

evil to a Macdonald—and, noticing the dish, Donald Gorm, with his men about him sat at the foot of the long table, beneath the salt, and away from Macleod and the gentlemen. Seeing this, Macleod made a place beside himself, and called out, 'Macdonald of Sleat, come and sit up here!' 'Thank you,' said Donald Gorm, 'I'll remain where I am; but remember that wherever Macdonald of Sleatsits, that's the head of the table.' So when dinner was over the gentlemen began to talk about their exploits in hunting, and their deeds in battle, and to show each other their dirks. Macleod showed his, which was very handsome, and it was passed down the long table from gentleman to gentleman, each one admiring it and handing it to the next, till at last it came to Macdonald, who passed it on, saying nothing. Macleod noticed this, and called out 'Why don't you show your dirk, Donald? I hear it's very fine.' Macdonald then drew his dirk, and holding it up in his right hand, called out, 'Here it is, Macleod of Dunvegan, and in the best hand for pushing it home in the four and twenty islands of the Hebrides.' Now Macleod was a strong man, but Macdonald was a stronger, and so Macleod could not call him a liar; but thinking he would be mentioned next, he said, 'And where is the next best hand for pushing a dirk home in the four and twenty islands?' 'Here,' cried Donald Gorm, holding up his dirk in his left hand, and brandishing it in Macdonald's face, who sat amongst his gentlemen, biting his lips with vexation. So when it came to bed-time, Macleod told Macdonald that he had prepared a chamber for him near his own, and that he had placed fresh heather in a barn for the piper and the body-guard of twelve. Macdonald thanked Macleod, but remembering the boar's head on the table, said he would go with his men, and that he preferred for his couch the fresh heather to the down of the swan. 'Please yourself, Macdonald of Sleat,' said Macleod, as he turned on his heel.

"Now, it so happened that one of the body-guard of twelve had a sweetheart in the castle, but he had no opportunity of speaking to her. But once when she was passing the table with a dish she put her mouth to the man's ear, and whispered, 'Bid your master beware of Macleod. The barn you sleep in will be red flame at midnight, and ashes before the morning.' The words of the sweetheart passed the man's ear like a little breeze, but he kept the colour of his face, and looked as if he had heard nothing. So when Macdonald and his men got into the barn, where the fresh heather had been spread for them to sleep on, he told the words which had been whispered in his ear. Donald Gorm then saw the trick that was being played, and led his men quietly out by the back door of the barn, down to a hollow rock which stood up against the wind, and there they sheltered themselves.

"By midnight the sea was red with the reflection of the burning barn, and morning broke on gray ashes and smouldering embers. The Macleods thought they had killed their enemies; but fancy their astonishment when Donald Gorm, with his body-guard of twelve, marched past the castle down to the foot of the rock, where his barge was moored, with his piper playing in front—'Macleod, Macleod, Macleod of Dunvegan, I drove my dirk into your father's heart, and in payment of last night's hospitality, I'll drive it to the hilt in his son's yet.'"

CHINESE THOUGHTS.

WE present our readers with a number of extracts from the writings of Mencius, a Chinese sage, who stands next to Confucius in the estimation of his countrymen. Some of them will serve to illustrate his merits and at the same time the highest reach of wisdom in the thoughts of the Chinese.

As water subdues fire, the humane principle subdues the non-humane. But if a man throw without effect a cup of water to extinguish chariots filled with burning wood, can he say, "Water will not subdue fire?" The humane must not bring feebleness to the rescue of those who suffer. Humanity must, therefore, not be weak, but energetic.

Gold is heavier than feathers. Is a cart-load

of feathers, therefore, weightier than a button of gold?

Seek and you will find; neglect anything, you will lose everything; but we must seek what is to be found within (our grasp), for we shall not find what we seek if we seek what is beyond (our reach).

If your lessons are listened to, preserve your serenity; if they are not listened to preserve your serenity, for if you know your truthfulness, why should you not be serene?

He who looks upon the ocean thinks little of streams and rivers. He who has passed the portal of the saints (who has been instructed by the sages), will not value highly the teachings of ordinary men.

The prime minister of the kingdom of Sung consulted Mencius, and told him that being convinced of the oppressive character of a tax that bore heavily upon the people, he thought he should diminish it, and at the end of the year abolish it altogether. Mencius answered, "There was a man who was accustomed to steal every day the poultry of his neighbours, and was reproached for his dishonesty. 'Well,' he answered, 'I will amend little by little. I will only steal one fowl a month for a year to come, and then I will abstain altogether.' No," said Mencius, "no, when you know that what you do is unjust, cease at once to do it. Why wait a year?"

Men talk idly about empire, nation, family. The foundation of the empire is in the nation, of the nation in the family, of the family in the individual; in fine, government is founded on the people, the people on the family, the family on its chief.

Win a people and the empire is won; win their hearts and their affections, and you win the people; you win their hearts by meeting their wishes, by providing for their wants, and imposing upon them nothing that they detest.

As the fish hurries away from the otter to the protection of the deep waters, as the little bird flies to the thick forest from the hawk, so do subjects fly from wicked kings.

You cannot reason with the passionate, you cannot act with the feeble or the capricious.

Sure and sincere truth is heaven's pathway; to meditate on truth in order to practice it is to discover the pathway and the duty of man.

No man who has been consistently true and sincere has failed to win the confidence and favour of other men. No man in whom truth and sincerity have been wanting has ever long possessed their confidence and favour.

The benevolent man loves mankind; the courteous man respects them. He who loves men will be loved by them; he who respects men will be respected by them.

If I am treated rudely, let me examine into the cause, and if I cannot discover any sort of impropriety in my own conduct, I may disregard the rudeness, and consider him who displays it as no better than a brute, and why should the conduct of a brute disturb me?

Mencius relates what follows, and it is characteristic of the manners and customs of his time.

There was a man of Tsi who had a legitimate wife and a concubine, who dwelt together in his house.

Whenever the husband went out he returned gorged with wine and food, and when his wife inquired where he had been eating and drinking, he answered, "With the rich and the noble."

The wife said to the concubine, "Whenever my husband goes out he returns satiated with wine and food. If I ask him with whom he eats and drinks, he answers, 'With the rich and the noble.' Now, never has one illustrious person visited our abode. I will secretly learn where he goes."

So she rose early, and followed her husband to the places he visited. He passed through the locality, but not a soul saluted or spoke to him. Reaching the western suburb among the tombs, was one who devoured the remains of the ancestral sacrifices, but without being satisfied. He went to other places and did the same, and thus he habitually gratified his appetite.

His lawful wife returned home, and said to the concubine, "We placed our future hopes in

our husband, and lo! what are we doing?" She told the concubine what she had seen, and they wept together in the women's apartment (over the profligacy of the man). He returned—not knowing what had taken place—with a gay countenance, boasting of his good fortune to the wife and the concubine.

Such are the means, says the sage, by which many pursue wealth and honour, profits and advancement. How few those are who blush and mourn for this misconduct!

He gave the following description of one of the ancient governments of China (Khi):

The people were taxed to the amount of one-ninth of their earnings, the public functionaries were regularly paid, the frontiers were well guarded, but no (import) duties were levied. There was no interference with the fisheries in the lakes and ponds, criminals were not punished in the presence of their wives and children. Widowers, widows, and those who had lost their parents, were under the special charge of the state. And he quotes the verse from the book of Odes:

Riches and power and blessings but to those
Who soothe the widow's and the orphan's woes.

Upon which the king exclaimed, "What admirable words!" And the sage replied, "O king! if you find them admirable, why do you not practise them?"

Some labour with their intellect, some with their hands. Those who labour with their intellect govern men, those who labour with their hands are governed by men. Those who are governed by men produce the food of men, and those who govern men have their food produced by men.

Not by superiority of age or honour, not by the virtues and power of your brother, is friendship to be secured. Friendship must be allied with virtue. Virtue is its only bond.

When the king of Tsi consulted Mencius as to the mutual duties of princes and ministers, he replied:

If the prince commit great faults, the minister should remonstrate. If he repeat them, if he turn a deaf ear to these representations, the minister should replace him, and deprive him of his power.

The king changed colour when he heard these words, and Mencius added: "The king must not deem my words extraordinary. If the king interrogate his subject, his subject dares say nothing which is opposed to right and truth."

Once he said to the prince: "If a man were commanded to carry off a great mountain and fling it into the sea, he might well answer, 'I cannot do this,' but if he were told to tear away the branch of a young tree, and replied, 'I cannot,' he would exhibit indisposition, but not impotence. Now a monarch who governs amiss should not compare himself to the man who is expected to throw the big mountain into the ocean, but to one who refuses to pluck the branch from the tree."

If, says Mencius, in abundant years good actions predominate, in sterile years evil actions, it is not that man's nature is different, but that passion has attacked and submerged the heart and led it away to evil.

When pulse and corn are as plentiful as fire and water, what should prevent the people from being virtuous?

While you listen to a man's word, watch the movement of his eyes, and you will penetrate his disguises.

Diffuse knowledge, interchange employments, so that the deficiencies of some may be filled up by the superfluities of others.

Sacrifice not in an unclean vessel.

A beggar will not value what is trampled on.

The courage of the impetuous is far less virtuous than the courage of the thoughtful.

All men have in them the sentiments of compassion and sympathy. In a crowd that should see a child falling into a well, there would not be one who would not feel fear and pity.

Nothing is nobler than to afford to others the means of exercising their virtues.

Markets were established to enable men to exchange what they possessed for what they did not possess. He was a worthless man who first levied taxes upon this interchange.