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FRAGMENTS
OF
CONFUCIAN LORE

A SELECTION OF SHORT
QUOTATIONS WITH
THE ORIGINAL TEXT

By

THOS. T. H. FERGUSON

Commissioner of Chinese Customs.

學
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THE Books from which these quotations have been culled are the Confucian Analects (論語), the Great Learning (大學) and the Doctrine of the Mean (中庸). In the translation the rendering of Dr. James Legge has been mostly followed, though somewhat freely adapted. The arrangement in chapters as given on page 3 has been made without any regard to the order (there being no such order anyhow) in which the subjects are treated of in the original books.

Foochow, August, 1920.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
On The Order of Things	5
On Truth and Sincerity	7
On Virtue and Moral Courage	10
On Heaven and the Spiritual	12
On the Path	14
On Knowledge and Learning	16
On Human Intercourse	21
On the Art of Governing... ..	26
On the Superior Man and the Small Man	29
Confucius, the Man	32
On Family Relationship	36
On Propriety, Ceremony and Decorum	37
On War	38
On Music	39
On Youth and Age	40
On Litigation, Wealth and Rank	41

On The Order of Things.

Everything under Heaven is subject to the Order of Things.

天下之物莫不有理

The Importance of adhering to the Order of Things.

Things have their Origin and Development; affairs their Beginning and End. A knowledge of the proper sequel leads to the Path.

物有本末事有終始知所先後則近道矣

No solid Structure possible on decayed Foundations.

The Origin being disordered, no good result can spring from it.

其本亂而末治者否矣

Necessity of Preparation.

Whatever has been previously arranged will succeed; without preparation failure is bound to follow.

凡事豫則立不豫則廢

And of Grounding.

Confucius said: For the laying on of colours a plain ground is needed.

子曰繪事後素

The Survival of the Fittest.

The flourishing tree is nourished and the tottering one overthrown.

故栽者培之傾者覆之

The Natural Route.

Confucius said: Who can go but by the door? Then why not follow that route?

子曰誰能出不由戶何莫由斯道也

Force Majeure.

When the wind blows, the grass must bend to it.

草上之風必偃

The Artisan and his Tools.

The Artisan who wishes to produce good work will begin by giving attention to his tools.

工欲善其事必先利其器

The Need of Foresight.

He who neglects distant precautions will have trouble near at hand.

人無遠慮必有近憂

On Truth and Sincerity.

Sincerity the Alpha and Omega.

Sincerity is the Beginning and End of things; without it nothing can exist.

誠者物之終始不誠無物

Its Seat both in Heaven and in Man.

Sincerity belongs to Heaven: its attainment to Man.

誠者天之道也誠之者人之道也

Knowledge of Self.

Sincerity of mind consists in brooking no self-deception.

所爲誠其意者毋自欺也

And the Remedy.

If at fault, do not hesitate to correct yourself.

過則勿憚改

The Futility of the Mean Person trying to hide his Inner Self.

"He is seen through as if lungs and liver were exposed."

人之視已如見其肺肝然

Truly Impartial Vision rare.

Hence to see the bad points of the beloved ones and the good qualities of those one hates, is a quality rarely met with in this world.

故好而知其惡惡而知其美者天下鮮矣

A Warning against superficial Impressions.

A ready tongue and prepossessing appearance seldom go with true virtue.

巧言令色鮮矣仁

The Futility of Self-Deception.

The Book of Poetry hath it:—Though a fish may try to hide at the bottom, yet it is clearly visible.

詩云潛雖伏矣亦孔之昭

Truthfulness.

Confucius said:—I do not see how a man without truthfulness is to succeed.

子曰人而無信不知其可也

A Damper for the Loquacious.

Confucius said:—The Ancients were spare in speech lest their actions might not bear out their words.

子曰古者言之不出恥躬之不逮也

Beyond Redemption.

Rotten wood cannot be carved; a mud wall cannot be plastered.

朽木不可雕也糞土之牆不可朽也

Where the Name exists without the Reality.

Confucius said:—A three-cornered vessel without the corners—a strange vessel indeed!

子曰觚不觚觚哉觚哉

Dying Confessions.

Tsengtzu said:—As a third about to die emits plaintive cries, so does a man at death's door speak nought but the truth.

曾子言曰鳥之將死其鳴曰哀人之將死其言也善

Adversity the Test of Sincerity.

Confucius said:—As the weather turns cold we perceive how the pine and cypress are the last to shed their foliage.

子曰歲寒然後知松柏之後彫也

Confucius' Aversion of Sophistry.

"That is why I hate your glib-tongued people!"

是故惡夫佞者

Something in a Name.

Confucius said:—Above all, let names be made true!

子曰必也正名乎

Because:—

Misleading names lead to insincere language. Insincere language shuts out success.

名不正則言不順言不順則事不成

To the Verbose of all Ages.

Let the Language be clear, and nothing more!

辭達而已矣

Ancient Meanness.

Confucius said:—Who said that Wei-Shêng Kao was upright? Someone begged him for some vinegar; he begged it off a neighbour and gave it to him.

子曰孰謂微生高直或乞醢焉乞諸其鄰而與之

On Virtue and Moral Courage.

The Will as Starting Point.

If the Mind be really bent on Virtue, there will be no Wickedness.

苟志於仁矣無惡也

Restlessness of the Wicked.

Those who are devoid of Virtue cannot abide (contentedly) in poverty nor live in long continued enjoyment.

不仁者不可以久處約不可以長處樂

Even in those Days.

Confucius said:—I have not yet seen the love of virtue equal the love of the senses.

子曰吾未見好德如好色者也

Virtuous Deliberateness.

Confucius said:—The Virtuous are extremely cautious in their speech.

子曰仁者其言也訥

Moral Courage.

To shirk taking what is clearly the right course is want of courage.

見義不爲無勇也

Power of the Will.

The General of Three Army Corps may be carried off by force—not so the will of one simple man.

子曰三軍可奪帥也匹夫不可奪志也

A Clear Conscience.

If one can find no faults within oneself, what cause can there be for anxiety or fear?

子曰內省不疚夫何憂何懼

Honest Effort, the one Thing needful.

Only one day of real, honest effort in striving after virtue! I have not yet seen a case in which strength would then prove insufficient.

有能一日用其力於仁矣乎我未見力不足者

Hopeless!

Confucius said:—It is all over! I have not yet met one who, on perceiving his faults, could conduct his own prosecution.

子曰己矣乎吾未見能見其過而內自訟者也

On Heaven and the Spiritual.

The Ordinances of Heaven.

Confucius said:—He who does not recognize the Ordinances of Heaven cannot become a Superior Man.

子曰不知命無以爲君子也

A Warning.

He who offends against Heaven has no one to whom he can pray.

獲罪於天無所禱也

A well-known Utterance by Tze Hsia.

Life and Death are ordained from Above; Wealth and Position come from Heaven.

死生有命富貴在天

When only Man was vile.

Great as are Heaven and Earth, man ever finds something to croak about!

天地之大也人猶有所憾

Angels or Spirits?

We look for them without seeing, listen without hearing them—yet they pervade all things and can never be left behind.

視之而弗見聽之而弗聞體物而不可遺

The Hereafter.

Not knowing Life, what can we know about Death?

未知生焉知死

As quoted elsewhere.

Confucius avoided speaking on the subject (amongst others) of Spiritual Matters.

子不語怪力亂神

On the Path

Humanity the Starting Point.

Confucius said:—The Path does not lie far from Man. He who seeks to follow a path deviating widely from man's nature is on the wrong track.

子曰道不遠人人之爲道而遠人不可以爲道

The Quotation which immediately precedes the Golden Rule.

He who cultivates to the utmost the best side of his nature and exercises it towards others on the principle of Reciprocity, is not far from the Path.

忠恕違道不遠

The Difficulty of finding the Happy Mean.

Confucius said:—I know why the Path is not trodden; the clever ones overstep it and the stupid ones do not reach it.

子曰道之不行也我知之矣知者過之愚者不及也

Both wrong.

To overstep it is as bad as not to reach it at all.

子曰過猶不及

A Truism:—

Opulence and State are greatly coveted by man.

富與貴是人之所欲也

—and its Qualification.

But if they cannot be reached by the Path of Righteousness, they should not be entertained.

不以其道得之不處也

The All-pervading Principle of Confucian Teaching.

Tsengtzu said:—All that the Master teaches is loyalty to one's best principles and their disinterested extension towards others.

曾子曰夫子之道忠恕而已矣

Free-and-easy Ways not to be carried too far.

Chungkung said:—While strictly adhering to Principle the smaller matters in one's dealing with men may perhaps be neglected; but if such neglect should also be extended to the principle itself, I certainly hold that it would be going too far!

仲弓曰居敬而行簡以臨其民不亦可乎居簡而行簡無乃太簡乎

The Human Starting Point again.

By nature man is not far removed (from the Path). It is in the Practice where he goes astray.

子曰性相近也習相遠也

What it is worth.

Confucius said:—He who beholds the Path in the morning may die in the evening without regret.

子曰朝聞道夕死可矣

Effort and Success.

Action is what matters—Success a secondary consideration.

先事後得

On Knowledge and Learning.

Human Intelligence.

... For the Human Intelligence is inseparable from Knowledge.

蓋人心之靈莫不有知

Foundation of Knowledge.

The extension of knowledge lies in the Investigation of Things.

致知在格物

The Reward of Perseverance.

Using his endeavours perseveringly, he suddenly arrives at the stage of clear-sighted perception.

以求志乎其極至於用力之久而一旦豁然貫通焉

Preference of Knowledge to Fame.

Confucius said:—I would not be so much distressed at men not knowing me as I would at not knowing men.

子曰不患人之不已知患不知人也

Learning and Thinking mutually indispensable.

Study without meditation is vain; meditation without study is dangerous.

學而不思則罔思而不學則殆

True Knowledge: the Full Realisation of one's Limitations.

To know that which one knows and to recognize as unknown that which one does not know; such is true knowledge!

知之爲知之不知爲不知是知也

Absence of Mind.

When the mind is absent, we look without seeing, hear without understanding and eat without tasting.

心不在焉視而不見聽而不聞食而不知其味

On behalf of some of these Sayings.

Let not the Reader despise them for their simplicity.

讀者不可以其近而忽之也

For it is all solid wisdom!

皆實學也

Paradoxes.

Secrecy is the most visible of everything and minuteness the most apparent.

莫見乎隱莫顯乎微

The Paucity of Connoisseurs.

All men eat and drink, but few can distinguish the real flavour.

人莫不飲食也鮮能知味也

Various Roads to Knowledge.

Some are born with knowledge, some acquire it by study, some by painful experience; but once acquired it amounts to the same thing.

或生而知之或學而知之或困而知之及其知之一也

A modest List of Desiderata.

Extensive Study, careful inquiry, discriminating thought, intelligent analysis and earnest action.

博學之審問之慎思之明辨之篤行之

Keeping up to Date.

He who can keep rubbing up his old knowledge while acquiring new, is fit to be a teacher.

溫故而知新可以爲師矣

How to utilise the Example of others.

Confucius said:—When you see a great man, try to equal him; when an unworthy one, turn and examine yourself!

見賢思齊焉見不賢而內自省也

The Proverb of all Nations.

Confucius said:—The Cautious seldom err.

子曰以約失之者鮮矣

But don't overdo it.

Chi Wen-tzu thought thrice before acting. Confucius on hearing about this said:—Twice will do!

季文子三思而後行子聞之曰再斯可矣

How to make Use of one's Companions.

Confucius said:—Whenever I walk with a few others, I look upon them as my teachers. I select their good qualities for a guide and their bad ones for a warning.

子曰三人行必有我師焉擇其善者而從之其不善者而改之

A hopeful Promise.

Confucius said:—It would be hard indeed to find one who has studied for three years without arriving at some substantial result.

子曰三年學不志於穀不易得也

For Students of the Chinese Language?

Confucius said:—Learn as if you would never reach it and always fear lest it escape you again.

子曰學如不及猶恐失之

Few will deny this:

Confucius said:—The Knowing ones are free from Doubt, the Virtuous ones from Trouble and the Brave from Fear.

子曰知者不惑仁者不憂勇者不懼

Said of the Disciple Min Tzu-chien.

This man never speaks without hitting the mark!

夫人不言言必有中

True Worth needs a suitable Setting.

Ornament and Substance are mutually indispensable. The skin of a tiger without the hair looks like that of a dog or sheep.

文猶質也質猶文也虎豹之鞶猶犬羊之鞶

No Royal Road to Learning.

The Scholar who thinks of his comfort is not a true scholar.

子曰士而懷居不足以爲士矣

A Hint to Thinkers.

Confucius said:—I have tried going without food and sleep for the sake of meditating, but find that even that cannot replace studying.

吾嘗終日不食終夜不寢以思無益不如學也

Knowledge the great Equaliser.

Where there is instruction, classes disappear.

有教無類

This was said 2500 years ago.

The Ancients studied for their own improvement; nowadays, however, all study is prompted by a craving for contemporary fame!

古之學者爲己 今之學者爲人

On Human Intercourse.

The Golden Rule.

That which thou dost not wish to be done unto thyself, do not unto others.

施諸已而不願亦勿施於人

Another Variant.

Not to bestow to the left what one dislikes receiving from the right, nor to the right what one dislikes from the left—is called Acting by the Golden Rule.

所惡於右毋以交於左所惡於左毋以交於右
此之謂絜矩之道

And the Positive Form (the existence of which in Confucianism is usually denied)

Confucius said:—To set an example in behaving to a friend as I should wish him to behave to me—to this I have not yet attained.

所求乎朋友先施之未能也

On the Choice of Friends.

Have no friends inferior to thyself in qualities and attainments.

無友不如己者

Debit and Credit.

Thus curses will return as curses and ill gotten goods will depart in ill manner.

是故言悖而出者亦悖而入貨悖而入者亦悖而出

A Warning to Excentrics.

To love that which is commonly disliked by men and to dislike that which is generally cherished, is to act in opposition to human nature; calamities are bound to be the result.

好人之所惡惡人之所好是謂拂人之性蓄心違夫身

Independence of character.

In a high position he does not oppress his inferiors, in a lowly one he does not truckle to his superiors; he perfects himself without invoking aid of others and, consequently, has no cause for dissatisfaction.

在上位不陵下在下位不援上正已而不求於人則無怨

How to obtain the Information one is seeking.

Tze Kung said:—The Master is kind, sincere, courteous, modest and accommodating and thus obtains the information he desires. Does he not in this respect differ from others who seek information?

子貢曰夫子溫良恭儉讓以得之夫子之求之也其諸異乎人之求之與

Bygones.

It is no use talking about things which have had their course, analysing past occurrences or finding fault with former doings.

成事不說遂事不諫既往不咎

The Influence of Surroundings.

Confucius said:—Virtue should be prized in one's surroundings. To choose a neighbourhood devoid of virtue, how can that lead to wisdom?

子曰里仁爲美擇不處仁焉得知

The Unpopularity of the Egotist.

Confucius said:—He who acts merely for his own benefit will beget much ill-will.

子曰放於利而行多怨

Danger of being too smart.

Confucius said:—What is the use of being witty? Ready repartee often begets hatred. What is the use of being witty?

子曰焉用佞禦人以口給屢憎於人

Where Familiarity did not breed Contempt.

Confucius said:—Yen P'ing-Chung excelled in his intercourse with men. However long the acquaintanceship, he never ceased to be courteous.

子曰晏平仲善於人交久而敬之

Secret Resentment.

To harbour secret resentment and yet appear friendly was abhorrent to Tso Ch'iu-ming. So it was to Confucius.

匿怨而友其人左丘明恥之丘亦恥之

Yet some Polish seems to be needed, for:

Straightforwardness without due observance of forms becomes positive rudeness.

直而無禮則絞

Again the Principle of Reciprocity.

To be able to judge others by ourselves may be called the essence of virtue.

能近取譬可謂仁之方也已

Tzu Hsia's Winged Words.

ALL WITHIN THE FOUR SEAS ARE BRETHERN; then
why should the Superior Man bemoan his lack of brothers?

四海之內皆兄弟也君子何患乎無兄弟也

The Spoken Word Irretrievable.

A Span of four horses cannot overtake the tongue!

駟不及舌

What a Promise meant to one of Confucius' Disciples.

Tzu Lu never slept over a promise.

子路無宿諾

Virtue's Example.

Confucius said:—Virtue will not remain alone; it is sure
to have neighbours.

德不孤必有隣

Charity begins at Home.

To attack one's own faults and not those of others—is that
not the right way to correct them?

攻其惡無攻人之惡非脩慝與

Advice to Reformers.

Confucius said:—Try to guide to righteousness by honest
exhortation. If not successful, stop! Do not make a fool
of yourself.

子曰忠告而善道之不可則止毋自辱焉

Against Rashness in Speech.

The headlong talker will find difficulty in making good his
words.

子曰其言之不怍則爲之也難

As to Repaying Injury with Kindness:—

Confucius said:—How are we then to repay kindness?
Repay injury with *justice*—kindness with kindness!

子曰何以報德以直報怨以德報德

How to become Popular.

To be exacting towards oneself and lenient towards others
will ward off resentment.

躬自厚而薄責於人則遠怨矣

Tact required in Details.

Want of Tact in the details will frustrate the largest
schemes.

小不忍則亂大謀

International Conferences?

Confucius said:—Where interests differ, it is useless deli-
berating jointly.

道不同不相爲謀

On the Art of Governing.

The Pivot of the Universe.

He who governs by virtue may be likened to the Polar Star which remains in its place while all the other stars circle around it.

爲政以德譬如北辰居其所而衆星拱之

The Fundamental Principle.

Where the Rulers observe Propriety, the peoples are easily led.

上好禮則民易使也

To show the extreme Antiquity of these Principles:

Even Yao and Shun were solicitous about this!

堯舜其猶病諸

How Confucius forestalled Adam Smith.

Let there be many producers and few consumers; let the former be active and the latter thrifty and there will never be a lack of wealth.

生之者衆食之者寡爲之者疾用之者舒則財恒足矣

A Lesson to Rulers.

Not to be able to bring forward—and quickly—a man found to be superior, is neglectful. Not to be able to remove—and far—a man found to be bad, is weak.

見賢而不能舉舉而不能先命也見不善而不能退退而不能遠過也

Imperial Prerogatives (now exploded)

It behoves only the Emperor to arrange ceremonies, to establish measures, to verify literature!

非天子不議禮不制度不考文

Advice to Autocrats.

To advance the Upright and cast out the Unprincipled will secure the submission of the subjects. A reversal of this policy will breed rebellion.

舉直錯諸枉則民服舉枉錯諸直則民不服

The Kind of Officer Confucius wanted.

One who could *pause, think* and *act*.

必也臨時而懼好謀而成者也

When the Masses were still ignorant.

Confucius said:—The people may be made to comply but cannot be made to understand.

子曰民可使由之可使知之

Ne Sutor Ultra Crepidam.

Confucius said:—Those not in office should not meddle with Government.

子曰不在其位不謀其政

The Master's terse Definition of Government.

Let there be a sufficiency of food, of military power and of confidence among the people.

足食足兵民信之矣

When asked which of these three might be best missed:—

Cut out the military power!

去 兵

And after that?—

Cut out the food—for throughout the Ages men have had to die. Without Confidence, however, no state can exist.

去食自古皆有死民無信不立

Another Confucian Policy on Government.

Do not aim at too speedy accomplishment, nor give too much attention to petty advantages.

無欲速無見小利

The Ideal Delegate.

He who can be trusted abroad without disgracing his Prince's mission, may be called a great officer.

使於四方不辱君命可謂士矣

What the Ancients thought of it.

Confucius said:—To be merely thinking of one's salary, whether the government served be good or corrupt, is shameful.

子曰邦有道穀邦無道穀恥也

How to commandeer.

He only takes when justified by right, hence the people do not resent his taking.

義然後取人不厭其取

Ancient Opposition Leaders.

What kind of men is the present Government composed of? Confucius said:—Pooh! A set of nincompoops, not worth their salt!

今之從政者何如子曰噫斗筭之人何足算也

On the Superior Man and the Small Man.

The Main Distinction.

The Superior Man is a Catholic and not a Partisan, the Small Man is a Partisan and not a Catholic.

君子周而不比 小人比而不周

A Test of Excellence.

That in which the Superior Man cannot be excelled is what he accomplished unseen by others.

君子之所不可及者其唯人之所不見乎

A Test of Modesty.

The Superior Man acts within a sphere of his own which he does not wish to overstep.

君子素其位而行不願乎其外

A Test of Adaptability.

The Superior Man never finds himself in a position in which he feels at a loss.

君子無入而不自得焉

The Lasting Influence of a Great Mind.

Thus the Superior Man in his Movements points the Way, in his Acts sets the Law and in his Words conveys the Lesson for Ages and a Day.

是故君子動而世爲天下道行而世爲天下法
言而世爲天下則

Another Distinction.

The actions of a great man, though he may strive to hide them, will daily become more apparent; the mean man's doings, though he proclaim them loudly, will dwindle in significance as time passes by.

故君子之道闇然而日章小人之道之然而日亡

Independence.

The true Scholar is not a Utensil!

君子不器

Words and Actions.

Tzu Kung asked what constitutes a Superior Man. Confucius answered:—He who first acts as he would have spoken and then speaks accordingly.

子貢問君子子曰先行其言而後從之

The Test of Serenity.

The Superior Man has no jealous ambitions.

君子無所爭

Discrimination in Acts of Charity.

He aids the distressed but does not add to the wealth of the rich.

君子周急不繼富

A Point often overlooked.

The Superior Man can be imposed upon but he cannot be made a fool of.

可欺也不可罔也

Intellectual Life.

Tsengtzu said:—The Superior Man finds friends in his literary pursuits and by their friendship strengthens his virtue.

曾子曰君子以文會友以友輔仁

As an Improver of Mankind.

The Superior Man strives to bring out the best qualities of his fellow beings and not their bad ones; the Small Man takes just the opposite course.

君子成人之美不成人之惡小人反是

A gentle Insinuation.

The Superior Man avoids speaking on topics of which he is ignorant.

君子於其所不知蓋闕如也

Perspicacity without Suspiciousness.

Without suspecting deceit or unbelief, yet to be able to recognise them when met with,—is that not true worth?

不逆詐不億不信抑亦先覺者是賢乎

The Effect of Want on the Uncultured.

The Small Man, when in want, gives way to license.

小人窮斯濫矣

A few more Traits of the Superior Man.

The Superior Man does not raise a man for his words only, nor does he disregard words on account of the person by whom they are uttered.

君子不以言舉人不以人廢言

A dangerous Excuse for those inclined to neglect Details.

Confucius said:—The Great Man may not show to advantage in small details, but can be trusted with important matters.

君子不可小知而可大受也

The Small Man again.

The Small Man is sure to explain away his faults!

小人之過也必文

Confucius, the Man.

Educational Progress.

Confucius said:—At fifteen my mind was bent on learning; at thirty it was fixed; at forty I had no doubts; at fifty I knew the Decrees of Heaven; at sixty I (still) had a willing ear; at seventy I could follow my heart's desire without transgressing what was right.

子曰吾十有五而志於學三十而立四十而不惑五十而知天命六十而耳順七十而從心所欲不踰矩

Some Intimate Personal Traits—Slyness.

Confucius, when in his native village, held himself extremely simple as if he could not utter a word.

孔子於鄉黨恂恂如也似不能言者

Veneration Extraordinary.

While passing the seat of his Prince, his countenance seemed to change, his legs to bend under him, his words coming in whispers as if lacking breath.

過位色勃如也足躩如也其言似不足者

Fastidiousness in Taste.

He ate no meat which was not properly cut, nor that which was not served without its proper sauce.

割不正不食不得其醬不食

As to Wine.

Only in wine he imposed no limit but did not allow himself to be overcome by it.

惟酒無量不及亂

General Dietetics.

However much meat he might eat, he did not allow it to exceed its due proportion to vegetables.

肉雖多不使勝食氣

Besides :

He never omitted to eat ginger at a meal, nor did he eat much.

不撤薑食不多食

The Sage at the Table.

He did not converse during meals.

食不語

And in Bed.

He did not talk in his sleep.

寢不言

Nobody knows why.

If his mat was not straight he did not sit on it.

席不正不坐

Not from Fear, but as a Matter of Ceremony.

At unexpected thunderclaps or violent gusts of wind, he changed countenance.

迅雷風烈必變

(Changing Countenance appears to have been a common act of ceremony or propriety in Confucian days, resorted to under circumstances too numerous to mention).

As a true Sportsman.

Confucius angled and did not use nets; he shot, but not birds sitting.

子釣而不網弋不射宿

What was said of Confucius to his Disciples.

My friends, why thus sorrowful? Long have lawlessness and disorder held their sway; now Heaven is about to employ your Master as a wooden bell-hammer.

二三子何患於喪乎天下之無道也久矣天將以夫子爲木鐸

What Confucius claimed for himself.

In a ten-family hamlet there may be as sincere and faithful as I, but none as fond of learning.

子曰十室之邑必有忠信如丘者焉不如丘之好學也

How Confucius wished himself to be characterised.

He is a man who in his studious ardour forgets food, in his happiness forgets sorrow and does not perceive the advent of age.

其爲人也發憤忘食樂以忘憂不知老之將至云爾

And as devoid of Originality.

A transmitter and not an originator, a believer in and lover of the Ancients.

述而不作信而好古

A wasted Hint.

Confucius only spoke on the right occasions; thus people did not tire of his talk.

夫子時然後言人不厭其言

A typical Confucian Reply.

A great Question indeed!

大哉問

Irony or Modesty?

Confucius said:—I am fortunate indeed. Whatever faults I possess are bound to be known by all.

子曰丘也幸苟有過人必知之

A startling Confession.

And never to be overcome by wine,—how can I lay claim to such qualities?

不爲酒困何有於我哉

His frequent Themes of Discourse.

The Odes, History and the Rules of Propriety.

詩書執禮

And the Topics he avoided.

Mysteries, Feats of Strength, Rebellion and Spiritual Matters.

怪力亂神

On Family Relationship.

Filial Piety.

Confucius said:—To follow a father's wish during his lifetime and to imitate his example after his death without departing from it for three years,—such is filial piety.

子曰父在觀其志父沒觀其行三年無改於父之道可謂孝矣

No longer observed.

Confucius said:—Do not travel afar while your parents live. If you must travel, let it be to definite and known places.

子曰父母在不遠遊遊必有方

For Fathers.

He who does not know the bad qualities of his son is ignorant of the richness of his sprouting crops.

人莫知其子之惡莫知其苗之碩

Paternal Partiality.

Confucius said:—Be he talented or not, a son remains a son.

子曰才不才亦各言其子也

As to Girls.

Whoever heard of a girl being taught to bring up children in order that she may be prepared for motherhood?

未有學養子而后嫁者也

Filial Love paramount.

A father concealing his son's crimes; a son shielding his father,—this includes righteousness.

父爲子隱子爲父隱直在其中矣

On Propriety, Ceremony and Decorum.

The Importance of Propriety.

Without knowledge of the rules of propriety man's character cannot be established.

不知禮無以立也

But

In matters of propriety it is better to be sparing than extravagant.

禮與其奢也寧儉

Mere outward Show deprecated.

In matters of Mourning, real grief is more in place than a minute observance of form.

喪與其易也寧戚

The Gravity of the Scholar.

If a scholar be not grave he will not be respected, his learning will lack substance.

君子不重則不威學則不固

Decorum as observed by Confucius.

In a carriage he never looked behind him; he never talked excitedly nor pointed at anything.

車中不內顧不疾言不親指

On War.

Civilisation not necessarily detrimental to Military Prowess.

Confucius said:—A nation civilised for seven years by a virtuous man will also be fit to wage war.

子曰善人教民七年亦可以即戎矣

But:—

To lead an uninstructed people to war is to cast them away.

子曰以不教民戰是謂棄之

On Music.

The Soul of Music.

A man without virtue, how can he have anything to do with music?

人而不仁如樂何

A Lesson in Harmony.

Confucius instructing the Music Master of Lu said:—The principles of music are thus:—let there be complete accordance at the beginning, then let there be harmony, individuality and continuity till the end.

子語魯太師樂曰樂其可知也始作翕如也從之純如也皦如也釋如也以成

Some Music!

Confucius after hearing the "Shao" performed in the State of Ch'i forgot the taste of meat for three months. He said:—I never thought music could produce such an effect!

子在齊聞韶三月不知肉味曰不圖爲樂之至於斯也

Against serenading by one's Disciples.

Confucius said:—What business has Yu with his noisy harp at my door?

子曰由之瑟奚爲於丘之門

On Youth and Age

Youth's Potentiality.

Confucius said:—A youth should be regarded with awe; who knows but in after years he may excel us.

子曰後生可畏焉知來者之不如今也

The Age of Resignation to Mediocrity.

If at 40 or 50 years of age he has not yet made his mark, he need no longer be feared.

四五十而無聞焉斯亦不足畏也已

How Confucius reproved a disrespectful Youth.

In youth to be disrespectful, in manhood unproductive and in old age to remain alive:—that is to be a public nuisance!

幼而不孫弟長而無述焉老而不死是爲賊

On Litigation, Wealth and Rank.

A sound View on Litigation.

Confucius said:—In hearing cases I may do as well as the rest. The main thing, however, is to prevent litigation.

子曰聽訟吾猶人也必也使無訟乎

The Ability of one of Confucius' Disciples on the Bench.

To settle a law case with half a word, such was Yu's ability.

子曰片言可以折獄者其由也與

Consolation for the Poor.

Ill-gotten riches are to me like floating clouds.

不義而富且貴於我如浮雲

The greater Merit.

Confucius said:—It is more difficult to be poor without discontent than to be rich without pride.

子曰貧而無怨難富而無驕易

Practical Advice in Trade.

Confucius said:—Sell it, by all means, but if I were you I would wait until a price was offered for it!

子曰沽之哉沽之哉我待賈者也

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