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RELIGIONS OF CHINA:

ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

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BY

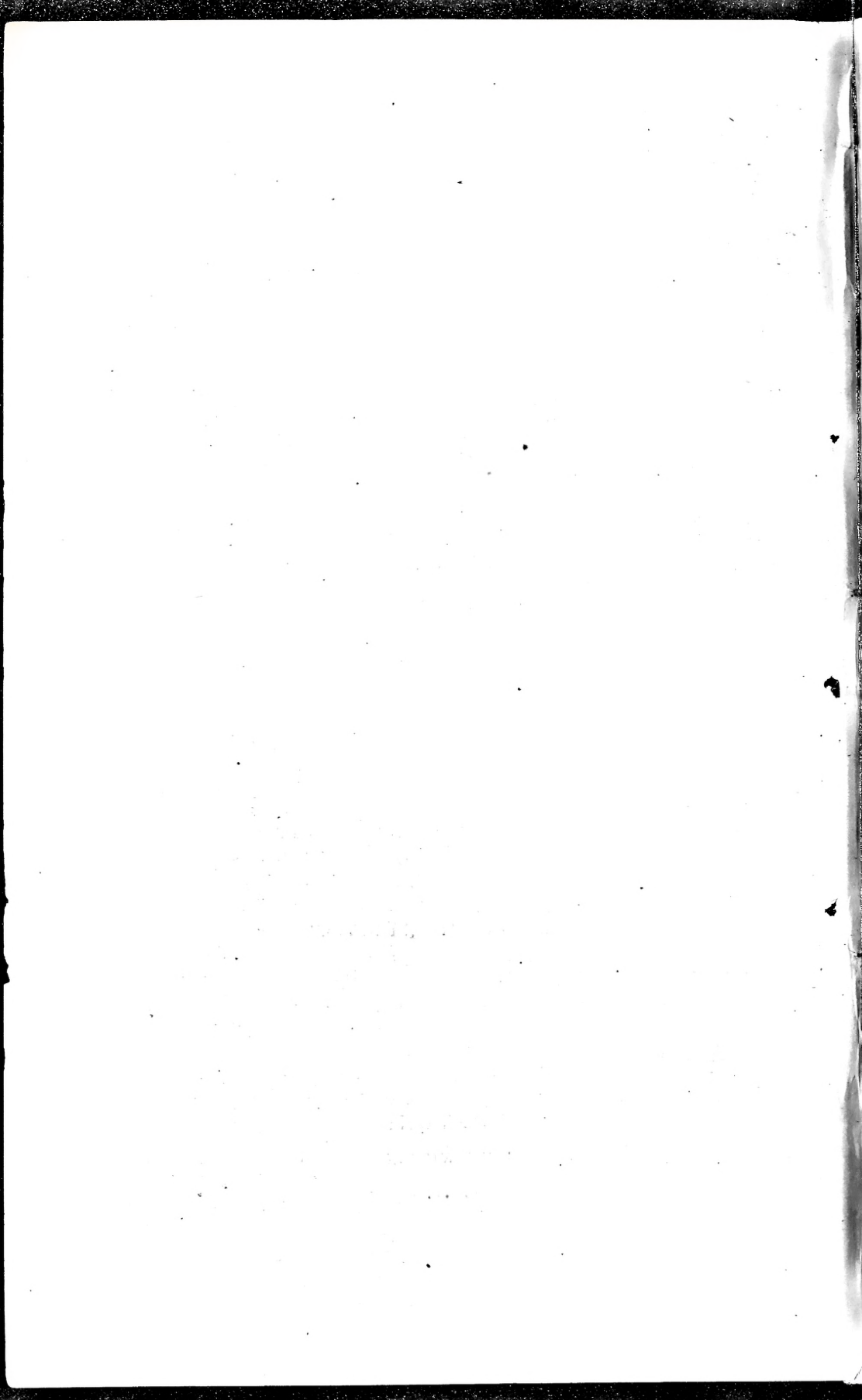
REV. WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING.

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RELIGIONS OF CHINA.

WHY was the nation and land, which we from tradition call "China," named by its rulers, scholars, and people THE CENTRAL EMPIRE, CHUNG-KWOH? Not merely because they believed their sacred mountain to be the centre, whence blew the four great winds, and flowed the four great rivers; nor chiefly because they considered themselves as being midmost among the nations. But they took this title of Central because they claimed that their government, laws and social forms were the product of the harmonious union of Heaven and Earth, — the meeting point of all creative powers. Theirs was the Central Empire, because it was organized from the Central Principle of Universal Order. And where did they find the test, standard, and arbiter of this Central and Universal principle? They found it in the reason and yet more in the heart of Man, — of each man, of all men. The Central, Universal Principle of Chinese religion, ethics, laws, is found, in essence, in Sincerity of Heart. This is a high claim. But here, beside me, are the books, whence can be proved, at length, how earnestly these claims have been asserted by the "Men of the Central Empire," — as they loftily name themselves, from the earliest ages to the present day. All real scholars know this fact. And now briefly let me describe the Religions of "China," which are Three in number.

I. THE TAO-ISTS, or the followers of the "Eternal Reason" — the "Tao," — as the Way of life, shall here be mentioned first, — not only because Lao-Tsze, their eminent teacher, born 604 before the Christian era, preceded Confucius by some fifty years; but because that profound sage perpetually refers to the "skilful philosophers in olden time who had mystic communication with the Abyss," — the original principle of "Unity," — to the "ancient sages, deep, simple, circumspect, still," who were the "associates of Heaven, which was the supreme aim of antiq-

uity." It is through this wonderfully pure seer, indeed, as it appears to me, that we ascend to the primitive revelation of truth given to this ancient people. And how sublime in simplicity it is! Hear his first word: "The reason which can be reasoned is not the Eternal Reason. The name which can be named is not the Eternal Name." And again: "Something existed before heaven and earth. It stood alone and was not changed. It pervaded everywhere. It was still. It was void. In its depth it seems the first Ancestor of all things. It appears to have been before God. It may be regarded as the Mother of the Universe. I know not its name, but give it the title of Reason. If I am forced to make a name for it, I say it is Great. . . . Reason is great; Heaven is great; Earth is great; a King is great. Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from Reason; Reason takes its law from what it is in itself." Again: "Virtue in its grandest aspect is neither more nor less than following Reason. Reason is indefinite, yet therein are forms; impalpable, yet therein are things; profound and dark, yet therein is essence. This essence is most true; and from of old until now it has never lost its name. It passes into all things that have a beginning. How know I the manner of the beginning of all things? I know it by this Reason. . . . Would you go before it, you cannot see its face. Would you go behind it, you cannot see its back. But to have such an apprehension of the Reason which was of old as to regulate present things, and to know their beginning in the past, this I call having the clew of Reason." Thus does this simple-hearted sage aspire "to go home to the origin," as he says. "Great Reason is all pervading. It can be on the right hand, and also at the same time on the left. All things wait upon it for life, and it refuses none. When its meritorious work is done, it takes not the name of merit. In love it nourishes all things, and it is ever free from ambitious desires. It may be named with the smallest. All things return home to it, but it does not lord it over them. It may be named with the greatest. . . . Lay hold on the great form of Reason, and the whole world will go to you. It will go to you and suffer no injury; and its rest and peace will be glorious. Reason in passing from your mouth is tasteless. If you look at it, there is nothing to fill the eye. If you listen to it, there is nothing to fill the ear. But if you use it, it is inexhaustible." — "The Spirit, like the perennial spring of the valley, never dies. This Spirit I call the Abyss-Mother." — "Going home to the origin is said to be a reversion to destiny. This reversion to destiny is called eternity. . . . He who knows eternity is magnanimous. Being magnanimous, he is catholic. Being catholic, he is a king. Being a king, he is Heaven. Being Heaven, he is Reason.

Being Reason, he is enduring. Though his body perish, he is in no danger."

Here, then, in oneness with Eternal Reason, Lao-Tsze found the Central Principle of Unity. Do we say that this doctrine is mystical? But it is no more mystical than the doctrine of Socrates and Plato, of Aristotle and Zeno; of the Hebrew Psalms and Prophets; of the Sermon on the Mount, the Proem to the Gospel of John, and the Pauline Epistles; of the great Mediæval Saints; of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel; of Henry More, Price, and Coleridge. And now let us see the practical application of his principle; and first to personal perfection. He says: "There is nothing like keeping the inner man. The Sage embraces Unity, and so is a pattern for all the world. He puts himself last, and yet is first; abandons himself, and yet is preserved. Is this not through his having no selfishness? Thereby he preserves self-interest intact. He is not self-displaying, and therefore he shines. He is not self-approving, and therefore he is distinguished. He is not self-praising, and therefore he has merit. He is not self-exalting, and therefore he stands high; and inasmuch as he does not strive, no one in all the world strives with him. That ancient saying, 'He that humbles himself shall be preserved entire,'—oh, it is no vain utterance! Verily, he shall be returned home entire to his origin." And again: "By undivided attention to the passion nature and increasing tenderness, it is possible to be a little child. By putting away impurity from the hidden eye of the heart, it is possible to be without spot. By loving the people and so governing the nation, it is possible to be unknown. There is a purity and quietude by which one may rule the whole world." Thus by tenderness and purity of heart would the sage become like a little child. "To keep tenderness I pronounce strength," he says. "Use the light to guide you home to its own brightness. . . . This I call practising Eternal Reason."

And thus seeking "simple goodness like water," the Sage should strive in all social relations, to rule, not by force, but by influence. "He who knows the masculine nature, and at the same time keeps the feminine, will be the whole world's channel, the centre of universal attraction. Being the whole world's channel, eternal virtue will not depart from him; and he will return again to the state of an infant. He who knows the light, and at the same time keeps the shade, will be the whole world's model. He who knows the glory, and at the same time keeps the shame, will be the whole world's valley. Being the whole world's valley, eternal virtue will fill him, and he will return home to simplicity."—"Of all the weak things in the world nothing exceeds water; and yet of those which attack hard and strong things I know not what is superior to it. Don't make light of this. The fact that the weak can conquer the

strong, and the tender the hard, is known to all the world; yet none carry it out in practice. Therefore the Sage says, 'He who bears the reproach of his country shall be called the lord of the land. He who bears the calamities of his country shall be called the king of the world.'

And this spirit of self-sacrificing gentleness, blending masculine strength with feminine sweetness, should flow abroad in abounding benevolence. "The Sage is ever the good saviour of men. He rejects none. He is ever the good saviour of things. He rejects nothing. His I call comprehensive intelligence. For the good men are the instructors of other good men; and the bad men are the material of the good men for them to work upon." — "The Sage has no invariable mind of his own, he makes the mind of the people his mind. The good I would meet with goodness. The not-good I would meet with goodness also. Virtue is good. The faithful I would meet with faith. The not-faithful I would meet with faith also. Virtue is faithful. The Sage lives in the world with a timid reserve; but his mind blends in sympathy with all. The people all turn their ears and eyes up to him; and the Sage thinks of them all as his children."

But thus living personally, and acting socially, according to the law of Universal Reason, the "Mother of the Universe," the Sage would apply the same principle to government. "In governing men and in serving Heaven there is nothing like moderation. This moderation is the first thing to be obtained. When this is first attained, one may be said to have laid in an abundant store of virtue. Such a one has the mother of the kingdom and may endure long. This I call having the roots deep and the fibres firm. This is the Reason by which one may live long and see many days." — "For what did the ancients so much prize this Reason? Was it not because it was found at once without searching; and by it those who had sinned might escape? Therefore it is the most estimable thing in the world." — "Recompense injury with kindness." — "Begin to regulate before the disorder comes." — "Reason, as it is eternal, has no name. But though insignificant in its primordial simplicity, the world dares not make a servant of it. If a prince or king could keep this, every thing would spontaneously submit to him; and the people without orders, would of themselves harmonize together. . . . Would that I were possessed of sufficient knowledge to walk in the great Way of Reason. The great Way is exceedingly plain, but the people like the cross-paths. . . . The Sage, when he wishes to be above the people so as to rule them, must keep below them. When he wishes to be before the people, he must in person keep behind them. In this way, while in position over the people, they do not feel his weight. Therefore the world delights to exalt him, and no one is offended." —

“The Reason of Heaven does not strive, yet conquers well; does not call, yet things come of their own accord; is slack, yet plans well. The net of heaven is very wide in its meshes, yet misses nothing.” — “When the people do not fear death, to what purpose is the punishment of death still used to overawe them? There is always the Great Executioner. Now, for any man to act the Executioner’s part, I say it is hewing out the Great Architect’s work for him. And he who undertakes to hew for the Great Architect rarely fails to cut his own hands.” — “I have three precious things, which I hold fast and prize, — Compassion, Economy, Humility. Being compassionate, I can therefore be brave. Being economical, I can therefore be liberal. Not daring to take precedence of the world, I can therefore become chief among the perfect ones. But in the present day men give up compassion, and cultivate only courage. They give up economy, and aim only at liberality. They give up the last place, and seek only the first. It is their death. Compassion is that which is victorious in attack and secure in defence. When Heaven would save a man it encircles him with compassion.”

And finally, although living in the midst of war and civil disturbance, this great teacher of the Way of Reason was as earnest an apostle of peace as any Christian Father, or modern Friend, or latest advocate of Woman’s influence. Hear how broadly and magnanimously he preaches the gospel of mercy and good-will. “He who in the use of Reason renders assistance to a human ruler does not use weapons to force the people. His actions are such as he would wish rendered to himself again. Where legions are quartered, briars and thorns grow. In the track of great armies must follow bad years. The good soldier is brave only to effect some good purpose. He ventures nothing for the sake of power. He is brave in need, but never a bully. He is brave in need, but never overbearing. He is brave in need, for he cannot be less, but not violent.” And again: “Ornamental weapons are not instruments of joy, but objects of hatred to every creature. Therefore he who has Reason will not stay where they are. The Superior Man in his home makes the left hand — the weak side — the place of honor. But he who goes forth to use weapons of war honors the right — the strong hand. Weapons are instruments of evil omen. They are not the tools of a Superior Man. He uses them only when he cannot help it. Peace is his highest aim. When he conquers he is not elated. To be elated is to rejoice at the destruction of human life; and he who rejoices at the destruction of human life is not fit to be intrusted with power in the world. He who has been instrumental in killing many people should move on over them with bitter tears. Therefore those who have been victorious in battle are disposed after the order of a funeral.” And not only does the Sage

thus hate war and love peace, but he teaches, with a profound and penetrating wisdom never surpassed, that Pacific Policy is omnipotent. Hear him. "When a great kingdom takes a lowly position, it becomes the place of concourse for the world: it is the wife of the world. The wife by quietness invariably conquers the man; and since quietness is also lowliness, therefore a great kingdom, by lowliness toward a small kingdom, may take that small kingdom; and a small kingdom, by lowliness towards a great kingdom, may take that great kingdom. So that either the one stoops to conquer, or the other is low and conquers. If the great kingdom only desires to attach to itself and nourish — that is, benefit — others, then the small kingdom will only wish to enter its service. But in order that both may have their wish, the great one should be lowly." — "Those who of old were good practisers of Reason used it not to make the people bright, but to make them simple. What makes the people hard to govern is their having too much policy. He who encourages this kind of policy in the government of a kingdom is the robber of that kingdom; but he who governs a kingdom without it is a blessing to that kingdom. To know these two things is the very ideal of government; and a constant knowledge of this ideal I call sublime virtue. Sublime virtue is profound, immense, and the reverse of every thing else. It will bring about a state of Universal Freedom."

The last words of Lao-Tsze in his truly sublime book of the "Tao-T'eh-King," or the "Book of Reason and Virtue," "The Way of Truth and Life," are these: "Faithful words are not fine. Fine words are not faithful. The good do not debate. The debater is not good. The knowing are not learned. The learned are not knowing.

"The Sage does not lay up treasures. The more he does for others, the more he has of his own. The more he gives to others, the more he is increased. This is the Way of the Sage, who acts, but does not strive. This is the Way of Heaven, which benefits, but does not injure."

Such, in outline, is the Religion of Tao-ism as set forth by its chief apostle. With the mere statement that under several dynasties this faith has swayed for a season the Imperial Court; and regretting that time will permit no reference to its later forms, as presented in the "Book of Recompenses and Penalties," we will pass to the Second Religion, which throughout the course of the Central Empire has been most widely prevalent. This is the doctrine of the Scholar-Class, who among us are popularly known as, —

II. THE CONFUCIANS. This form of religion has been so amply exhibited by the Jesuit and Dominican Fathers, by Leibnitz and Du Halde, and their German and French compeers, — and by many English writers, from Collie and Morrison to the most trustworthy translator of all, Dr.

James Legge, — that intelligent persons must be supposed to be more or less acquainted with it. Leaving aside, therefore, what is familiar, let me guide your thoughts to the central doctrine of the grand sage and saint, K'ung-Foo-Tsze, or Confucius, as the Jesuits first taught us to call him.

This great philosopher and statesman is too often spoken of as a mere expounder of ethical precepts and conventional proprieties; and would that by a sketch of his life and his ideal aim, the injustice of this superficial estimate might be proved! Yet even such brief extracts as time will allow me to present, may serve to show, that although this admirable philanthropist was a teacher of morals, he was pre-eminently a Religious and Social Reformer. His initial word is Reverence. And Reverence for the Supreme Sovereign of Heaven is the corner and capstone of his temple of society, — underlying and crowning all modes of Reverence.

K'ung-Foo-Tsze never presented the form of religion that he inculcated as his own, but always as an inheritance from the Ancestors of the Empire, and especially from the poets, sages, and rulers of the famous Chow dynasty, who lived five hundred years before his time. His first work was to republish the books of this Golden Age, — so pure, high, large, so fitted to renovate all ages, appeared to him to be the spirit, laws, and manners of that heroic generation. Let us listen to a few passages from these books, that we may judge whether he revered them too earnestly.

The most ancient of these books, to the study and explanation of which K'ung-Foo-Tsze devoted years of profound study, is the Yih-King, or Book of Principles and Changes. But as the philosophy embodied in this volume is too mystical for popular treatment, consisting, as it does, of a system of analogies between the Natural and Spiritual worlds, it will be better on this occasion to pass at once to the second of these Sacred Books, the Shoo-King, or Book of History. Its tone may be learned from two or three sentences, as follows: "The Royal path is right and straight, without perversity, without one-sidedness. Seeing this Perfect Excellence, turn to it. This amplification of the Royal Perfection contains the unchanging rule, and is the great lesson. Yea, it is the lesson of Shang-Te;" that is, literally, of the "Supreme Sovereign," or God. And it is well to pause here a moment to say, that throughout the Shoo-King this Ruler over all, Shang-Te, — or the equivalent, Tien, Heaven, — is everywhere declared to be the Supreme Being, whose justice, mercy, and righteous providence direct the universe and govern humanity, humbling the proud, exalting the lowly, comforting the sad, avenging wrongs, loving and caring for people and rulers alike. The passage goes

on: "The multitudes instructed in this amplification of Perfect Excellence, and carrying it into practice, will approximate to the glory of the Son of Heaven, and will say, 'The Son of Heaven is the parent of the people, and so becomes the sovereign of the empire.'" Again: "Your management of the people will depend upon your reverently following your father. Carry out his virtuous words, and clothe yourself with them. . . . And seeking what is to be learned from the wise kings of antiquity, employ it in the tranquillizing and protecting of the people. Finally, enlarge your thoughts to the comprehension of all heavenly principles, and virtue will be richly displayed in your person. . . . Heaven in its awfulness yet helps the sincere. . . . It is yours, O little one! it is your business to enlarge the regal influence, and harmoniously to protect this people. Thus shall you assist the king, consolidating the appointment of Heaven and renovating this people."—"Oh! early and late, never be but earnest. If you do not attend jealously to your small actions, the result will be to affect your virtue in great matters, as when in raising a mound the work is unfinished for want of one basket of earth. If you follow this course, the people will preserve their possessions, and the throne will descend from generation to generation." Again: "The king speaks to this effect, 'Head of the princes, my younger brother, my little one, it was your greatly distinguished father who was able to illustrate his virtue and to be careful in the use of punishments. He did not dare to show any contempt to the widower and widows. He revered the reverend; he employed the employable; he was terrible to those who needed to be awed. It was thus he laid the first beginnings of the sway of our small portion of the empire, and one or two neighboring states were brought under his improving influence; until throughout our western regions all placed in him their reliance. The fame of him ascended up to the High God, and God approved. Heaven gave to him the great charge to exterminate the dynasty of Yin" (the ruling Emperor of which was a most atrociously cruel tyrant), "and to receive its great appointments, so that the various states and their people were brought to the condition of order.'" After listening to such extracts, how can any one deny that the fundamental principle of this book is Religion?

Yet more does this religious spirit of the early Central Empire appear in the She-King, or Book of Hymns and Poems, some passages of which astonish us by their close resemblance to the pure piety of the Hebrew Psalms. Thus a young King prays: "I know that one must watch incessantly over himself, that Heaven has an intelligence which nothing escapes, and that its decrees are without appeal. Let no one say, then, 'Heaven is so high and so far above us that it scarcely thinks

of things below.' I know that it regards all things; that it enters into all; that it is present incessantly to all. But, alas! I am so young, so little enlightened, so inattentive to my duties! Nevertheless, with all my energies I strive to lose no time, desiring with ardor this only, that I may attain to perfection." Again: "He who alone is King and Supreme Lord humbles his majesty even to take care of things here below. Always attentive to the true happiness of the world, He extends his regards over all the face of the earth. He sees people who have abandoned his laws; but the All-High does not abandon them. He watches over them. He examines them. Everywhere He seeks for a man after his own heart, and wills to extend his rule." Again: "The Supreme Sovereign regards the Sacred mountain. It is the home of peace. It is an eternal kingdom, where are seen no trees whose leaves fade and fall. It is the work of the Most High. There has he placed the youngest in room of the eldest; for it is only Wān whose heart knows how to love his brethren. He causes all their happiness, all their glory. The Lord has heaped upon him all blessings, and given him the world for a recompense. The Supreme Sovereign penetrates the heart of Wān, and there he finds a secret and inexplicable virtue, whose sweetness diffuses itself abroad. It is a marvellous combination of precious gifts,—intelligence to rule all; wisdom to enlighten all; counsel to govern all; reverence and gentleness to make itself beloved; energy and majesty to make itself feared; a grace and charm which win all hearts; virtues always the same and incapable of change. It is an inheritance which he has received from the All-High; a blessing which he has transmitted to posterity." Once more: "The Supreme Sovereign has said to Wān, 'When the heart is not right, its desires are unregulated, and one is not fit to save the world. But you are incapable of such defects. . . . I love a virtue pure and simple like yours; it makes no noise; it is without display; it is never extravagant; it is free from violence. It might be said that your sole genius and wisdom are to obey my commandments.'" And finally: "Heaven penetrates to the depth of all hearts, as daybreak illumines the darkest room. We should strive to reflect its light, as two instruments in full accord respond to one another. We should unite ourselves closely to it, as two tablets which seem to make but one. We should receive what it gives in the very instant when it opens its hands to bestow. Nothing is easier for Heaven than to enlighten us. But our own unregulated passions close the entrance of our souls against its influence." Similar extracts might be multiplied without end; but surely these will suffice to prove the ignorance or unfairness of all who scoff at the religion of the ancient Chinese. These sacred hymns of the She-King breathe a devout Theism,—gratefully conscious of

dependence on the All-Good; reverent in awe of the Holy Witness, Judge, and King; earnestly aspiring after communion in life, thought, deed, with the All-True.

Thus much for the Sacred Books, to the editing and expounding of which K'ung-Foo-Tsze consecrated the best years of his life. And leaving aside the other Sacred Books, and the first and second of the so-called Classics, "The Discourses and Dialogues," and "The Great Learning," let us give a few moments to the third of these, for which the world is indebted to the grandson of the Sage. This book deserves patient study; for in it is embodied, as the best Chinese scholars declare, the very genius and spirit, not only of K'ung-Foo-Tsze, but also of their nation. Its name is "Chung-Yung," which literally means "The Central Immutable," or "Correct Fixed Principle." The Catholic Fathers called it "Medium constans vel sempiternum." Abel Rémusat has named it "L'invariable Milieu." Morrison interprets it "The Constant Medium;" and Collie, "The Golden Medium;" while Dr. Legge translates the title "The Doctrine of the Mean." But such renderings do but partial justice to the profound and comprehensive thought that inspires this book, which is this, "How from a Central Principle to evolve Universal Harmony, by a Method of Distributive Order." The first chapter, indeed, strikes the key-note of the whole system, in a few all-significant sentences, thus: "1. 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. 2. The path may not be left an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the path. On this account, the Superior Man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious; nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive. 3. There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the Superior Man is watchful over himself while he is alone. 4. While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of EQUILIBRIUM. When the feelings have been stirred, and they act in their *due degree*, there ensues what may be called the state of HARMONY. This EQUILIBRIUM is the great root, from which grow all human actings in the world; and this HARMONY is the universal path, which they all should pursue. 5. Let the states of Equilibrium and Harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth." Thus, Equilibrium is the root, Growth is the trunk, Harmony is the tree full grown. In these words — Equilibrium of Nature, the Way of Order, and Harmony in Act — is given the Central Universal method of K'ung-Foo-Tsze, and of his compeers. "The Master said: Perfect is the virtue which is according to the constant, invariable prin-

iple. Rare have they long been among the people, who could practise it. . . . Alas! how is the Path untrodden," referring, for illustration, to the ancient sages. And again: "When one cultivates to the utmost the Principles of his Nature, and exercises them on the method of Reciprocity, he is not far from the Path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others." Once more: "Earnest in practising the ordinary virtues, and careful in speaking about them, the Superior Man dares not but exert himself, if in his practice there is any thing defective; and if in his words he has any excess, he dares not allow himself such license. Thus his words have respect to his actions, and his actions have respect to his words. Is it not just an entire SINCERITY, which marks the Superior Man?"

Here we reach (as was said in the outset) the very centre of the Central Principle, in Sincerity. Sincerity means "Fidelity to the Heaven-given Nature." "Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who without an effort hits what is right, and apprehends without an exercise of thought; he is the Sage, who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains to sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast. To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it. . . . When we have intelligence resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature. When we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction. But given the sincerity, and there shall be intelligence; given the intelligence, and there shall be sincerity." "Sincerity is the end and the beginning; without sincerity, there would be nothing. On this account, the Superior Man regards the attainment of sincerity as the most excellent thing."

And now having once attained — either by Nature, the way of Heaven, or by Instruction, the way of Man — to Sincerity, from this centre we may grow to the perfect life. "Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and its way is that whereby man must direct himself. . . . It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transform

ing and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may become with Heaven and Earth a Third." Thus the perfectly Sincere Man grows to be the Saint, and becomes endowed with transforming powers. "It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can *transform*." — "It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to foreknow. . . . Therefore the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a Spirit." — "To entire sincerity there belongs ceaselessness. Not ceasing, it continues long. Continuing long, it evidences itself. Evidencing itself, it reaches far. Reaching far, it becomes large and substantial. Large and substantial, it becomes high and brilliant. Thus it contains, overspreads, perfects all things. So large and substantial, the man possessing sincerity is the co-equal of Earth. So high and brilliant, it makes him the co-equal of Heaven. So far-reaching and long-continuing, it makes him Infinite. . . . The Way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence. They are without any *Doubleness*; and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable. It is said in the She-King: 'The ordinances of Heaven, how profound are they and unceasing!' The meaning is, that it is thus that Heaven is HEAVEN. And again it says: 'How illustrious was the *Singleness* of the virtue of King Wān!' indicating that it was thus that King Wān was what he was. Singleness is likewise unceasing." Thus Singleness — utter freedom from Duplicity — is the essential life of the true Sage, or Saint. "It is only he possessed of all sagely qualities that can exist under heaven, who shows himself quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence and all-embracing knowledge, — fitted to exercise rule; magnanimous, generous, benign, and mild, — fitted to exercise forbearance; impulsive, energetic, firm, and enduring, — fitted to maintain a firm hold; self-adjusted, grave, never swerving from the central invariable principle, — fitted to command reverence; accomplished, distinctive, concentrative, and searching, — fitted to exercise discrimination. All-embracing and vast, he is like Heaven. Deep and active as a fountain, he is like the Abyss. He is seen, and the people all reverence him; he speaks, and the people all believe him; he acts, and the people are all pleased with him. . . . All who have blood and breath unfeignedly honor and love him. Hence it is said: 'He is the equal of Heaven.' . . . Call him Man in his Ideal, how earnest is he! Call him an Abyss, how deep is he! Call him Heaven, how vast is he!" — "It is said in the She-King: 'Looked at in your apartment, be there free from shame, where you are exposed to the light of Heaven.' Therefore the Superior Man, even when he is not moving, has the feeling of Reverence; and while he speaks not, he has

the feeling of Truthfulness. It is said in the She-King: 'In silence is the offering presented and the Spirit approached to; there is not the slightest contention.' Therefore the Superior Man does not use rewards, and the people are stimulated to virtue. He does not show anger, and the people are awed more than by battle-axes. It is said in the She-King: 'What needs no display is Virtue. All the princes imitate it.' Therefore the Superior Man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquillity."

Such is the ideal of the Sage, developed from the centre of Singleness or Sincerity, up to the-degree of the Saint. And in this beautiful image K'ung-Foo-Tsze was represented, as in life he had appeared to his revering grandson. Is not, then, the assertion verified, that in character and influence he was a Religious and Social Reformer? Indeed, was he not in himself the embodiment of Religion?

That this conception of the Sage-Saint as the "Ideal of Man" was not confined to K'ung-Foo-Tsze and his immediate circle of disciples, might be proved from the writings of his grand successor and expounder, a century and a half later, — M'ang-Tsze, or Mencius, whose sublime doctrine of the essential goodness of human nature has never been surpassed in any age or nation. But time will not allow even a passing quotation. Let us close, then, this view of the Second Religion of the Central Empire, by some final exhibitions of the Saint, as drawn from later writings of this School. K'ung-Foo-Tsze is reported as having distributed men into Five Orders, briefly as follows: "1. The first and most numerous order is made up of those who do to-day what they did yesterday, for no other reason than because it has been done before; who never act spontaneously, but allow themselves to be passively led; who are incapable of embracing large views of human affairs; and whose understanding is governed by the organs of sense. They are commonly called the People. 2. The second order includes those who have been sufficiently trained in science, letters, and the liberal arts as to propose to themselves ends and the means to attain them; who, without having penetrated to the depth of things, can yet give a reason for what they say or do, and can thus teach others. They may be called the Lettered Class. 3. The third order consists of those who never depart from the rules of right reason, and do good for its own sake; who plunge into no excess, and are the same in prosperity and adversity; who regard all mankind as equals, in having the seeds of the same vices and virtues, not esteeming themselves above others; who, not content with ordinary science, pursue knowledge to its remote sources, so as to obtain it in purity. They may be honored with the name of Philosophers. 4. The fourth order consists of those who, under all

circumstances, regard with reverence the central immutable principle, and have fixed rules of moral action which they on no account transgress; who fulfil their least obligations to the minutest detail with scrupulous exactness and untiring perseverance; whose every deed is intrinsically good and fitted for example; who despise toil and anxiety, when the object is to recall men to duty and to enlighten the ignorant; who serve all without distinction of rank or fortune, and without regard to interest, not even exacting the sentiment of gratitude. These are the Sincere or Virtuous. 5. The fifth order, the highest to which human merit can attain, is composed of the Superior Men, who combine the rarest qualities of heart and mind with the habit of pleasurably discharging all duties which nature or morality can impose upon a reasonable and social being; who do good to all, like the Heaven and Earth, never intermitting their beneficence; who are as imperturbable in their mortal career as the sun and moon in their courses; who see without being seen, and act as it were insensibly, like spirits. The very few who attain to this degree may be called the Perfect Men or Saints." This tradition certainly attests the perpetuity of the ideal of the Saint. Again, in this School it is taught that "the name of Saint designates one who knows all, sees all, comprehends all. His thoughts are all true, his acts all holy. All his words are lessons in wisdom; all his deeds are rules for conduct. He unites in himself the Three Orders of Being. He possesses all good. He is altogether heavenly." Once more: "The Saint is at once so elevated and so profound, that he is incomprehensible. His wisdom is boundless. The future is unveiled to his sight. His love embraces the Universe, and quickens all around him like the breath of spring. His words are inspiring and life-giving. He is one with Heaven." — "The heart of Heaven is in the bosom of the Saint, and its truth on his lips. The world can know Heaven only through the Saint." — "Heaven is invisible; the Saint is Heaven become visible." The Saint is named "the Divine Man," "the Celestial Man," "the Unique Man," "the most beautiful of men," "the marvellous man," &c. Finally, it is said: "The Saints and Sages are called the Sons of Heaven." — "The Saint has no father: he is conceived by the operation of Heaven itself."

Now critics may cavil at these sublime conceptions of the Sage-Saint—as the Third with Heaven and Earth, as able to transform all things by the power of a good life, as inspired with heavenly wisdom, as the image and incarnate form of Heaven, as the Heavenly Man, as the Son of Heaven—for their mystic enthusiasm; but certainly no candid person will deny, that in these conceptions the disciples of K'ung-Foo-Tsze have exalted Ethics to the degree of Religion, and

of a singularly pure and spiritual Religion. And before Christians permit themselves to condemn this Ideal as extravagant, it may be well to compare it reverently and deliberately with the Saints of all communions in the Christian Church, whether Apostolical, Catholic, or Reformed.

And now let us pass to a very rapid sketch of the Third Religion, which has at various eras moulded the minds of Emperors, Ministers, and People, and which still is received by multitudes in several states of the Central Empire. This Religion is usually called,

III. FO-ISM, the "Chinese" rendering of Buddhism. And referring all who wish to pursue the subject to the masterly works of Abel Rémusat, Klaproth, Stanislas Julien, &c., let me use the few moments at command for an illustration of Fo-ism, by selecting from the rich literature of this school one most remarkable book of worship. It is called by its translator, the Rev. Samuel Beal, "The Confessional Service of the Great, Compassionate Kwan-Yin." This name has been variously translated by Rémusat, Klaproth, Julien, Sir John Davis, and Chinese Scholars, as meaning "the Being who contemplates with love," "the manifested Self-Existent One," "the manifested Voice," "She who hears the cries of men," "the Goddess of Mercy," &c. But, in view of a name frequently used in this Liturgy, and the spirit and end of this form of worship, it might well be called "The Confessional Service of the Great, Compassionate Heart." For its aim is an act of consecration to the service of a beneficent and compassionate Being, who is constantly manifested to all creatures throughout the universe for their deliverance from the consequences of sin and error. Of this Being, it is said: "By her compassionate heart, she has pledged herself by a great oath to enter into every one of the innumerable worlds, and bring deliverance to all creatures which inhabit them. For this purpose she has enunciated Divine Sentences, which, if properly recited, will render all creatures exempt from the causes of sorrow; and, by removing these, will make them capable of attaining to Supreme Wisdom." After preliminary services, the worshippers offer this prayer of invocation: "Oh would that our teacher Sakya-Mouni, and our merciful Father Amitábha, and the other Buddhas of all regions, — not passing beyond their own limits of perfect Rest and Love, — would descend to this sacred precinct, and be present with us, who now discharge these religious duties! Would that the great, perfect, illimitable, compassionate Heart, influenced by these invocations, would now attend!"

Next follow various prayers and chants, in order that "the worshippers may be filled with holy joy and reverence, without confusion of heart." And then comes the central act of communion, which consists of *Vows* and *Confessions*. It is thus opened: "Whatever worshipper

desires to recite the Sentences of this Service, in order to excite in the midst of all sentient creatures the operation of the Compassionate, Merciful Heart, ought first to go through the following vows. . . . Kwan-Yin, addressing Buddha, said: 'World-honored one! whilst the recitation of these Divine Sentences is ineffectual to deliver creatures from the evil ways of birth, I vow never to arrive at the condition of Buddha. So long as those who recite these Divine Sentences are not born in the various lands of all the Buddhas, I vow never to arrive at that condition myself. So long as those who recite these Divine Sentences are unable to attain to every degree of spiritual perception, I vow never to arrive at the condition of Buddha. So long as those who recite these Divine Sentences do not receive full answers to their prayers, I vow to remain as I am.' Then, in the midst of all the congregation, with closed palms, standing perfectly upright, her eyebrows raised, a smile on her lips, exciting in all creatures the Great, Compassionate Heart, Kwan-Yin began to deliver these comprehensive, effectual, complete, Great-Compassionate-Heart, divine Sentences. . . . Such then is the Vow: Never will I seek, nor receive, private, individual salvation, — never enter into final peace alone; but for ever and everywhere will I live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature, throughout all worlds. Until all are delivered, never will I leave the world of sin, sorrow, and struggle, but will remain where I am." — In what church, of what age or nation, was ever offered a purer, larger, gentler vow of utter consecration to Infinite Mercy?

And next follows the CONFESSIO. The Liturgy continues thus: "The worshippers, having finished the sentences, ought to consider that all the obstacles which prevent spiritual progress spring from sins committed in our condition as sentient creatures; that from the first, till now, the sins of all created beings have been constantly going on, and that now the web of guilt has become intricate and complicated. Every age has entertained its own peculiar crimes, which, descending from parent to child, have caused the sorrows of our present state. Without repentance there can be no remission. Our sins, therefore, ought to be well considered and weighed, that so they may be forgiven and destroyed. Bowing low, therefore, say thus: 'We, and all men from the very first, by reason of the grievous sins we have committed in thought, word, and deed, have lived in ignorance . . . of every way of escape from the consequences of our conduct. We have followed only the courses of this evil world; nor have we known aught of Supreme Wisdom. And even now, though enlightened as to our duty, yet with others do we still commit heavy sins, which prevent us from advancing in true knowledge. Therefore, in the presence of Kwan-Yin and the Buddhas of the Ten Regions, we would

humble ourselves and repent us of our sins. Oh that we may have strength to do so aright! and that may cause all obstacles to be removed.'” Here with a loud voice add: “For the sake of all sentient creatures, in whatever capacity they may be, — would that all obstacles might be removed! — we confess our sins and repent.” After a complete prostration, the worshippers then continue: “We and all men from the first, from too great love of outward things, and from inward affections towards men, leading to sinful friendships, — having no wish to benefit others, or to do good in the least degree, — have only strengthened the power of the three sources of sin, and added sin to sin; and even though our actual crimes have not been so great, yet a wicked heart has ruled us within. . . . Now, therefore, believing from the bottom of our heart in the certain result of sin, and filled with fear, shame, and great heart-chiding, would we thus publicly repent us of our sins; . . . we would separate ourselves from evil and pursue good; we would diligently recount all our past offences and earnestly follow the path of virtue. . . . Hitherto we have only gone astray; but now we return. Oh would that the Merciful would receive our vows of amendment!” And then each one giving the personal name, together the worshippers prostrate themselves and say, “With all our hearts do we repent; and here do we prostrate ourselves before the Sacred Presence, and all the countless beings of the infinite universe.” Then follow particular confessions.

But the service does not close here. Having thus by Vows and Confessions recognized the unity of the human race, and indeed of the whole universe, spiritual and natural, in sin and sorrow, struggle and salvation, and having thus consecrated themselves, individually and collectively, to the service of the Great, Compassionate Heart, the worshippers then unite in this act of INTERCESSION. “Having myself returned to my duty to Buddha, I ought to pray for all men, that they may attain to perfection of wisdom. Having myself returned to my duty to the Law, I ought to pray that all men may be deeply versed in the wisdom of the Sacred Books, and acquire perfect knowledge. Having myself returned to my duty to the Assembly, would that all men may agree in the great principles of Reason, and maintain peace and worship in the Holy Assembly!” Thus from beginning to end this service is one of self-sacrificing consecration to Infinite Mercy. And here must close, for this time, the illustration of Fo-ism.

And now, after such an exposition of the Three Great Religions of the Central Empire, it may well be asked, How has it come to pass that a Nation inspired and illumined with such sublime ideals has been seemingly so false to its trusts and has fallen so short of its destiny? The answer to this question must be given in the briefest terms, although it

would be instructive to tell the tragic story at length. To us citizens of this Republic, just redeemed by an awful struggle from the death-in-life of disunion, the terrible significance of the fact will come home, — that from the earliest ages, China has been, century after century, the prey of Civil Wars. The age of Lao-Tsze and K'ung-Foo-Tsze and their compeers was followed by that of an execrable usurper, who crushed the nation down under a centralized despotism, from the transmitted forms of which it never has been able to shake itself free. What would have become of our Ideals, if the imperial Slave Oligarchy had triumphed in our late war? Again, we are strangely ignorant or forgetful of the fact that China is a conquered nation. Twice has the Empire been swept and subdued: first, by that resistless race, which all but overran Europe, the Mongol-Tartars; next, by that almost equally indomitable race, the Mantchou-Tartars; and twice has the immortal principle in the Religion and Ethics of China manifested itself by spiritually conquering the conquerors. For first Kublai-Khan, the great emperor of the Mongols, and afterward the still greater Kang-Hi, the establisher of the existing Mantchou Dynasty, reverently accepted the ancient Creeds, Customs, Laws, and Books transmitted by the School of K'ung-Foo-Tsze. But notwithstanding the efforts of these two grand sovereigns to make the best atonement in their power for the wrongs wrought by foreign invasion, the free spirit of the people and their spontaneous genius were stifled by oppressive formalism, of which their shorn heads and long queues are but the outward type. The chief cause, however, of the apparent immobility of the Chinese Nation for many centuries, — and the one which it is important for us and for all Christendom to study, — is the influence of scientific scepticism over that very Scholar-Class which should have kept clean and full the fountains of Religious Life. It is impossible now to do more than barely to state the fact, that since the time of the Sung Dynasty, — when the learned Choo-He, a greater Positivist than Auguste Comte, indeed almost an Aristotle, first promulgated his vast system of Universal Science, — speculative Atheism has choked and dried up the streams of thought in the Central Empire. Choo-He himself, indeed, was not an Atheist, but on the contrary asserted that Heaven had a mind to perceive and a heart to sympathize with the efforts and struggles, the joys and woes, of humanity. But although the Sage admitted, as he once said, that there was a "Man up above," yet he, on the whole, discouraged the culture of devotional feelings and usages. And it cannot be denied that the tendency of his system has been to substitute Philosophy for Religion. Among the Literati, for centuries, the glowing worship of "Shang-Te" or the "Supreme Sovereign," and of "Tien" or "Heaven," has too often been eclipsed by the cold shadow of "Tai-

Ke," "The Summit," — the principle of Unity, — with its two manifestations, the Active element, "Yang," and the Passive element, "Yin." In ethics, "Le," or Law, — an all-pervading Order, — has usurped the throne of personal character and sovereign will. And as a natural consequence, external regularity and conventional propriety have been inculcated, rather than the spontaneous and intuitive goodness that aspires upwards to saintly perfection. While such has been the influence of scientific scepticism among the Scholar-Class, by a law of reaction, that, under various modes, has operated in all ages and nations, the People, meantime, have been impelled towards idolatrous ritualism, — exhibited in the adoration of the Natural Elements; in the worship of Ancestors and Great Men; in necromancy, demonology, and communion with Spirits; in magic, incantations, and countless superstitious practices, such as in all times and lands have invariably accompanied the decline of spiritual religion. These frivolous and degrading rites may be found described in many modern books, such as Williams's "Middle Kingdom," and the works of l'Abbé Huc, Davis, Meadows, Doolittle, &c. But it would be about as fair to judge of the Christian Religion, by Catholics of Naples crowding to watch the liquefaction of St. Januarius' blood, and circles of American spiritualists seeking ghostly counsel from table-tippings and "planchette," as it is to judge of the Religions of China from the childish antics of a mob in Shanghai and Canton. In estimating the countrymen of Lao-Tsze, K'ung-Foo-Tsze, and their grand compeers, let us practise a little the Golden Rule we boast of, and take as our test the Representative Men and Systems, and above all the Ideals of the Central Empire.

This brings us to the point, which now forces itself upon us, as an immediate practical duty: "How shall we do unto others as we would have others do unto us," in our treatment of the "Chinese?" How shall we "love our neighbors as ourselves," in our conduct towards those who are already becoming at least our guests, and who soon are destined to become our fellow-citizens? Shall we try to put in force that policy of Exclusion which Christendom has unanimously condemned for ages in the Central Empire, and against which Great Britain and France have twice made war? Surely it would stultify all our past professions, and brand our Republic with infamous inconsistency, to attempt to rear on the western coast of the Pacific those very walls, which the cannon of Christian States have levelled with the dust upon its eastern shore. Never can this mighty Nation be guilty of a deed so mean. Our doors are open. Where is the ingrate miserly enough to bar them? And if we admit the "Men of the Central Empire" to free residence here, and if our own citizens make homes for themselves in "Chung-Kwoh," — as assuredly

will be done on both sides, in rapidly increasing ratio,—what shall be the quality of our fellowship? There can be but one reply. We must meet one another in cordial and respectful friendliness. This passing flurry on the “labor question” will be forgotten to-morrow. Let our energetic and high-hearted working-men learn, that, centuries before this continent was discovered, a system of “MUTUAL HELP” was taught and practised in the communities of “China,” which anticipated, and in some respects, surpassed our modern plans of “Co-operation.” Our land and labor reformers might well take a page or two out of the famous “Chow-Le,” or Laws of the Chow Dynasty, and the noble chapters on popular policy of “Mencius.” Let our educators study the most ancient system of “Common Schools” ever instituted, and learn to imitate the graduated method of training from Primary Schools to Academies, from Academies to Colleges, from Colleges to Universities,—organized thousands of years ago in the “Central Empire,” whereby the sons of peasants might rise to the highest honors of the Imperial University, and become the peers of princes. Let our moralists sit respectfully at the feet of the most eloquent teachers whom our race has known, of Filial Reverence as the fountain-head of virtue, and of Urbanity, as the flowing stream to keep the garden of social life freshly beautiful. Let our statesmen also comprehend that from the earliest days, recorded in “Chinese” history, it has been asserted that government rests as its only sure foundation on the “hearts of the People;” that again and again men have risen, and continually rise, from the lowest social conditions to highest offices of trust, and even to the Imperial Seat, by competitive examination, and by merit; that the principles of republicanism really pervade the literature, laws, and institutions of “China,” notwithstanding its usages of centralization; and that just what is needed to revive, unfold, and perfect this wonderfully enduring people is the inspiring influence of our freedom and progressive energy. Finally let us, one and all, with blended trust and hope, acknowledge that it was not chance or destiny, but the Providence of the Living God, that clasped in union the hands of the Oldest and the Youngest of the Great Nations of our globe, across the Pacific, as a pledge that in the fulness of time MAN shall be ONE.

