

is with men. Should our present successor of his fathers prove greatly unable to reverence heaven above, and the people below, and so bring to an end the glory of his predecessors, could we in the retirement of our families be ignorant of it? The favor of heaven is not easily preserved. Heaven is difficult to be depended on. Men lose its favoring appointment because they cannot carry out the reverence and brilliant virtue of their forefathers. . . . Great heaven has no partial affections—it helps only the virtuous.”

“Perfect government has a pervading fragrance and influences the superior intelligences.”

“The end of punishment is to make an end of punishment.”

“The people are born good and are changed by external things.”

“Want of harmony in the life rises from the want of it in one’s inner-self.”

“He showed himself dissolute and dark and would not yield for a single day to the leadings of God.”

“There is not any cruel oppression of heaven ; people themselves accelerate their guilt and its punishment.”

“Heaven sends down misery or happiness according to our conduct.”

“There is no invariable characteristic of what is good that is to be regarded ; it is found where there is a conformity to the uniform consciousness (in regard to what is good).”

“The great God has conferred on the inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which show their nature invariably right. To make them tranquilly pursue the course which it would indicate is the work of the sovereign. . . . I will examine these things in harmony with the mind of God.”

We have also a number of odes or psalms which were inspired by the heroic elements of this age, and which, although of later origin, still are virtually the product of those times. In them this religious element is also very pronounced, as witness the following extracts :

“This King Wan, watchfully and reverently with entire intelligence served God, and so secured the great blessing.”

“King Wan was their worthy successor in his capital . . . Always striving to be in accordance with the will of heaven, and thus he secured the confidence due to a King.”

“How vast is God, the ruler of men below ! How arrayed in terrors is God ! With many things irregular in his ordinations. Heaven gave birth to the multitude of the people, but the nature it confers is not to be depended on. All are good at first, but few prove themselves to be so at the last.”

“With a handful of rice I go out and define how I may be able to become good.”

“Great is God, beholding this lower world. In majesty He surveyed the four quarters of the kingdom, seeking for some one to give establishment to the people. These two earlier dynasties had failed to satisfy Him with their governments, so throughout the various states He sought and considered for one on whom He might confer the rule. Hating all the great states He turned His kind regards on the west and there gave a settlement (to King Thar) etc., etc.”

“Great is the appointment of heaven. There were the descendents of Shang. The descendents of the sovereign of Shang were in numbers more than hundreds of thousands, but when God gave the command they became the subjects of Kan. For the appointment of heaven is not unchangeable. . . . Look at the fate of Yin in the light of heaven.”

In one of the records there is a kind of argument between an *American* and *Calvinist*. Li Zu remonstrates with a wicked King, and predicts disaster because of his sins. The King replies, “Was not my birth in accordance with heaven ?”

These histories are given chief place amongst the *sacred* books of the Chinese, and it is evident that their sacredness has grown with the ages until they are regard-