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Confucius and Mencius.

An Imperial Appreciation.

By JAMES WARE.

KIA LUNG was the sixth emperor of the present dynasty. He came to the throne A.D. 1736, and reigned sixty years, abdicating in 1796 in favour of his son Kia K'ing. He died four years later in the 89th year of his age.

On account of his intelligence he was reputed to be a reincarnation of Yao and Shun, the two worthies who stand at the dawn of Chinese history as the personification of all wisdom and understanding.

Kia Lung was a man of unusual energy. It was his custom to take long journeys to the provinces in order to personally investigate the condition of his country and people. He governed the empire himself, not allowing any important measure to be transacted without his knowledge and consent. And it was not merely an idle boast of his when writing, in the 60th year of his reign, to the King of Holland, to say, "I have reigned for sixty years with glory and happiness and I have established the most profound peace upon the four seas. In fact I have attended to nothing but the good administration of my empire." He instructed his ministers to point out to him whatever faults they detected in his administration of the government. He commanded that only men of proved integrity and ability should be recommended for office and that equal justice should be dealt to all alike. In times of famine and flood, he was unstinting in the use of his private funds for the alleviation of his people's sufferings.

Kia Lung was an ardent Confucianist. During his reign the Sacred Edict was read in front of all Confucian temples, and colleges were established in each of the provinces for the systematic study of the Classics. He was unsparing in his denunciation of everything that to him savoured of heterodoxy. In this he included fortune telling and divining, also certain Buddhist sects, and all secret societies. He also prohibited the publication of many popular



TABLET I.

千植檜贊
文欄肥壤厥有檜株
先聖攸植緊手澤餘幾經
枯榮左紐右紆造物憑護
孫枝扶踈 御筆 □

TABLET II.

故井贊
疏食飲水曲肱樂之既清
且潔汲繩到茲我取一勺
以飲以思嗚呼
宣聖實我之師 御筆 □

TABLET III.

改邑不改養無窮心
惻王明氣鳳回可滅
當年飲水處曲肱樂
亦在其中
乾隆丙子春為題 □

TABLET IV.

works, including "The Deification of Gods and Genii," and "The *Shwan Hoo Chwen*," a tale of brigandage, second only in interest to the celebrated "Three Kingdoms." The blocks of these books he ordered to be destroyed wherever found.

Several times the emperor visited the scene of the life and labours of Confucius, and while on the spot wrote many beautiful inscriptions in memory of the great teacher, which were transferred to stone with the exception of the engravings of the tree, and Mencius. It is rubbings from these inscriptions which we here reproduce. The characters (御筆) on the left hand side, and at the end of the inscription, signify the imperial autograph.

The rubbings were given to the writer twenty years ago by his old friend, Dr. Luther H. Gulick, who received them from a friend in the interior.

TABLET I.

THE TREE BY THE GRAVE OF CONFUCIUS.

This engraving was made by a Peking scholar while on a pilgrimage to the grave in A.D. 1667. He signed the tablet, but his name has since been erased as will be seen from our photograph. He says:—

Although dead for centuries,
 Resplendent it stands, a bronze-like figure,
 Its trunk decorated with perpetual lichen,
 While it shows no tendency to decay.

The writer then states that he had made the engraving in order to perpetuate the form of the tree for the benefit of coming generations.

TABLET II.

IN PRAISE OF THE TREE.

Kien Lung, in this tablet, says that Confucius planted the tree with his own hand. But it is generally believed that it was planted by Tsz Kung, his most faithful disciple, who dwelt by the graveside for six years after his master's decease.

The tree was planted by the Master's hand,
 In soil, the richest in the land,
 Though often withered, oft to life it sprang;
 And numerous branches spread abroad,
 Cared for by the Creator, * God.

NOTE.—The tree is here called 楷, which means an example, and is defined by Williams as the name of a straight, graceful and durable tree which grows on the grave of Confucius. But Kien Lung calls it a 檜樹 or a species of cypress.

*造物 for Creator is commonly used in Christian literature as造物之主, but the expression is rarely seen in Chinese literature.

TABLET III.

THE EMPEROR AT THE WELL OF CONFUCIUS.

The song is prefaced with a reference to a passage in the Analects: "With coarse rice to eat, with water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow, I have still joy in the midst of these things."

I saw the crystal water, and I drew
 A draught refreshing from the ancient well.
 I drank, and with a sigh I owned
 The Holy Man to be my teacher still.

TABLET IV.

IN PRAISE OF THE WELL.

Amid the city's changes *
 The well remains the same.
 May an enlightened governor arise,
 A ruler among men, and wise
 As the phoenix is among the feathered tribes.
 The Master once drank water from this well;
 Frugal, yet contented,
 His joy no change could tell.

TABLET V.

IN PRAISE OF THE HOME OF CONFUCIUS.

No decorations beautify the gateway of the greatest Sage.
 I walk, and pause, and gaze; and as I gaze
 I praise the Master's great frugality.
 May I within his footsteps place my own,
 And likewise others urge, to tread this righteous road.

TABLET VI.

THE TABLET BY THE WELL.

By the side of the well I saw a tablet of great size. It states that when King Kang of Lu was demolishing the old homestead of Confucius, in order to erect a palace for himself upon the spot, the sound of music issued from the dwelling.

Although King Kang the Master's walls destroyed,
 No power had he to make his doctrine void.
 As music issued from the ancient home,
 So shall the doctrine still pervade
 The generations yet to come.

* This theme is founded upon a passage in the Yih King, on th 48th Hexagram or the "Well" symbol. The full text reads, "Looking at Tsing, we think of how the site of a town may be changed, while the position of its wells undergo no change. Its waters neither diminish nor increase, and those who come and those who go can draw and enjoy the benefit." See Legge *in loco*.

故宅門贊

居廟之右殿門斯故茲績
不施意存後素徘徊仰瞻
心焉學少告尔後人由茲
義路

御筆



故井前頭得楔碑傳開魯
辟響金絲徑天緯地存千
古豈係恭王壞宅時
乾隆丙子春德題



詩禮堂贊

昔者趨遶詩禮垂訓維言
與立伊誰不奮九仞一筭
願勉乎進御堂聽講景仰
聖舜

御筆



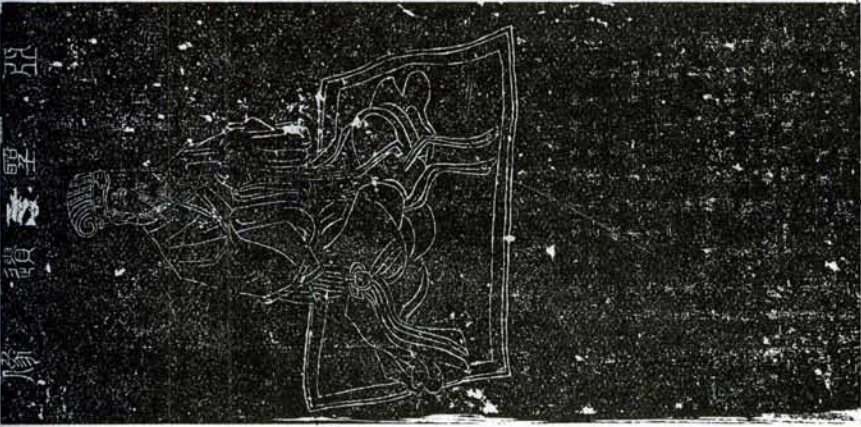
杏壇贊

憶昔緇帷詩書授受與有
榮焉軼桃欒柳博厚高明
亦曰悠久萬世受治杏林
何有

御筆



TABLET VIII.



亞
聖
讚

TABLET IX.

亞聖孟子贊

戰國春秋又異其世陷溺人心豈惟功利時君
爭雄處士橫議為我無愛鼗鼓樹蔽魯連高風
陳仲廉士所謂英賢不過若是於此有人入孝
出弟一髮千鈞道脉永繫能不動心知言養氣
治世之略克齊仁義受君學民惓惓餘意欲入
孔門非益何自益丁其難顏丁其易語默故殊
道無二致卓哉亞聖功在天地

乾隆戊辰仲春月御筆



KIEN LUNG'S PRAISE OF MENCIUS.

TABLET VII.

IN PRAISE OF THE MASTER'S STUDY.

THE HALL OF ODES AND RITES.

As his son was hastening past the study, Confucius called after him enquiring if he had studied the Odes and Rites. He had not done so. Confucius then declared that by neglecting these important lessons he would remain illiterate, and would eventually become shiftless.

* The Master by a basketful of earth,
Teaches persistency, and learning's actual worth.
Reverently within the sacred walls we stand,
Great benefits deriving at the Master's hand.

TABLET VIII.

TABLET OF THE APRICOT ALTAR.

THE PLACE WHERE CONFUCIUS HAD HIS SCHOOL.

I call to mind my schoolboy days,
And the text books studied long ago.
All the prosperity since enjoyed,
To the Master's word alone I owe.
May the doctrine descend from him, wisest of Sages,
Universal, illustrious, from ages to ages!

TABLET IX.

MENCIUS, THE SECOND SAGE.

Our engraving was made in the year A.D. 1717 by Meng Shang-kwei, one of the 64th generation of Mencius.

The title "second" (第二) was conferred upon him by the emperor Hung Wu, founder of the Ming Dynasty. When he came to the throne he was quite illiterate, but he applied himself with such diligence to the study of the Classics that in a short time he was able to find the meaning for himself. There is a passage in Mencius which reads, * "When the Prince regards his ministers as his hands and feet, his ministers regard their prince as their stomach and heart; when he regards them as his dogs and horses, they regard him as any other man; when he regards them as the ground or grass, they regard him as a robber and an enemy." When Hung Hu come to this passage he was so enraged that he ordered his archers to shoot down the tablet of Mencius from the walls of the Temple of Confucius. But in after years, when he was able to appreciate the value of Mencius to his government, he conferred upon him the title of 亞, which has henceforward been his designation.

* "The prosecution of learning may be compared with what may happen in raising a mound. If there is wanted but one basketful of earth to complete the work, and I stop, the stopping is my own work." Tsze Han, Ch. 18. *Analects*.

* Le Low, II 3: 1. Mencius.

KIEN LUNG'S PRAISE OF MENCIUS.

The Summer and Autumn period * was evil,
 Comparable only to the period of the Contending States † for depravity.
 The earth was changed :
 Men's hearts were sunk in the mire, and ingulfed in the waters of iniquity.
 Their highest thoughts were of temporary fame,
 Their one endeavour to acquire fleeting riches.
 Mutual war and robbery alone engrossed the attention of the ruling princes :
 Scholars refused office and withdrew to their homes.
 Here they did nothing but discuss and criticize the situation.
 The doctrines of Yang Chu, " Each one for himself,"
 And of Mih Tih, " Free love," prevailed.
 These were followed as men flock to hear the lute, and to follow the flag.
 In these days also flourished Lu Lien, honoured as " the reputable " ;
 Also Chen Chung-sz, known as " the undefiled."
 These four only were regarded as the Sages and Heroes of the time.
 Then arose Mencius, excelling in filial piety.
 ‡ One hair of his could support the weight of thirty thousand catties.
 As the veins in the human system,
 So his doctrines are entwined with the teachings of Confucius.
 His body was proof against earthly contamination ;
 His discernment was such that from a man's words he could read the heart.
 His self-control was equalled only by his grasp of doctrine.
 The principles of Yao and Shun, " benevolence and rectitude,"
 Formed the foundations of his methods of government :
 Love and loyalty from people to prince ;
 Imperial favours from prince to people.
 Thus did he aim to lead coming generations to enter the door of Confucius ;
 Which can be achieved only by following the lead of Mencius.
 Mencius embraced the doctrine in times of peril ;
 The disciple Yen Tsz§ received it in peaceful times.
 One spake much, the other was a man of few words ;
 Nevertheless, their doctrine is one and the same.
 O great and exalted one ! the Second Sage,
 World-wide has become the fame of thy excellent virtue.

* The times of Confucius.

† The times of Mencius.

‡ The reference to one hair of Mencius may have been used by Kien Lung with satirical reference to the egotistical philosopher, Yang Chu, above-mentioned, whose principle was, " Every man for himself." Mencius said of him : " Though he might have benefitted the whole empire by plucking out a single hair he would not have done it."—M. 7,25.

§ The favourite disciple of Confucius.