered, "If the prince have great faults, they ought to remonstrate with him, and if he does not listen to them after they have done so again and again, they ought to dethrone him." Mencius here seems to think that the ministers who are members of the royal family naturally have the greatest interests in the welfare of the House, and it is only right for them to take the summary measure of dethroning an unworthy prince when it is the only means to save the House from ruin. It means, of course, that a good deal of statesmanship and nothing short of a strong will and a commanding personality will be able to handle the situation.

In default of such a minister, that is, a minister who is also a relative of the prince, a minister of a different surname may also take upon himself the important responsibility of deposing an incompetent prince, when the situation becomes so critical as to necessitate such a drastic step. Kung-sun Châu, a disciple of the philosopher, asked this question: "Î Yin said, 'I cannot be near and see him so disobedient to reason', and therewith he banished Tâi-chiâ to Tung. The people were much pleased, when T'âi-chiâ became virtuous, he brought him back, and the people were again much pleased. When worthies are ministers, may they indeed banish their sovereigns in this way, when they are not virtuous?" Mencius answered in the affirmative.

There are many who dispute this doctrine of Mencius. King-makers such as Î Yin in China and the Earl of Warwick in England are considered by some as dangerous figures. The sovereign may be deposed and set up again at the caprice of some powerful minister under the cloak of acting as the people's champion. At any rate, so the objection runs, demagogism is not to be encouraged. The people can be as easily pleased as they can be deceived. But Mencius makes no such headlong statement as to justify the deposition of a sovereign by his minister under any circumstances. In his reply to Kung-sun Châu in Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 31, he takes special care to add that a minister may depose his sovereign, provided he has the same purpose as Î Yin; otherwise his action will be no less than usurpation, which is never justifiable. What Mencius means by the purpose of Î Yin is clearly the promotion of the welfare of the country and the interests of the people. That should be the overruling consideration in politics. That alone justifies an extra-legal means being resorted to in an extraordinary case. According to Mencius, the state is a means whereas the welfare of the people is the end, and the sovereign is only the person entrusted with the control of the means in order to best secure

the realization of the end. Borrowing the language of Plato, we may say that to Mencius the sovereign is to the state as the state is to the welfare of the people. Thus Mencius says, in Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 14: "The people are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain (an expression often used to indicate the state) are the next; the sovereign is the slightest." The logical outcome of this principle is that the sovereign may be sacrificed for the welfare of the state, and the state may be sacrificed for the interests of the people. In reply to a question of Duke Wên of T'ăng on international politics, Mencius said, "Formerly, when King T'âi dwelt in Pin, the barbarians of the north were constantly making incursions upon it. He served them with skins and silks, and still he suffered from them. He served them with dogs and horses, and still he suffered from them. He served them with pearls and gems, and still he suffered from them. Seeing this, he assembled the old men, and announced to them, saying, 'What the barbarians want is my territory. I have heard this,—that a ruler does not injure his people with that wherewith he nourishes them. My children, why should you be troubled about having no prince? I will leave this land.' Accordingly, he left Pin, crossed the mountain Liang, built a town at the foot of Mount Ch'î, and dwelt there" (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 15). This case cited by Mencius was a plain instance of the state being sacrified for interests of the people. The ruler must not injure the people with that wherewith he nourishes them. This is what Mencius wants to emphasize.

From what has been said, it is clear that according to Mencius' philosophy, the people constitute the most important element in the state. Nay, it is the channel through which the will of Heaven expresses itself, as is shown in Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 14. In that chapter, Mencius says, "To gain the peasantry is the way to become sovereign; to gain the sovereign is the way to become a prince of a state; to gain the

prince of a state is the way to become a great officer." This is very democratic teaching. But we should place ourselves on very uncertain ground if we jump to the conclusion that the state as conceived by Mencius is a democracy in the modern sense of the word. It is true, indeed, that in Mencius' philosophy the democratic element stands out in bold relief. Men, as we have seen, are all created equal. They are equally endowed, and are capable of equal attainments. To Mencius, the Confucian saying that all men within the four seas are brethren has greater significance than to most of the followers of the great sage. Equality and fraternity mean nothing less to Mencius than to the French apostle of democracy, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Not only all men can be Yâos and Shuns, but all men, before they become equal in their moral and intellectual attainments, are already equal before the law of the country. T'âo Yin once asked the philosopher, saying, "Shun being sovereign, and Kân Yâo chief minister of justice, if Kû-sân (Shun's father) had murdered a man, what would have been done in the case?" Mencius said, "Kân Yâo would simply have apprehended him." "But would not Shun have forbidden such a thing?" "Indeed, how could Shun have forbidden it? Kân Yâo had received the law from a proper source." "In that case what would Shun have done?" "Shun would have regarded abandoning the kingdom as throwing away a worn-out sandal. He would privately have taken his father on his back, and retired into concealment, living somewhere along the sea coast. There he would have been all his life, cheerful and happy, forgetting the kingdom." Even the father of the sovereign is subject to the same law as the humblest citizen in the state. Mencius knows no privileged class.

Notwithstanding these democratic teachings, the state of Mencius is yet a long way removed from the democracy of our own time. We must bear in mind what Henry Sidgwick points out that the distinction between power that is uncon-

sciously possessed and power consciously possessed should be carefully noticed. The political experience of every country shows that no government is possible without the consent of the governed, in whatever form and through whatever channel that consent may be given. The fear of possible disorder is always a retraint to governmental power. The most absolute despot in India, says Henry Maine, will not dare to alter a tittle of the customs of the Indian tribes, although he has practically in his own hand the life and death of the people under his rule. But it would sound ridiculous to call the state of Runjeet Singh a democracy. In determining a democracy, the question is not how much the consent of the people is consulted by the ruler, but to what extent the "active consent" of the people influences the operations of government. Indeed, in Mencius' philosophy, popular consent plays such an important part in politics that it almost amounts to popular sovereignty. Still he conceives popular consent as merely passive, and with no definite means of being expressed. "If the people of Yen will be pleased with your taking possession of it," said the philosopher to King Hsüan, then do so. . . . . If the people of Yen will not be pleased with your "taking possession of it, then do not do so." The people have no organ to express their will, and have to wait to have it interpreted by some minister of the sovereign who feels his responsibility and remontrates with the sovereign, or by some benevolent prince in the kingdom who responds to Heaven's call and comes forth as "the minister of Heaven" and the champion of the oppressed. In Mencius' teaching, we find more than enough to build up a democracy, but democracy as such was probably never actually in his mind.

There is more to be said in favour of classifying the state of Mencius as a theocracy. We have seen how the state has for its basis a divine sanction, and how the ruler is regarded as the vicegerent of Heaven. But leaving aside the disputed question as to whether theocracy is a form of state, it is at

least true to Mencius' teaching that the divine will is always interpreted by some human being or revealed by the opinion of the people. Mencius knows no original direct revelation, which is essential to a theocracy.

The state as conceived by Mencius is a monarchy in form, although its principle is virtue, which, according to Montesquieu, will entitle it to the name of democracy. In the last analysis, however, it is nearer to Plato's monarchy, or royal government, than any other form described by western political thinkers. Mencius' ideal of the state is a sage king who rules in perfect accordance with the principles of benevolence and righteousness, so as to be pleasing in the sight of God and to sustain the love of the people.

CHAPTER VI.

FORM AND ORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT.

Following the distinction made by modern political scientists between the state and the government, it is proposed to treat in the present chapter the form and the organization of government as taught by Mencius in his Works.

Government, according to Mencius, is based on the necessary division of labour in a civilized nation. In Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4, he says, "Great men have their proper business, and little men have their proper business. Moreover, in the case of any single individual, whatever articles he can require are ready to his hand, being produced by the various handicraftsmen: if he must first make them for his own use, this way of doing would keep all the people running about upon the roads. Hence, there is the saying, 'Some labour with their minds, and some labour with their strength. Those who labour with their minds govern others; those who labour with their strength are governed by others. Those who are governed by others support them; those who govern others are supported by them.' This is a principle uinversally recognized."

This passage reads very like the philosophy of Plato in the "Republic." As with Plato there must be in a state an intelligent class, who shall govern the state, and a producing class, whose function is to supply the materials necessary for the subsistence of the state; so with Mencius there must be men of a superior grade and country-men, for, "if there were not men of a superior grade, there would be none to rule the country-men, and if there were not country-men, there would be none to support the men of superior grade" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3). But there are certain differences between the teachings of the two philosophers, which are worthy of note. In the first place, Plato is an aristocrat,

while Mencius is a democrat. Class demarcation finds no footing in the political philosophy of the Chinese sage. It is the division of labour, necessitated by nature, which alone makes difference among men. Men are not made of different stuff such as gold and brass and iron, as Plato wants us to believe. All are created on the same pattern, endowed with the same moral nature and the same mental constitution, and placed in this world for the same grand purpose. Then, in the second place, Mencius does not consider it necessary to make the warriors a special class. While Plato's republic is to a great extent the idealization of the warlike Sparta, Mencius, on the other hand, draws his inspiration for his political ideals from the most peaceful period in the history of the most peace-loving people, the period of Yâo and Shun. Mencius, indeed, is not blind to the importance of national defence. But he holds that when the hearts of the people are won over by the benevolence of the ruler, men are ready enough to fight or to die for their country (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 12.) "Opportunities of time vouchsafed by Heaven are not equal to advantages of situation afforded by the Earth, and advantages of situation afforded by the Earth are not equal to union arising from the accord of men (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 1). When men are moved by the cause of righteousness, they prove themselves the best fighters. This is being proved by the present European War, and we may feel sure which side Mencius would take in the heated debate of our own time as to the advantages and disadvantages of general conscription.

We turn next to inquire more particularly into the form of government. Mencius finds his model in the Golden Ages of Yâo and Shun and the prosperous periods of the Three Dynasties. It is in the past that we should look for the best and the model for the future. "To raise a thing high," he says, "we must begin from the top of a mount or a hill; to dig a great depth, we must commence in the low ground

of a stream or a marsh. Can he be pronounced wise, who, in the exercise of government, does not proceed according to the ways of the former kings?" (Bk. IV, Pt. I. Chap. 1).

Of the form of government in the time of Yâo and Shun Mencius leaves us no description. He merely intimates in different places that the government of Yâo and Shun was a benevolent one and that it had for its sole object the welfare of the people.

A good deal, however, may be learned from Mencius concerning the ancient political institutions of the Châu Dynasty, although even these were known to him only in fragments. Pei-kung Î asked the philosopher one day, saying, "What was the arrangement of dignities and emoluments determined by the House of Châu?" Mencius replied, "The particulars of that arrangement cannot be learned, for the princes, disliking them as injurious to themselves, have all made away with the records of them. Still I have learned the general outline" (Bk. V, Pt. II. Chap. 2). From what Mencius then described for Pei-kung Î and from what is found in other places in the Works, it is possible to get a fair idea of the important features of the government under the Châu Dynasty.

The empire was organized on the feudal system. At the top of the elaborate system was the emperor, the Son of Heaven, under whose direct rule was a territory of a thousand *li* square, which was called the Imperial Domain. Immediately under him were his own ministers, the Ching, or the Chief Ministers, the Tâi-fu, or the Great Officers, and the Yuen Sze, or the Scholars of the First Class. He had also his vassal-princes, who were graded in a series of five ranks or dignities, and through whom he ruled the empire indirectly. The highest of the dignitaries was the Kung, or the Duke, and next to him was the Hâu, or the Marquis. Each of these received from the imperial suzerain, the Son of Heaven, a fief of a hundred *li* square. The Pâi, or the

Earl, who was next to the Hâu in rank, was given a fief of seventy *li* square, while the Tsz, or the Viscount, and the Nan, or the Baron, received each from the emperor a feudal estate of fifty *li* square.

The government in each feudal state was similar in organization to the imperial government within the imperial domain.

Chapter 2 in Book III, Part II, gives a fairly clear description of the different officials in the feudal states and their respective emoluments: "A state which embraced a territory of a hundred *li* square, was a great state. In such a state, the ruler had ten times as much income as his chief minister; a chief minister four times as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the first class; a scholar of the first class twice as much as one of the middle class; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest class; the scholar of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had for their emolument as much as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the fields.

"In a state of the next order, where the territory was seventy *li* square, the ruler had ten times as much revenue as his chief minister; a chief minister three times as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the first class; a scholar of the first class twice as much as one of the middle class; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest class; the scholar of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had for their emolument as much as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the fields.

"In a small state, where the territory was fifty *li* square, the ruler had ten times as much revenue as his chief minister; a chief minister three times as much as a great officer; a great officer twice as much as a scholar of the first class;

a scholar of the first class twice as much as one of the middle class; a scholar of the middle class twice as much as one of the lowest class; the scholars of the lowest class, and such of the common people as were employed about the government offices, had for their emolument as much as was equal to what they would have made by tilling the fields.

"As to those who tilled the fields, each husbandman received a hundred *mâu*. When those *mâu* were manured, the best husbandmen of the highest class supported nine individuals, and those ranking next to them supported eight. The best husbandmen of the second class supported seven individuals, and those ranking next to them supported six; while husbandmen of the lowest class supported only five. The salaries of the common people who were employed about government offices were regulated according to these differences."

The organization of government described by Mencius in this long chapter was evidently a feudal monarchy resting on an agricultural basis. We shall see next how the land in each feudal principality was allotted to the people according to the famous system of the "nine square division," so enthusiastically advocated by Mencius as the very foundation of a benevolent government. A description of the system is found in Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3. Besides the hundred *mâu* allotted to each male who had the support of a family, each one, from the highest officers down to the lowest, must have his holy field consisting of fifty *mâu*, the produce of which was intended to supply the means of sacrifice. The supernumerary males, who did not have the care of a family, had their twenty-five *mâu*. "A square *li* covers nine squares of land, which nine squares contain nine hundred *mâu*. The central square is the public field, and eight families, each having its private hundred *mâu*, cultivate in common the public field. Not till the public work is finished, may they presume to attend to their private affairs."

This nine-square division of the land is, in the opinion of Mencius, not only the best system of land-tenure considered from the economical point of view, but the social benefits resulting from it are conducive to the very end of the state. "On occasion of death, or removal from one dwelling to another, there will be no quitting the district. In the fields of a district, those who belong to the same nine squares rendered all friendly offices to one another in their going out and coming in, aid one another in keeping watch and ward, and sustain one another in sickness. Thus the people are brought to live in affection and harmony" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3).

In short, Mencius believes that under such a feudal system everyone will live in perfect contentment. The ruling class have their emoluments properly regulated, and the common people all feel that their means of livelihood is secure to them. The goodness of man's nature has then its full play and virtue prevails throughout the country. In Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 13, Mencius pictures to us his Utopia. "Under a true sovereign," he says, "the people have an air of deep contentment. Though he slay them, they do not murmur. When he benefits them, they do not think of his merit. From day to day, they make progress towards what is good, without knowing who makes them do so."

Such, then, is what Mencius means by the Imperial Government, and such are its effects.

But how is the imperial government to be brought about? What are its requisites? These were some of the questions asked by the princes of Mencius' time and it will be interesting to note his answer. Diametrically different from the views of his contemporaries, Mencius holds that an extensive territory is not essential to the practice of the imperial government. "He who, using force, makes a pretence to benevolence is the leader of the princes. A leader of the princes requires a large kingdom. He who, using virtue,

practises benevolence is sovereign of the kingdom. To become the sovereign of the kingdom, a prince needs not wait for a large territory. T'ang did it with only seventy *li*, and King Wên with only a hundred *li*" (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 3).

Nor is military force a requisite. One day Wan Chang asked the philosopher, saying, "Sung is a small state. Its ruler is now setting about to practise the true royal government, and Ch'î and Ch'û hate and attack him. What in this case is to be done?" (Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 5). Mencius told him that the prince who practises benevolence with sincerity has none to fear, for a benevolent government is mightier than any military force. "Sung is not," he said in conclusion, "practising true royal government as you say. If it were practising royal government, all within the four seas would be lifting up their heads, and looking for its prince, wishing to have him for their sovereign. Great as Ch'î and Ch'û are, what would there be to fear from them?" In a conversation with King Hui of Liang, he said, "If your Majesty will indeed dispense a benevolent government to the people, being sparing in the use of punishments and fines, and making the taxes and levies light, so causing that the fields shall be ploughed deep, and the weeding of them be carefully attended to, and that the strong-bodied, during their days of leisure, shall cultivate their filial piety, fraternal respectfulness, sincerity, and truthfulness, serving thereby, at home, their fathers and elder brothers, and abroad, their elders and superiors,—you will then have a people who can be employed, with sticks which they have prepared, to oppose the strong mail and sharp weapons of the troops of Ch'î and Ch'û" (Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 5). Relying on this principle, the philosopher questioned the validity of the Book of History. "It would be better to be without the Book of History," he said in one place, "than to give entire credit to it. In the 'Completion of the War,' I select two or three passages only,

which I believe. The benevolent man has no enemy under heaven. When the prince the most benevolent was engaged against him who was the most the opposite, how could the blood of the people have flowed till it floated the pestles of the mortars?" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 3).

In holding these views, Mencius set himself in diametrical opposition to his time. With all his might, he endeavoured to stem the tide of brute force then in ascendancy. He condemned mercilessly the spirit of militarism and aggrandisement which reigned supreme in his days. "Those who are skilful to fight," he said, "should suffer the highest punishment. Next to them should be punished those who unite the princes in leagues; and next to them, those who take in grassy commons, imposing the cultivation of ground on the people" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 14). The imperial government requires no such material strength as an extensive territory or a strong army. Its foundation rests upon a better and nobler basis. A virtuous sovereign assisted by virtuous ministers will be all that is necessary. With Mencius, the sovereign is the centre of gravity in the state. Thus he says, "The root of the empire is in the state. The root of the state is in the family The root of the family is in the person of its head" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 5). What the sovereign does is followed by the people, and what he is tells effectively upon the whole nation. "If the sovereign be benevolent, all will be benevolent. If the sovereign be righteous, all will be righteous" (Bk. IV, Pt. II, Chap. 5). Indeed, to Mencius' mind, the sovereign occupies such an important position in the state, and exerts such an extensive influence upon the people, that he seems almost to embrace all and embody all. Thus, as Dr. Faber points out, the notorious saying of Louis XIV, "L'état c'est moi," has some truth in it, only its meaning must be understood in the spirit of Mencius.

Let us now turn our attention to the character of a true sovereign as depicted by Mencius.

First of all, the true sovereign must have a peace-loving spirit. This question was once put to Mencius by King Hsiang of Liang: "How can the empire be settled?" Mencius replied, "It will be settled when it is united under one sway." "Who can so unite it?" asked the king again. Mencius' answer was, "He who has no pleasure in killing men can so unite it." In making this statement, Mencius struck the right chord. The age in which he lived was a warlike age. Union was what the country needed and needed badly. Incessant war harassed the land throughout its length and breadth, and to satisfy the insatiable ambitions of the princes thousands of precious lives were sacrificed, cities desolated, crops destroyed, and peace banished from the country. The people were thirsting for order, and they would hail as their saviour and sovereign any prince who should come forth as the champion of humanity and put into practice the principles of a benevolent government.

In other words, the sovereign must make benevolence the controlling principle of his life and conduct. Military force may conquer a country, but it cannot succeed in the long run in holding the power gained by such a conquest. "When one by force subdues men, they do not submit to him in heart," says Mencius. They submit, because their strength is not adequate to resist" (Bk. II, Pt. I. Chap. 3). "To yield to force," says Rousseau, "is an act of necessity, not of will. . . . . As soon as men can disobey with impunity, they may do so legitimately." To be sovereign is, according to Mencius, completely to win the hearts of the people. "He who practises benevolence in the spirit of real virtue is the sovereign. . . . . When one subdues men by virtue, they are pleased in their hearts' core, and sincerely submit, as was the case with the seventy disciples in their submission to Confucius." Hence the philosopher says, "There are instances of individuals who got possession of a single state without practising benevolence, but there has

been no instance of the whole empire's being got possession of by one without benevolence'' (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 13). The empire, Mencius seems to think, is too extensive to be ruled by sheer military despotism. It can be ruled only with the consent of the ruled, when their hearts are won.

But benevolence is not conceived by Mencius as a passive virtue. It must be shown in the various actions of the sovereign and the many activities of the government. Mere intention, however good, amounts to little. "Virtue alone is not sufficient for the exercise of government; laws alone cannot carry themselves into practice. . . . . When the sages had used the vigour of their eyes, they called in to their aid the compasses, the square, the level, and the line, to make things round, square, level, and straight:—the use of the instruments is inexhaustible. When they had used the power of hearing to the utmost, they called in the pitch-tubes to their aid to determine the five notes:—the use of these tubes is inexhaustible. When they had exerted to the utmost the thoughts of their hearts, they called in to their aid a government that could not endure to witness the sufferings of men; and their benevolence overspread their empire. Hence we have the saying:—'To raise a thing high, we must begin from the top of a mount or a hill; to dig a great depth, we must commence in the low ground of a stream or a marsh.' Can he be pronounced wise, who, in the exercise of government, does not proceed according to the ways of the former kings?" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 1). Elsewhere he says, "He who as a sovereign would perfectly discharge the duties of a sovereign, and he who as a minister would perfectly discharge the duties of a minister, have only to imitate the one Yâo and the other Shun. He who does not serve his sovereign as Shun served Yâo does not respect his sovereign, and he who does not rule his people as Yâo ruled his, injures his people" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 2). In a word, the true sovereign must needs give expression to his benevolence, and the best way is to imitate Yâo and Shun.

This sounds very conservative, but it contains in it a great deal of truth, and shows much political insight, when it is interpreted in the right spirit. Speculation in politics is to be feared. The doctrinaire is dangerous and should be guarded against. We are on firm ground only when we rest upon history. The whole stock of experience gained in the past ages by our predecessors is not to be despised and wantonly set aside. The present cannot be cut off from the past, because history works out certain principles which must be handed down as valuable heritage to the succeeding generations. What is good should be followed, but followed in such a manner as to be compatible with the existing circumstances. It is only important that the past be followed not because it is past but because it has proved to be good. Experience and reason cannot be separated. The two must join hands in order to be of value.

Especially natural was it in Mencius' case, that he should turn his eyes fondly to the past. He must have read of the innocent happiness and the smiling prosperity of the country in the days of Yâo and Shun. Contrasting these with the deplorable conditions of his own time, how the oppressed groaned under the tyrannical ruler, how crime multiplied and virtue decayed, he could not but wish that among the rulers of the age there might be found one who would lend him his ears, carry into effect the principles of Yâo and Shun, and bring to life again the Golden Ages long buried in history. He made it, therefore, the pursuit of his life to seek for a virtuous sovereign who would imitate the sage rulers of the past.

As we have seen, the sovereign is the vicegerent of Heaven on earth. Nay, more than this, he is the parent of the people. He should therefore ever keep in his mind the welfare of the country, and always aim at the interests of the people. He should be so much engaged in the business of the government, that he has no time to give to any other pursuit. Hsü Hsing

and his school maintained the communistic view that "wise and able princes should cultivate the ground equally and along with the people, and eat the fruit of their labour, and that they should prepare their own meals, morning and evening, while at the same time they carry on their government." Mencius proved the absurdity of such a view, and showed that the sage sovereigns of the past had been so absorbed in their solicitude for the people that it had been impossible for them to find leisure for cultivating the ground.

This does not mean, however, that the true sovereign is one who lives an ascetic life, monotonous and melancholy. He may have all his enjoyments, he may keep his royal parks, build his summer palaces, amuse himself with hunting and music, satisfy his own innocent love for woman, satiate his desire for wealth, and cherish his own ambition; nay, he may enjoy all the pleasures and privileges appropriate to the sovereign without interfering in any way with the practice of a benevolent government. It is only required that amidst his pleasures and enjoyments he be still in hearty sympathy with those under his rule, considerate of the aged and destitute, and kind to the poor and suffering. He should set his mind ever upon the welfare of the country; for it is with this that he has been entrusted by the will of Heaven and the consent of the people. It is his duty to see that agriculture, the main source of subsistence in the country, is not interfered with, that education is promoted and carried on in the right way, that justice is equitably administered, and that punishment is properly awarded so as to be fair to all. He can discharge all his multitudinous and important duties only by careful study and constant effort. The art of government, Mencius holds, is to be acquired just as any other great art. "When throughout the kingdom," says this philosopher, "there is leisure and rest from external troubles, let the ruler take advantage of such a season, and clearly digest the principles of his government with its legal sanctions, and then even great

kingdoms will be constrained to stand in awe of him'' (Bk. II, Pt. I, Chap. 4). But above all other things the sovereign should live a virtuous life. The end of the imperial government is to bring about such a condition that every one in the country should cultivate virtue and live a right life; for, as has already been quoted, ''if the sovereign be benevolent, all will be benevolent, and if the sovereign be righteous, all will be righteous.'' ''What the superior man loves,'' Mencius says in another place, ''his inferiors will be found to love exceedingly. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that between the wind and grass. The grass must bend when the blows upon it'' (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 2).

But the government is not to be carried on by the sovereign alone. Even Yâo, entitled the 'highly meritorious', and called great by Confucius, found himself inefficient to administer the state single-handed. ''In the time of Yâo, when the world had not yet been perfectly reduced to order, the vast waters, flowing out of their channels, made a universal inundation. Vegetation was luxuriant, and birds and beasts swarmed. The various kinds of grain could not be grown. The birds and beasts pressed upon men. The paths marked by the feet of beasts and prints of birds crossed one another throughout the Middle Kingdom. To Yâo alone this caused anxious sorrow. He raised Shun to office: and measures to regulate the disorder were set forth. Shun committed to Yî the direction of the fire to be employed, and Yî set fire to, and consumed, the forests and vegetation on the mountains and in the marshes, so that the birds and beasts fled away to hide themselves. Yü separated the nine streams, cleared the courses of the Tsî and T'a and led them all to the sea. . . . . The Minister of Agriculture taught the people to sow and reap, cultivating the five kinds of grain. . . . . The Minister of Instruction was appointed to teach the relations of humanity. . . . . What Yâo felt giving him anxiety was the not getting Shun. What Shun felt giving him anxiety was the not getting

Yü and Kâo Yâo. . . . . Hence to give the throne to another man would be easy ; to find a man who shall benefit the kingdom is difficult" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4).

Difficult as it is to secure the best talents of the country and employ them in the service of the government, it is a duty of vital importance devolving upon the sovereign. With the performance of this duty is bound up the very existence of the state and the efficiency of the goverment. Mencius says, "If men of virtue and ability be not confided in, a state will become empty and void" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 12). Again : "If a prince hates disgrace, the best course for him to pursue is to esteem virtue and honour virtuous scholars, giving the worthiest among them places of dignity, and the able, offices of trust" (Bk. II, Pt. I Chap. 4).

To secure the services of men of virtue and ability, the sovereign must pay them due respect and extend to them invitations in a humble and courteous spirit. "A prince who is to accomplish great deeds," says Mencius, "will certainly have ministers whom he does not call to go to him. When he wishes to consult with them, he goes to them. The prince who does not honour the virtuous, and delight in their way of doing, to this extent, is not worth having to do with. Accordingly, there was the behaviour of T'ang to Î Yin ; he first learned of him, and then employed him as his minister ; and so without difficulty he became emperor. There was the behaviour of the Duke Hwan to Kwan Chung; he first learned of him, and then employed him as his minister ; and so without difficulty he became chief of all the princes" (Bk. II, Pt. II, Chap. 2).

But to pay the many officials employed in the government and to meet the various expenditures of the state, a regular revenue is necessary ; hence taxation must be resorted to. Throughout the Works of Mencius, we find the philosopher constantly urging the princes of his time to make the taxes and levies light. This was, of course, due to the circumstances

of the age. The extravagant luxuries and the warlike ambition of the rulers led to heavy taxation. "After the whole year's toil, the people are not able to nourish their parents, so that they proceed to borrowing to increase their means, till the old people and children are found lying in the ditches and water channels" (Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 7). These words of Mencius are enough to show the oppressive nature of the taxes in his days. For this reason, he repeatedly called the attention of the princes to the sufferings of the people under their rule, and tried to bring home to them the importance of a properly regulated system of taxation. "There are the exactions of hemper-cloth and silk, of grain, and of personal service," he said. "The prince requires but one of them at once, deferring the other two. If he should require two of them at once, then the people would die of hunger. If he should require the three at once, then fathers and sons are separated" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 27). But there is a minimum below which taxation cannot go. Once Pâi Kwei said to Mencius, "I want to take a twentieth of the produce only as the tax. What do you think of it?" Mencius said, "Your way would be that of Mo (a barbarous tribe on the north of China). In a country of ten thousand families, would it do to have only one potter?" Kwei replied, "No. The vessels would not be enough to use." Mencius went on, "In Mo all the five kinds of grain are not grown; it only produces the millet. There are no fortified cities, no edifices, no ancestral temples, no ceremonies of sacrifice; there are no princes requiring presents and entertainments; there is no system of officers with their subordinates. On these accounts a tax of one-twentieth of the produce is sufficient there. But now it is in the Middle Kingdom that we live. To banish the relationships of men, to have no superior men; how can such a state of things be thought of? With but few potters a kingdom cannot subsist; how much less can it subsist without men of a higher rank than others? If we wish to make the taxation lighter than the system of Yâo and

Shun, we shall just have a great Mo and a small Mo. If we wish to make it heavier, we shall just have the great Chieh and the small Chieh" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 12).

This passage shows plainly that, while taxation should not exceed what the people can afford to pay, still it must be adequate to keep the machinery of the government going and to maintain the pomp and dignity of the state. One-tenth, the rate adopted by the Three Dynasties, is proposed by Mencius as the most reasonable and equitable rate of taxation.

Before we close the present chapter, a few remarks must be made with regard to the character and duties of the ministers who should assist the true sovereign and to whom Mencius attaches so much importance in bringing about a benevolent government.

According to Mencius there are four different classes of ministers (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 19). First, there are persons who serve the prince in order to court his favour. These he would spurn as abject, servile characters, unworthy of their positions. When raised to dignity, Mencius says, they will only disseminate their wickedness among all below them (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. I). But, alas! he found only too many of these ministers in his own time, and they, too, were those who enjoyed popularity and success everywhere. "Such persons are now called 'good ministers,'" he observed, "but anciently they were called 'robbers of the people.'" Indeed, Mencius did not deign to call them by the honorable name of ministers, but spoke of them simply as "those who served the prince."

Secondly, "there are ministers who seek the tranquillity of the state, and find their pleasure in securing that tranquillity." These do not yet attain the ideal, but they deserve respect and honour. Mencius seems to require of them two qualifications: to be virtuous and maintain due self-respect in intercourse with princes, and to possess a high ideal with which they should inspire their princes. No intellectual

qualification is expressly mentioned, but it is presupposed when the governance of a country is considered to require the knowledge of a specialist. But it is essential that such a minister should love what is good. "The love of what is good," says Mencius, "is more than a sufficient qualification for the government of the empire. . . . If a minister loves what is good, all within the four seas will count a thousand *li* but a small distance, and will come and lay their good thoughts before him" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 13).

Thirdly, "there are those who are the people of Heaven. They, judging that, if they were in office, they could carry out their principles throughout the empire, proceed so to carry them out." Î Yin, minister of the Emperor T'ang, and Tai-kung, minister of Wü Wang, were examples. They felt that they had been sent by Heaven with a special mission, and therefore owed special obligations to their fellow-men. Amidst the cries of the suffering and the groans of the oppressed, they heard their call and proceeded to labour for their delivery.

Fourthly, "there are those who are great men. They rectify themselves, and others are rectified." These are the ideal ministers. It is they who make real what the Great Learning says—"to illustrate illustrious virtue, to renovate the people, and to rest in the highest excellence." Their influence is such that the renovation of the people follows as a natural consequence of their imposing personality. Only the sages, the holy, ideal men, are equal to this attainment.

Turning next to the duties of the true minister, we find that they are many and various. The most important, however, is to rectify the sovereign and direct him to virtue. The sovereign, as we have seen, is the radiant of the body politic and the fountain of the governmental system. Thus Mencius says: "It is not enough to remonstrate with a sovereign on account of the mal-employment of ministers, nor to blame him for errors of government. It is only the great man who can rectify what is wrong in the sovereign's mind.

Let the prince be benevolent, and all his actions will be benevolent. Let the prince be righteous, and all his actions will be righteous. Let the prince be correct, and everything will be correct. Once rectify the prince, and the kingdom will be settled" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 20). It is therefore important that the minister should hold constantly before his prince the examples of Yâo and Shun, and inspire him with noble ideals. "To urge one's sovereign to difficult achievements may be called showing respect to him. To set before him what is good and repress his perversities may be called showing reverence for him. He who does not do these things, saying to himself, 'my sovereign is incompetent to do this', may be said to play the thief with him" (Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap. 1). Again: "He who does not serve his sovereign as Shun served Yâo, does not respect his sovereign."

But the question remains, What is to be done when the prince cannot be rectified in spite of all efforts on the part of the minister? Two ways are open to the minister: to resign, or to depose the prince and set up another in his place. Which course should be followed is determined by the relation of the minister to the reigning house as well as by the nature of the situation, which points have already been considered.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE.

The functions of the state follow naturally from the end of the state. The end of the state, as we have seen, is conceived by Mencius as the development of man's moral nature. But it must not be understood by this that Mencius advocates state interference in general so as to allow the state to encroach upon every department of life. What he maintains is that the state is under obligation to facilitate the development of morality by making conditions favourable.

First and foremost, the state should secure for the people their physical well-being; for upon this depends their moral development, and it should therefore be promoted in every possible way. "The people cannot live without water and fire," says Mencius, "yet if you knock at a man's door in the dusk of the evening, and ask for water and fire, there is no man who will not give them, such is the abundance of these things. A sage governs the empire so as to cause pulse and grain to be as abundant as water and fire. When pulse and grain are as abundant as water and fire, how shall the people be other than virtuous" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 23). To bring this about, waste land must be reclaimed and the habitable area increased by removing the thickets and marshes, by driving away the wild birds and beasts which are injurious to men, and by confining within their proper limits the streams and rivers so that flood and inundation may not occur (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4; Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 9). Then the nine-square system of land division should be carried into effect, that every family may have its means of living. Regulations of fishing and forestry should be proclaimed in order to prevent scarcity of fish and fuel. Cultivation of the mulberry-tree and rearing of cattle should be encouraged, so as to provide every family with cloth and meat. In time

of famine and scarcity, relief measures should be undertaken. But it is more important to attend to the economic conditions of the people in ordinary times so as to make famine and scarcity practically impossible. Thus Mencius says, "If the seasons of husbandry be not interfered with, the grain will be more than can be eaten. If close nets are not allowed to enter the pools and ponds, the fishes and turtles will be more than can be consumed. If the axes and bills enter the hills and forests only at the proper time, the wood will be more than can be used. When the grain and fish and turtles are more than can be eaten, and there is more wood than can be used, this enables the people to nourish their living and bury their dead, without any feeling against any. This condition, in which the people nourish their living and bury their dead without any feeling against any, is the first step of Royal Government." Mencius also adds: "Let mulberry trees be planted about the homesteads with their five *mâu*, and persons of fifty years old may be clothed with silk. In keeping fowls, pigs, dogs, and swine, let not their times of breeding be neglected, and persons of seventy years may eat flesh. Let there not be taken away the time that is proper for the cultivation of the farm with its hundred *mâu*, and the family of several mouths that is supported shall not suffer from hunger" (Bk. I, Pt. I, Chap. 3).

In this way, the material welfare of the great majority is secured. There are, however, the unfortunate few who are poor and destitute and for whom the state should make adequate provision. "There are the old and wifeless, or widowers;" says Mencius, "the old and husbandless, or widows; the old and childless, or solitaries; the young and fatherless, or orphans:—these four classes are the most destitute of the people, and have none to whom they can tell their wants, and King Wĕn, in the institution of his government with its benevolent action, made them the first objects of his regard" (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 5).

But "men possess a moral nature," observes the philosopher;" if they are well fed, warmly clad, and comfortably lodged, without being taught at the same time, they become almost like the beasts" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3). Education is therefore necessary. Indeed, with Mencius, education is that upon which the existence of the state depends. In Bk. IV, Pt. I, Chap I, we find these words: "When the prince has no principle by which he examines his administration, and his ministers have no laws by which they keep themselves in the discharge of their duties, then in the court obedience is not paid to the principle, and in the office obedience is not paid to rule. Superiors violate the laws of righteousness, and inferiors violate the penal laws. It is only by a fortunate chance that a kingdom in such a case is preserved. Therefore it is said, 'It is not the exterior and interior walls being incomplete, and the supply of weapons offensive and defensive being not large, which constitute the calamity of a kingdom. It is not the cultivated area not being extended, and stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a kingdom.' When superiors do not observe the rules of propriety, and inferiors do not learn, then seditious people spring up, and the kingdom will perish in no time" (Bk. IV, Pt. I. Chap. 1). Mencius agrees entirely with Plato that education is the highest concern of the state. Without education, all legislation will be futile, while with education laws are unnecessary. It is perhaps for this reason that Mencius says so little about law and lays his greatest emphasis on inculcating the principles of propriety and righteousness. A nation of brutes can make no stand in the world. The uneducated are not qualified to do even the most brutal work, that of war. "To employ an uninstructed people in war," says the philosopher, "may be said to be destroying the people" (Bk. VI, Pt. II, Chap. 8). Government, in short, should always be founded on the basis of education, not only because education enhances the work of government,

but also because it produces upon the people an influence different in kind, which the government itself is not capable of exerting. Thus says Mencius, "Good government does not lay hold of the people so much as good instructions. Good government is feared by the people, while good instructions are loved by them. Good government gets the people's wealth, while good instructions get their hearts" (Bk. VII, Pt. I, Chap. 14). On this account, Shun, as soon as the physical welfare of the country had been secured, turned his attention at once to the great work of education. "He appointed Seĕ to be the Minister of Instructions, to teach the people the relations of humanity:—how, between father and son, there should be affection; between sovereign and minister, righteousness; between husband and wife, attention to their separate functions; between old and young, a proper order; and between friends, fidelity" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 4).

Education received no less attention from the Three Dynasties. The Hsiâ dynasty had its *hsiâo*, the Yin its *hsü*, and the Châu its *hsiang*[82]. All of them established their *hsiâo*. "The common aim was," says Mencius, "to illustrate the human relations" (Bk. III, Pt. I, Chap. 3).

It is evident from these citations that Mencius is a strong advocate of state education. The question of the methods of state education may be left to the educationist. But it should be noted here that while Mencius regards education as an essential function of the state, he does not mean to exclude it entirely from the sphere of individual activity. On the contrary, he holds that the virtuous and talented owe to the young and ignorant the moral obligation of instruction. "Those who keep the Mean," he says, "train up those who do not, and those who have abilities train up those who have not, and hence men rejoice in having fathers and elder brothers who are possessed of virture and talent" (Bk. IV,

82 "Hsiâo," "hsü," and "hsiang," all mean "schools."

Pt. II, Chap. 7). Furthermore, preachers of the principles of benevolence and righteousness are entitled to the support and honour of the community; for, although apparently they merely wander from one place to another doing nothing substantial, their labour has transforming influence upon the people. In the opinion of Mencius, their labour is as equally effective in increasing the welfare of the community as any other form of labour, and should be remunerated accordingly. In a conversation with one of his disciples, he said, "If you do not have intercommunication of the productions of labour, and an interchange of men's services, so that one from his overplus may supply the deficiency of another, then husbandmen will have a superfluity of grain, and women will have a superfluity of cloth. If you have such an interchange, carpenters and carriage-wrights may all get their food from you. Here now is a man, who, at home, is filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders; who watches over the principles of the ancient kings, awaiting the rise of future learners;—and yet you will refuse to support him. How is it that you give honour to the carpenter and carriage-wright, and slight him who practises benevolence and righteousness," (Bk. III, Pt. II, Chap. 4). This much we are entitled to say. Mencius fails to realize the importance of individual initiative. Very little is said in his works on this point. But when we bear in mind that even in modern Europe people have been but very recently awakened to the importance of such initiative, the Chinese philosopher, who lived two thousand years ago, and upon whom the patriarchal idea of the state was exerting such a strong influence, must not be too severely criticised for not having brought out adequately the value and importance of individual initiative in educational enterprises.

Let us now turn to Mencius' teaching in regard to international politics. In this field the philosopher advocates in the most energetic manner the policy of peace. Offensive war

is never justifiable with Mencius. He says, "In the 'Spring and Autumn' there are no righteous wars. Instances indeed there are of one war better than another. 'Correction' is where the supreme authority punishes its subjects by force of arms. Hostile states do not correct one another" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 2). Here Mencius expressly condemns the policy of self-aggrandisement under the cloak of seeking for the good of humanity which is often upheld with much pride even by the nations of to-day. Prof. Burgess may be expressing a great truth, when he says that the Teutonic nations are justified by their political genius in assuming the leadership in the work of establishing and administering lesser states, for by so doing they help forward the economy of the world. But when this position is carried to such an extreme as to furnish a pretext for unprovoked intervention in the affair of nations which are not prepared for war, then it will become a great curse to the world's civilization. Mencius teaches, indeed, that a state has a right to deliver the oppressed people from their tyrannical yoke in a neighbouring state. But the means employed must not lead to unnecessary shedding of blood nor to a protracted war so that havoc is wrought among the lives and properties of the people. "There are men who say — 'I am skilful in marshalling troops, I am skilful in conducting a battle!'—They are great criminals. If the ruler of a state loves benevolence, he will have no enemy in the world" (Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 4). Moreover, this right of intervention belongs only to him who is the minister of Heaven, with qualifications acknowledged by the people, whose deliverance the war aims at. Otherwise, it will be a mere instance, as Mencius would say, of "one Yen smiting another Yen."

Pursuing this policy of peace, Mencius gave the following reply to King Hsüan of Ch'î, who asked him whether there was any fixed principle to regulate one's maintenance of intercourse with a neighbouring state: "It requires a

perfectly virtuous prince to be able with a great state to serve a small one, as, for instance, T'ang served Ko and King Wĕn served the Kwăn barbarians. And it requires a wise prince to be able, with a small state, to serve a large one, as, for instance, the King Tâi served the Hsün-yü, and Kâu-chien served Wu. He who with a great state served a small one, delights in Heaven. He who with a small state serves a large one, stands in awe of Heaven. He who delights in Heaven will affect with his love and protection the whole empire. He who stands in awe of Heaven will affect with his love and protection his own state'' (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 3). When the well-being of the people requires, territory may be conceded, as when King Tâi left the land of Pin to save his people from the inroads of the northern barbarians. But at certain crises, when concession would not remedy the situation, heroic resistance should then be preferred. ''Dig deeper your moats,'' said Mencius to Duke Wĕn of Tăng, who was threatened by his aggressive neighbours, ''and build higher your walls; guard them along with your people. In case of attack, be prepared to die in your defence and have the people so that they will not leave you'' (Bk. I, Pt. II, Chap. 13). Thus in pleading for the noble cause of international peace, Mencius has not failed to see the necessity of national defence.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONCLUSION.

Students in the East who are privileged to read European languages often come across sweeping statements and general remarks concerning the Eastern countries which are not at all complimentary to their national pride, and which they are impelled to refute when opportunity permits, however high their respect may otherwise be for the author of such generalizations. The following is an instance from the pen of a great authority in Political Science :

" Now it was this appeal to dogma rather than to reason, to faith rather than to logically grounded belief, that was and has continued to be the one characteristic of Oriental civilization. To the early Eastern mind the fact that a thing existed was sufficient of itself to show its right to be. Thus was effectually excluded all possibility of inquiries as to the relative perfection or justification for the existence of *de facto* social and political institutions. All social customs, all political obligations, thus become stereotyped in fixed customs of immemorial usage,—customs either of an unquestioned binding force, or, if questioned at all, answered by the predication of an original divine fiat. Thus fixity of the rules governing conduct became the chief characteristic of Asiatic civilization. In every particular of life, social, political, and religious, tradition and usage reigned supreme. So absolute, so imperishable was their import to the Oriental mind, that the mere suggestion of their invalidity was in itself conceived as an impiety. Unthinking submission to them and to the powers that were, summed up the whole duty of the individual."[83]

Enough has been set forth in the foregoing pages to show that what is affirmed of the Orientals in general, in the passage above quoted, cannot justly be applied to the philos-

83 Willoughby's "Political Theories of the Ancient World," p. 14.

opher we have been studying. Throughout the writings of Mencius, we are face to face with an inquisitive spirit, a spirit that seeks for a justification for every institution, social or political, and that is fond of digging down to the very root in order to reach the reason of things. In certain cases we must admit that the views displayed are rather short-sighted and the reasoning rather feeble when they are brought under the search-light of the modern mind. But Mencius lived two thousand years ago, and his experience and knowledge were confined to the history and institutions of a single nation. It is therefore not surprising that what seemed quite natural to him may seem to be ridiculous to us. This much however is clear : in Mencius, there was a constant and sincere effort to dig down to the bottom of truth, and to question everything which appeared contradictory to his reasoning.

Mencius' philosophy savours, indeed, of conservatism, but dogmatism has no place in his mind. He shows great reverence for the past, for the principles of Yâo, Shun, and other sage rulers, who shine in the pages of the Early History of the Chinese race. But it would be misrepresenting him to account for his reverence for the ancient sages by simply imputing to him an attitude of "unthinking submission" to what is past, rather than by interpreting his position the medium of his keen realization of the political degeneration of his time and of his deep conviction of the necessity of falling back upon the more fortunate experiences of the race. What characterizes Mencius is not blind worship of the past, but an intelligent appreciation of the lessons of history. He was a great student of the Book of History and of the Book of Poetry, two classics which embody the spirit of the Golden Ages of Chinese history. But he was a student who was not afraid to face the facts squarely and to criticise wherever criticism was needed. In Bk. VII, Pt. II, Chap. 3, occurs the striking passage: "It would be better to be without the

Book of History than to give entire credit to it. In the 'Completion of the War,' I select two or three passages only, which I believe." It was with such a critical spirit that he studied history, and it was with such a critical spirit also, not tinctured by any unthinking submission whatever, that he admired the past and cried out aloud for a return to the Golden Ages.

On the other hand, Mencius shares with all the other ancient political thinkers the characteristic of confusing morality and law. To him moral and legal are interchangeable terms. As we have seen, he conceives the state to exist for the sake of morality, and it follows naturally that whatever is against morality is against the state and is punishable by the state, and whatever is conducive to morality is within the scope of state action and should be legally enforced. The starting-point of his moral philosophy, moreover, is the belief that man's nature is originally good. He proceeds thence to reason that in man there is no want of a will to do what is good, so long as the conditions are favourable. To govern the state, therefore, needs no elaborate system of law. Its only secret is to lead the people to cultivate virtue by developing the moral nature implanted in them. Where there is any necessity of law, the moral sense of the ruler will dictate plenty of it. Indeed, with Mencius, there are equity and justice, but no law.

One thing, however, distinguishes Mencius from other ancient political philosophers. In his philosophy there is found very little religion. His is not a religious mind. His teachings reveal a vague idea of the Supreme Deity, but he fails to follow up those lofty ideas of God which are so outstanding in the Book of History and the Book of Poetry, with which his philosophy has a very close relation in other respects. Moral obligations express not any external will but an internal one, springing out of the moral nature inherent in man. To serve Heaven is to develp one's own

moral constitution. Finally, all of Mencius' political teachings have a practical end in view. He was not one of those library-chair philosophers who sit down deliberately to compose a scientific treatise intended to rouse the admiration of posterity rather than to satisfy a crying need. He lived and taught with his eyes constantly fixed upon the conditions of his own time. Aside from being a moral teacher and a political philosopher, he was above all an enthusiastic reformer. He was really one who had "a mind which could not bear to see the sufferings of others." He was fully alive to the fact that the country needed union and peace. He was more than conscious of the situation of the times, social, political, and moral. China in the time of Mencius was in a case similiar to that of Italy in the time of Machiavelli. Yet Machiavellianism was just what the Chinese philosopher denounced. His aim was not the mere union of the nation. That was to him only a means to an end. It was the welfare and happiness of the people that he was seeking. "To deliver the people from the midst of water and fire" was his watchword. It was his consciousness of the needs of the time that made his attitude towards the House of Châu, the then reigning house, so very different from that of Confucius. Confucius did his utmost to uphold the authority and dignity of the Emperor. When it came to the days of Mencius the influence of the Emperor had become so insignificant that he gave up the hope so fondly cherished by the former sage—the hope of strengthening the House of Châu and thus giving the country peace and order by holding up before the people a common supreme head. Mencius was ready enough to see the emperor displaced by a prince who should be better qualified to sit at the helm of the state. According to his idea, blind allegiance to a declining imperial house, regardless of the welfare of the people, was no virtue. For this Mencius may be ranked with the greatest statesmen and patriots the world has ever seen.

In spite of the fact that Mencius intended his political teachings to be for his own day, still there are among the principles he enunciated many which are of lasting value. The most modern political philosophy endorses his great principle that the government exists for the welfare of the governed, that it has a divine origin in the sense that its idea exists in germ in man's nature, and finally that its existence rests at any moment upon the consent of the people, expressed or implied. Political thinkers since his time have repeatedly confirmed his teaching that it is the function of the state to secure the physical well-being of the people and to provide means for their education and intellectual uplift. The statement that selfishness is a curse in politics holds good to-day as in the days of Mencius, and the need of righteousness is as urgent now as it was two thousand years ago, when the philosopher was pleading its cause from court to court. Centuries of political experience have proved it only too true that good laws are but futile, where there are no good officials to execute them and give them life and force. The great movement of international peace and the cry for disarmament were anticipated by Mencius in China long before the modern nations in Europe emerged upon the stage of history, and even the present European War, with all its evils and terrors, shows only more clearly the keen insight of the Chinese sage.

At the same time it must be admitted here that very little originality can be claimed for Mencius. He owed his democratic ideas chiefly to the Book of History, with which he was very familiar. In that classic we find brought out, in a very explicit manner, the ideas concerning the origin of the state, the nature of the government, the duty of the ruler, and the importance of the people. A few quotations will be sufficient to show the general spirit of that classic, of which he proved himself a great exponent.

In "the Great Declaration" is found this passage quoted by Mencius himself: "Heaven, to protect the inferior people,

made for them rulers and made for them instructors, that they might be able to be aiding to God, and secure the tranquillity of the four quarters of the empire."

In the same book, we read : "Heaven and Earth is the parent of all creatures ; and of all creatures man is the most highly endowed. The sincere, intelligent, and perspicacious among men becomes the great sovereign ; and the great sovereign is the parent of the people."

Then in "The Counsels of the Great Yu," the Emperor Shun is represented to speak thus to Yu : "Come, Yu. The inundating waters filled me with dread, when you realized all that you represented, and accomplished your task,—thus showing your superiority to other men. Full of toilsome earnestness in the service of the state, and sparing in your expenditure on your family ; and this without being full of yourself or elated ; you again showed your superiority to other men. Without any prideful presumption, there is no one in the empire to contest with you the palm of ability ; without any boasting, there is no one in the empire to contest with you the claim of merit. I see how great is your virtue, how admirable your vast achievements. The determinate appointment of Heaven rests on your person ; you must eventually ascend the throne of the great sovereign."

In a speech addressed to the Emperor, E Yin said, "Oh! Heaven has no affections ;—only to those who are reverent does it show affection. The people are not constant to those whom they cherish ;—they cherish only him who is benevolent." Also, about the time of his retirement, he made this admonition to the emperor : "Oh ! it is difficult to rely on Heaven ;—its appointments are not constant. But if the sovereign sees to it that his virtue be constant, he will preserve his throne ; if his virtue be not constant, the nine provinces will be lost to him. . . . . It was not that Heaven had any partiality for the ruler of Shang ;—Heaven simply gave its favour to pure virtue. It was not that Shang sought

the allegiance of the lower people;—the people simply turned to pure virtue. When the sovereign's virtue is pure his movements are all fortunate; when his virtue is wavering and uncertain, his movements are all unfortunate. Good and evil do not wrongly befall men, because Heaven sends down misery and happiness according to their conduct."

To show the revolutionary spirit in the Book of History, it is necessary only to cite the speech of T'ang. He said, "Come, ye multitudes of the people, listen all to my words. It is not I, the little child, who dare to undertake what may seem a rebellious enterprise; but for the many crimes of the sovereign of Hsia, Heaven has given the charge to destroy him. Now, ye multitudes, you are saying, 'Our prince does not compassionate us, but is calling us away from our husbandry to attack and punish the ruler of Hsia.' I have indeed heard these words of you all: but the sovereign of Hsia is an offender, as I fear God, I dare not but punish him."

The idea that the people are the most important element in the state and that they are Heaven's objects of special care is exhibited in the first of "The Songs of the Five Sons:"

> "It was the lessons of our great ancestors:—
> The people should be cherished;
> They should not be down-trodden:
> The people are the root of a country;
> The root firm, the country is tranquil."

In "The Counsels of Kao Yao," we read: "Heaven hears and sees as our people hear and see; Heaven brightly approves and displays its terrors, as our people brightly approve and would awe: such connection there is between the upper and lower worlds. How reverent ought the masters of the earth to be!"

In "The Great Declaration," these sentences are found: "Heaven loves the people, and the sovereign should reverence the mind of Heaven." Also: "Heaven compassionates the

people. What the people desire, Heaven will be found to give effect to.''

Mencius' idea of the functions of the state and the organization of the government can also be traced to the Book of History. Yu is represented as speaking to the Emperor Shun: ''Oh! think of these things, O emperor. Virtue is seen in the goodness of the government, and the government is tested by its nourishing of the people. There are water, fire, metal, wood, earth, and grain,—these must be duly regulated; there are the rectification of the peoples' virtue, the conveniences of life, and the securing abundant means of sustentation;—these must be harmoniously attended to. When the nine services thus indicated have been orderly accomplished, let that accomplishment be celebrated by songs. Caution the people with gentle words; correct them with the majesty of law; stimulate them with the songs on those nine subjects, in order that your success may never suffer diminution.''

The following is quoted from the Book of Châu: ''He (King Wu) arranged the orders of nobility into five, assigning the territories to them on a threefold scale. He gave offices only to the worthy, and employments only to the able. He attached great importance to the people's being taught the duties of the five relations of society, and to take care for food, for funeral ceremonies, and for sacrifices. He showed the reality of his truthfulness, and proved clearly his righteousness. He honoured virtue, and rewarded merit. Then he had only to let his robes fall down, and fold his hands, and the empire was orderly ruled.''

Even the doctrine of the goodness of man's nature, for which Mencius stands so high among the moral teachers of the world, has its germ in the Book of History. In a speech of King T'ang, are found these words: ''Ah, ye multitudes of the myriad regions, listen clearly to the announcement of me, the one man. The great God has conferred even on the

inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature invariably right. But to cause them tranquilly to pursue the course which it would indicate, is the work of the sovereign."

To Confucius, Tseng-tze, and Tze-sze, Mencius was greatly indebted, especially for the idea that politics and morality are identical in scope and application. It is not too much to say that the whole of Mencius' philosophy is simply an exposition of the classical text of Confucius in the Great Learning, commencing with the wonderful sentence: "What the Great Learning teaches is—to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence." He holds fast to the doctrine that to cultivate virtue in the individual, to regulate the family, to govern the state, and to rule the empire, mean eventually the same process, and need no harder task than the rectification of the heart by being sincere in one's thoughts, by extending one's knowledge, and by investigating into the principles of things. Over and over again, Mencius emphasizes in his writings the teachings of the Great Learning set forth in passages such as the following: "The ruler, without going beyond his family, completes the lessons for the state. There is filial piety;—therewith the sovereign should be served. There is fraternal submission:—therewith elders and superiors should be served. There is kindness;—therewith the multitude should be treated."

Mencius' teaching as regards the influence of the sovereign, so conspicuous in his political philosophy, reflects only the same sentiment expressed in the Great Learning. In that classic, we read: "From the loving example of one family a whole state becomes loving, and from its courtesies the whole state becomes courteous, while from the ambition and perverseness of the One Man, the whole state may be led to rebellious disorder;—such is the nature of the influence. This verifies the saying, 'Affairs may be ruined by a single sentence; a kingdom may be settled by its One Man. Yâo

and Shun led on the kingdom with benevolence, and the people followed them. Chieh and Châu led on the kingdom with violence, and the people followed them. The orders which these issued were contrary to the practices which they loved, and so the people did not follow them. On this account, the ruler must himself be possessed of the good qualities, and then he may require them in the people. He must not have the bad qualities in himself, and then he may require that they should not be in the people. Never has there been a man, who, not having reference to his own character and wishes in dealing with others, was able effectually to instruct them. Thus we see how the government of the state depends on the regulation of the family." Further on in the same classic, we read: "When the sovereign behaves to his aged, as the aged should be behaved to, the people become filial; when the sovereign behaves to his elders as the elders should be behaved to, the people learn brotherly submission; when the sovereign treats compassionately the young and helpless, the people do the same." Again: "Never has there been a case of the sovereign loving benevolence, and the people not loving righteousness. Never has there been a case where the people have loved righteousness, and the affairs of the sovereign have not been carried to completion. And never has there been a case where the wealth in such a state, collected in the treasuries and arsenals, did not continue in the sovereign's possession."

One more coincidence between the teaching of the Great Learning and that of Mencius we must notice. Readers of the Works of Mencius will remember how, in the first chapter, the philosopher endeavoured to bring home to the King of Wei that it was benevolence and righteousness, not gain, at which he should aim. This very idea is the conclusion of the tenth chapter of the commentary on the Text of Confucius that "in a state gain is not to be considered prosperity, but its prosperity will be found in righteousness."

The Doctrine of the Mean, generally believed to be from the pen of Confucius' grandson, Tze Sze, influenced our philosopher more or less. There we find these words of Confucius: "The government of Wên and Wŭ is displayed in the records,—the tablets of wood and bamboo. Let there be the men, and the government will flourish; but without the men, their government decays and ceases. With the right men the growth of government is rapid, just as vegetation is rapid in the earth, and moreover their government might be called an easily-growing rush. Therefore the administration of government lies in getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by his treading in the ways of duty. And the treading those ways of duty is to be cultivated by the cherishing of benevolence." Similar words are recorded in another place in the Doctrine of the Mean; "All who have the government of the kingdom, with its states and families, have nine standard rules to follow; *viz.*, the cultivation of their own characters; the honouring of men of virtue and talents; affection towards their relatives; respect towards the great ministers; kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers; dealing with the mass of people as children; encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans; indulgent treatment of men from a distance; and the kindly cherishing of the princes of the States."

But Mencius is indebted to the Doctrine of the Mean especially for his doctrine of the goodness of man's nature. The opening sentence of that book is: "What Heaven has conferred is called the nature; an accordance with this nature is called the path of duty; the regulation of this path is called instruction." Hence, the Classic goes on to say, "the path is not far from man," which is echoed emphatically by Mencius.

From the Book of Poetry, Mencius must have derived many of his ideas. That Classic was a source of his inspiration next in importance only to those we have mentioned. He

frequently quoted from it, and made reference to it constantly to illustrate his own principles. Space does not permit many citations to show the connection between the ideas of the book and the philosophy of Mencius, but one or two specimens only will answer our present purpose.

That those in power exert great influence upon the people is seen in the following lines :

" Lofty is that southern hill,
With its rugged masses of rocks !
Greatly distinguished are you, O, grand-teacher of Yin,
The people all look up to you."

The divine sanction of government is clear in this Classic as in the Book of History, as the following lines indicate :

" Before the sovereigns of the Yin dynasty had lost the hearts of the people,
They could appear before God.
Take warning from the house of Yin.
The great decree is not easily preserved."

From these various sources Mencius gathered his ideas. The borrowed doctrines, however, were not simply reproduced as they were found but were presented in a new spirit. He received the heritage of the ancient Classics and breathed into it a new life. In this way the ideas which had been handed down from the classical ages were inspired with new force and vigour by the subtle logic and matchless style of a master of the art of eloquence, and were given a power to produce effects, greater than they would have done if they had been allowed to remain buried in their ancient tombs.

But when we turn to trace the real effects of Mencius' teachings upon the history of China, we do not find what might be expected. We have seen how the philosopher retired from public life in disappointment, with all his hopes frustrated and his endeavours apparently wasted. After his death the social and political conditions of the country became

still worse. Nothing but incessant war was the order of the day. His writings do not seem to have received much attention till several hundred years had elapsed, and we are at least sure that the first commentaries on them were written some five hundred years after his death ; and that they were not admitted to the rank of Classics till the Sung Dynasty—more than a thousand years from the time they were written.

Mencius directed all his efforts to have benevolence and righteousness put into practice. He travelled from state to state in hopes of finding a prince who should be willing enough to come forth as the saviour of the oppressed, and effect the deliverance of the people from the evils of a bad government. The true sovereign, in short, was what he was seeking for. Such a sovereign did not make his appearance during Mencius' life time, nor has he ever become known to China. It was true that whenever the existing government became unbearable, there was always some one ready enough to start a revolution, resting on the authority of Mencius as sanction for his action. But no sooner was a new dynasty founded than Mencius was again set aside, and selfishness allowed to reign as supreme as ever. Mencius, however, has, by his writings, so established and popularized the principle that government exists for the welfare of the governed and forfeits its right of existence as soon as it fails to perform its proper functions, that revolution has come to be considered in China as a sacred right, nay, a moral duty, to those who feel that they are able to carry it to a successful end. It was the fear of revolution that served as a restraint to the absolutism of government and mitigated the sharpness of autocratic rule in this land. Indirectly, therefore, Mencius makes his influence tell in a negative manner. To a certain extent, it was also due to his influence that, at the beginning of each new dynasty there were, as a rule, some measures taken, in a half-hearted way it is true, to promote the well-being of the people. Sometimes certain taxes were remitted, and sometimes criminals

were pardoned, to show the benevolence of the government; but nothing more substantial was ever done. To do justice to Mencius, we must say that his teachings have not been given a fair test as yet.

At the present time, when China is reaching out for every new idea that may help her in the stupendous work of reconstruction, it behoves her to make a close study of the national literature, and avail herself of the valuable teaching of her own sages and philosophers. For the basis of a sound government, the teachings of Mencius will serve as well as any political doctrine we can learn from the West. China of the twentieth century cannot, of course, be advised to adopt the feudal form of government taken as the model by Mencius two thousand years ago. Nor is it possible to put into practice, in the present day, the nine-square system of land division believed by him to be the *sine quâ non* of a good government. But in an age when the atmosphere is filled with political speculations, it will be of value to keep constantly in mind the teaching of the philosopher that government is a necessity to human nature, that men are born with the idea of the state implanted in their very nature. We should guard ourselves with the greatest circumspection when we are told that the state is merely something conventional, that government is at the best a necessary evil, and that man is born free and therefore should aim at a happy return to the state of nature, where no state, no government, will rob him of his natural rights. Mencius, if he were to come to this world again, and listen to the talk of some who are fond of displaying the few archaic political ideas which they have picked up in some haphazard way, would certainly be filled with indignation. He would denounce the anarchism and nihilism of the present age, as energetically as he denounced the *Mih-ism* and *Yang-ism* of his own time. He would cry out aloud once more that "their delusions, springing up in men's minds, do injury to their practice of affairs, and, being

shown in their practice of affairs, they are pernicious to their government."

On the other hand, we find a great deal in the philosophy of Mencius which can be embodied in the new form of government recently adopted. The power of the people, the functions of the government, the responsibilities of the sovereign, and the duties of the officials—all these ideas can take effect with the help of modern political institutions. By thus falling back upon the democratic ideas of Mencius, we shall be in a position to realize that the great political experiment which is being now undertaken is not entirely alien in theory to the Chinese mind. Its fundamental principles were conceived by our philosophers centuries ago. The political experience of the nation in which they were encrusted was simply too hard for them to break through and get into the daylight of actual politics. It is now high time for them to have a fair trial and find their full expression.

Moreover, it is important to remember that the greatest object of a state is always to secure peace, order, and union. All the disintegrating forces should be counteracted, and all the rebellious tendencies should be kept down, not by effective administration merely, which, as Mencius points out, is only feared by the people, but by good instruction, which will win their affections. Externally, international friendship should be cultivated, and war avoided as much as possible. It may be objected here that Mencius' policy of peace is out of place in China to-day. The problem confronting the young Republic at present, so the objection runs, is that of national defence, that of self-preservation. She must prepare herself for war at any moment for war may be forced upon her unexpectedly with or without her consent. But Mencius wants us to understand that the best way to prepare for war is not for a nation to spend all its energy in building dreadnoughts and in drilling a large standing army, however necessary some attention to these things may be, but to win

the hearts of the people by education and good government, so that they may be ready always to give up their lives, if need be, for the defence of their country. It holds good to-day as ever that "there has never been a man trained to righteousness who made his sovereign an after consideration." When the duties of citizenship are well inculcated into the minds of the people, dreadnoughts and armies will spring up of themselves, and will prove more effective when their services are needed than those built by oppressive taxes. It was this very idea that Mencius was expressing, when he told King Hui of Wei that "he would have a people who could be employed, with sticks which they had prepared, to oppose the strong mail and sharp weapons of the troops of Ch'iu and Ch'û."

Furthermore, what greater lesson can China of to-day learn from Mencius than that the first duty of the government is to promote the well-being of the people? How often China needs to be reminded that measures should be taken to extend the habitable area of the country by making use of the fertile lands which have hitherto never been brought under cultivation! How necessary it is to spur her on to undertake the proper embankment of her rivers which periodically inundate large territories, doing greater injury to the lives and properties of the people than the wild birds and beasts in the time of Yao and Shun so frequently referred to by Mencius. A great deal remains to be done by way of preventing the plagues and famines which sweep away from this fair land thousands upon thousands of human lives every year, and cause an enormous amount of misery. Hospitals, asylums, workhouses, and other charitable institutions should be built by the state, so that "the four classes of the most destitute" described to King Wên by Mencius, regarded as the first objects of care, may be provided for, and sufferings in the country may be mitigated. Schools, indeed, have been established in many places in the republic, but the best has

not been done as yet. More attention should be directed to the moral education of the people on which Mencius laid so much emphasis. They should be taught how to develop their moral natures as well as how to equip themselves for a profession. It is essential to hold before their eyes the importance of cultivating the "nobility of heaven," and not the "nobility of man"; to learn how to serve others, not to serve just themselves; to prepare themselves, in other words, for the arena of life, not merely for an office in the government.

The last, but not the least, point is that China must needs place the greatest stress upon the moral character of her officials; must put moral qualification before intellectual and technical equipment in her governmental appointments. Herein lies the greatest hope for the salvation of the country. We must see that the offices in the government are not filled by "people who serve the head of the government," but by true ministers who are great men and who seek the tranquillity of the state. We do not want to raise to power those who throw away their "nobility of Heaven" when they have secured the "nobility of man." A new form of government may be tried, a new code may be enforced, new ideas may be imported, and new institutions may be introduced, yet China will remain as weak and helpless as ever; her politics will prove as corrupt as ever, and her general outlook as gloomy as ever, so long as the men in authority still regard their positions, not as responsibilities entrusted to them for the welfare and interests of the people, but as opportunities to amass a fortune or to fulfill in some way or other their own selfish ends.

But how are all these results to be brought about? Laws, we have seen, are futile. Institutions are impotent. According to Mencius, we must wait for the appearance of the true sovereign whose example he calculated would work wonders, and whose influence he counted on to transform everything. He himself spent his life in waiting, and China

since his time has waited for more than two thousand years. But still the true sovereign has not yet appeared in the arena of Chinese politics. Mencius was disappointed; for, however near his doctrine on man's nature is to the truth, he had too much faith in the inherent power of men to do good. China has been disappointed; for man has had a fall, and is in need of some external force for his reinstatement. Mencius' failure to see this is his greatest shortcoming as a moral teacher and a political philosopher. Not every man will develop his moral nature and follow the dictates of his higher self so as to be able to rest in the highest excellence, even though the state has made every condition favourable for that development, so far as the physical well-being and environment are concerned. And, indeed, the state is unable to do more, for morality lies beyond the scope of state action which is essentially backed up by force. Nor is it true to human experience that the influence of a single man, as man, can have such miraculous effects as were expected by Mencius from the true sovereign, unless by the true sovereign he meant some being higher than man. We cannot, therefore, lay the whole blame at the door of our predecessors, when we find that they honoured Mencius more than they followed his teachings, and that they praised his doctrines more than they practised them.

Who can help admiring Mencius? Even a superficial study of his writings will reveal the grandeur of his principles and the loftiness of his ideas. It is only when we come to the actual practice of them, that we begin to know that they are not any less incomplete than all other rules of conduct and all the fine maxims and precepts in Ethics and Philosophy. We are in full sympathy with Kung-sun Châu, when he spoke to the master in these words: "Lofty and admirable are your principles, but to put them into practice may well be likened to ascending the heavens, something which cannot be reached. Why not adapt your teachings so as to

cause others to consider them attainable, and so daily exert themselves." This is a sincere expressien of the weakness and dependence of man. Mencius seems to have entirely failed to realize it, or, if he did realize it, he found himself absolutely unable to do anything to help it. "The superior man draws the bow," he said in reply to the disciple, "but does not discharge the arrow. The whole thing seems to leap before the learner. Such is his standing exactly in the middle of the right path. Those who are able, follow him." But he had nothing to say to those who felt that they were insufficient in themselves and were in need of help. He said elsewhere, "A carpenter or a carriage-maker may give a man the circle and square, but cannot make him skilful in the use of them." But he failed to see that a moral teacher or a political philosopher was not any more powerful in this respect than a carpenter or a carriage-maker. Mencius has given China noble ideas and magnificent principles of politics. But he can give China no power to put them into practice. The application of the teachings of Mencius to actual politics in this country is what all Chinese and all well-wishers of this new Republic would like to see. But it cannot be effected until we have received a supernatural power, and for that supernatural power we have to turn to Him who gives men authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, to Him who is speaking to every one of us in these words of comfort: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." In a word, China needs a religion that will endow the teachings of her sages with life; and she finds that religion only in Christianity, founded by the Only Son of God, Jesus Christ. He, being both God and man, is the true sovereign, whom Mencius declared must come, and for whom Mencius waited in vain.