

Chinese philosophers, and the influence of his teaching has been greater than that of any other man who ever lived. He made no claim to divine revelations, nor to miraculous gifts. He propounded no new metaphysical theories. He concerned himself very little, if at all, about the immortality of the soul. Had he lived in our times he would have been called an agnostic. "The Kingdom to which he constantly directed the minds of his disciples was a kingdom on earth and of the earth. Its name was China. Had any one asked him—'What must I do to be saved?' he would have answered—'Be a good citizen of China.'"

Confucius was born in the Kingdom of Loo, corresponding to the modern province of Shantung about the year 551 B.C. He was descended from a long line of illustrious ancestors. As a child he was remarkable, chiefly for obedience to his mother and respect for those older than himself; as a student, for quickness of intellect and application. At nineteen he married and was made a mandarin, signaling himself by his extraordinary industry and faithfulness. He was appointed superintendent of the public markets, and by his sagacity instituted many improvements in agriculture, by which his countrymen were greatly benefited. At twenty-two he first came out as a public teacher, and was immediately recognized as a great master. It was not long before three thousand students were sitting at his feet, among them some of the most learned youths in China, by whom he was greatly revered. Then he took to travelling to and fro, his disciples following him, and everywhere proclaimed the necessity for governmental reform. In his forty-third year he was re-installed in public offices, and settled down for fourteen years when a party hostile to his sage maxims rose against him and compelled him to wander again as a teacher. He went through the provinces for twelve years, encountering much opposition and many hardships. At the end of that time, surrounded by a faithful band of disciples, he retired to a peaceful valley in his native province where his remaining years were spent in transcribing and codifying the Sacred Books which had come down from the earliest times. There he died, peacefully, aged 73.

Confucius urged strongly the power of

example.—"When we see men of worth we should think of equalling them; when we see men of a contrary character we should turn inwards and examine ourselves." He is credited with enunciating the "golden rule" in a negative form;—"What you do not like when done to yourself, do not that to others." The duty of filial obedience and reverence was inculcated with special emphasis: this was indeed the foundation of his whole system of political economy. "The sovereign stands in a purely paternal relation to his subjects. If the sovereign choose to be a tyrant, the subject has no redress." The natural outcome of this was absolute despotism in the ruler, and the development of 'ancestral worship,' which became universal. The ancestral tablet is found in every family, and sometimes a great deal of money is expended in this form of worship, which has absolutely nothing in it to satisfy the craving of an immortal soul. Confucianism wants the elevating, transforming, and constraining influences of Christianity, and has failed to make the Chinese a moral people. It sheds not a single ray of light on the gloom of the grave. It offers its adherents no remedy for sin, and leaves them absolutely without the blessed hope of Immortality.

Brieflet No. 6.

IN ROME—THE FORUM.

AFTER the Palatine—even before it, many think—the interest of Rome comes to its climax in the *Forum Romanum*. Notwithstanding all that has been destroyed, much still remains to be seen. It occupies an area of 850 feet by 250 feet, more or less, and presents a scene of ruin and desolation that baffles description. Many attempts have been made to re-construct these dismembered remains, and to re-people these now silent precincts, but the task has failed, on account of the many changes the Forum has undergone, the length of time it has been buried, and the different conditions of life that prevailed, say, two thousand years ago. Within the last few years, however, many important disclosures have been made. The original level of the enclosure has been reached, at a depth of from twenty-five to thirty feet below the adjoining streets.