

commonalty of lay pilgrims seeing but little of what takes place, the celebrants of the rites being screened off.

The incantations, exorcisms, and ancient rites are imitated by charlatans who impose upon the credulous for sordid motives, but the Order does not sanction such practices.

C. PFOUNDEN.

### FILIAL PIETY IN CHINA.

While sauntering through the Pan-American Exposition, my eye caught a little Chinese store in which among other Chinese curios were displayed wall pendants, ornamental mottos designed to be hung up as decorations in the sitting-rooms of the Celestials. Being interested in the subject, I secured copies of them, and since they are characteristic of the spirit of Chinese moralism, I take pleasure in reproducing them here for the benefit of our readers.

The paper and art work are crude enough to allow the assumption that the prints must be very cheap in China, and are designed not for the rich but for the common people. They may cost in Peking or Hong Kong not more than one or two cents apiece. Evidently they serve two purposes: first of ornament and secondly of instruction.

The Chinese are a moralising people, even more so than we; while we dislike abstract moralising, they delight in it, and do not tire of impressing upon their children the praiseworthiness of filial devotion.

Filial devotion is in Chinese *hsiao*; the character consists of two symbols showing a child supporting an old man, and filial piety is supposed to be the basis of all virtue. The moral relations are regarded as mere varieties of *hsiao*; and the original significance of the word, which means chiefly the devotional attitude of a child toward his parents, includes such relations as the obedience of the subject to his ruler, of the wife to her husband, of the younger brother to his elder brother, and of any one's relations to his superiors, including especially man's relation to heaven or the Lord on high, to God.

The Chinese ornament their rooms, not as we do with pictures of beauty, but with moral sayings; and the two here reproduced are typical of the national character of the Chinese. The former of the two pendants, literally translated, reads:

#### 父子協力山成玉

"When father | and son | combine | their efforts | mountains | are changed | into gems."

The saying, however, is not an admonition to parents to keep in harmony with their sons but to sons to be obedient to their parents.

The second pendant means:

#### 兄弟同心土變金

"When elder brother | and younger brother (or briefly, when brothers) | are harmonious | in their hearts | the earth | will be changed | into an Eldorado."<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed that the letters are pictures containing figures and Chinese characters; and we have here the Chinese peculiarity of utilising their script for illustrations which represent scenes from well-known Chinese stories of filial devotion; all of them being taken from a famous book called *Twenty-four Stories of Filial Devotion*. These stories are known to every Chinaman, for they form the most important text-book of their moral education.

<sup>1</sup>Literally, gold.



*fu*  
[When] father



*tze*  
[and] sons



*hsieh*  
combine



*li*  
[their] efforts



*shan*  
mountains



*ch'êng*  
are fashioned



*yü*  
into gems.



*hsüng*  
[When] elder  
brothers



*ti*  
[and] younger  
brothers



*t'ung*  
[are] harmoni-  
ous



*hsin*  
[in their] hearts



*t'u*  
the earth



*pien*  
is changed



*chin*  
into an Eldorado  
(gold).

The first character (*fu*, meaning father) represents Wang Ngai, who lived during the Wei dynasty (220-364 A.D.). His mother while living was much afraid of thunderstorms. The picture shows him bringing offerings to her grave and protecting it against the fury of the thundergod, who is seen hovering above him in the air. (No. 805*a*, p. 242.<sup>1</sup>)

The inscription of the second character (*tze*, meaning "son") reads in one place "Tai Son's aged mother" and in another "Tan Hsiang's daughter weeping over a sweet melon."

The third character (*hsieh*=combine) pictures a child standing before an old gentleman. The inscription reads: "Keeping in his bag a crab apple he showed his devotion to his parent." It refers to the story of Luh Sü. When a boy of six years he visited Yen Yü who gave him crab apples to eat but noticed that the child kept one in his bag for his mother.<sup>2</sup>

The fourth character (*li*, meaning "strength") illustrates the story of Hwang Hiang who, as a boy of seven, after his mother's death devoted himself unweariedly to his father's comfort. In summer he fanned his pillow, in winter he kept it warm. (No. 217, pp. 69-70.)

The fifth character (*shan*, meaning "mountain") represents Kiang Keh, a Chinese Anchises, about 490 A. D. Once he rescued his mother during a disturbance of the peace by carrying her many miles on his shoulders. Behind the fugitives in the center of the character rages the spirit of rebellion and on the right-hand corner is seen a deserted house. (No. 255, p. 80.)

The sixth character (*ch'êng*, meaning "fashioning, shaping, transforming into") illustrates the story of Wu Meng who exposes himself to the bites of mosquitoes lest his mother be stung by them. The picture of the hero of the story lying naked on a couch is quite indistinct in the reproduction, but the comfort of his mother, reclining in an easy chair finds an artful expression. (No. 808, p. 260.)

The last character (*yü*) of the first series is remarkable in so far as it represents the only instance of a woman's being praised for filial devotion. It represents Ts'ui She who nursed at her own breast her toothless old mother-in-law who was incapable of taking other nourishment. (No. 791*a*, p. 238.)

The first character of the second pendant (*hsiung*, meaning "elder brother") relates to Wang Siang, whose stepmother felt an appetite for fresh fish in winter. He went out on the river, lay down on the ice, warming it with his own body, and caught a couple of carp, which he presented to her. (No. 816, p. 241.)

The next character (*ti*, younger brother) shows the famous Emperor Yao in the center and before him his successor Shun, the pattern of filial as well as royal virtues. The elephant, one of the animals that helped him plow the fields, is visible above Shun on the right-hand side. William Frederick Mayers in his *Chinese Reader's Manual* (No. 617, p. 189) says about him:

"Tradition is extremely discordant with reference to his origin and descent. According to the Main Records of the five Emperors, his personal name was Ch'ung Hwa, and he was the son of Ku Sow, a reputed descendant of the emperor Chwan Hü. (He had also the designation Yü, which is by some referred to a region in modern Ho-nan, but by others to the territory of Yü Yao, in modern Chekiang, with one or the other of which it is sought to connect him.) His father, Ku Sow (lit. the 'blind old man') on the death of Shun's mother, took a second wife, by whom he had a son named Siang; and preferring the offspring of his second union

<sup>1</sup> The numbers and pages in parentheses refer to Mayers's *Chinese Reader's Manual*.

<sup>2</sup> Luh Süh is mentioned by Meyer *Ch. R. M.*, No. 443.

to his eldest son, he repeatedly sought to put the latter to death. Shun, however, while escaping this fate, in no wise lessened his dutiful conduct toward his father and stepmother, or his fraternal regard for Siang. He occupied himself in ploughing at Li Shan, where his filial piety was rewarded by beasts and birds who spontaneously came to drag his plough and to weed his fields. He fished in the Lui Lake and made pottery on the banks of the Yellow River. Still his parents and his brother sought to compass his death; but although they endeavoured to make him perish by setting fire to his house and by causing him to descend a deep well, he was always miraculously preserved. In his 20th year, he attracted by his filial piety the notice of the wise and virtuous Yao, who bestowed upon him his two daughters in marriage, and disinherited his son Chu of Tan, in order to make Shun his successor upon the throne. In the 71st year of his reign (B. C. 2287, cf. T. K.), Yao associated his protégé with him in the government of the empire, to which the latter succeeded on the death of Yao in B. C. 2258."

The character *t'ung* which means "agree" refers to Meng Tsung of the third century A. D. whose mother loved to eat bamboo shoots. While he was sorrowing because they do not sprout in winter, the miracle happened that in spite of the frost the bamboos began to put forth their sprouts, and so he was enabled to fulfil his mother's desire. (No. 499, p. 155.) The picture shows a table on which the dish of bamboo sprouts is served, the face of his mother hovering above it. On the right hand Meng Tsung sits sorrowing; the left-hand stroke is a sprouting bamboo stick.

Yen-Tze, the hero of the next story, depicted in the character "heart," is said to have ministered to his mother's preference for the milk of the doe by disguising himself in a deer skin and mingling with a herd of deer in the forest, where he succeeded in milking a doe and in spite of robbers, represented as attacking him on either side, he carried his mother's favorite food safely home in a pail. (No. 916, p. 276.)

The character *t'u*, "earth," depicts the touching story of the sacrifice of Yang Hiang, who saw a tiger approaching his father and threw himself between him and the beast. (No. 882, p. 266.) In the reproduction it is difficult to recognise the crouching tiger, which forms the stroke through the character.

The last but one character (*pien*, meaning "changes") refers to Min Sun, a disciple of Confucius. Mayers says: "His stepmother, it is recorded, having two children of her own, used him ill and clothed him only in the leaves of plants. When this was discovered by his father, the latter became wroth, and would have put away the harsh stepmother, but Min Sun entreated him saying: 'It is better that one son should suffer from cold than three children be motherless!' His magnanimous conduct so impressed the mind of his stepmother that she became filled with affection toward him." (No. 503, p. 156.)

The last character (*chin*, meaning "gold") bears the inscription "With mulberries he shows his filial devotion to his mother." It illustrates the story of Ts'ai Shun who during the famine caused by the rebellion of Wang Meng (25 A. D) picked wild mulberries in the woods and brought the black ones to his mother while he was satisfied with the unripe yellow ones. The picture shows a robber watching the boy. In China even criminals have a respect for the devotion of children to their parents. So in recognition of his filial piety the robber made him a present with rice and meat.

Hokusai, the painter of the poor, one of the most remarkable artists of Japan,

illustrated the twenty-four filial stories in pictures which in crude woodcut reproductions are well known all over the country of the rising sun.



They represent (beginning always with the picture in the right-hand corner and proceeding downward):

1. Shun, the person mentioned above destined to become the son-in-law of and successor to Emperor Yao, assisted in plowing by an elephant

2. Tseng Shen, Confucius' disciple. The picture illustrates a miraculous event. When gathering fuel in the woods his mother, anxious to see him, bit her finger and such was the sympathy between the two that he was aware of his mother's desire and at once appeared in her presence. (No. 739, p. 223.)
3. Wen Ti, natural son of Kao Tsu, founder of the Han dynasty, succeeded to the throne after the usurpation by the Empress Dowager in 179 B. C. When his mother fell sick he never left her apartment for three years and did not even take the time to change his apparel. He is also famous as a most humane monarch.
4. Min Sun, maltreated by his stepmother, has been mentioned above. (No. 503, p. 156.)
5. Chung Yeo, another disciple of Confucius, famous for his martial accomplishments, who died a hero's death in the suppression of a rebellion. He used to say: "In the days when I was poor I carried rice upon my back for the support of those who gave me birth; and now, for all that I would gladly do so again, I cannot recall them to life!" (No. 91, p. 29—30.)



CHIH NÜ AND KENG NIU.

A Chinese fairy tale of the Star Vega. A native illustration from Williams's *Middle Kingdom*.

6. Tung Yung was too poor to give his father a decent burial. So he bonded himself for 10,000 pieces of cash to perform the funeral rites with all propriety. "When returning to his home, he met a woman who offered herself as his wife, and who repaid the loan he had incurred with 300 webs of cloth. The pair lived happily together for a month, when the woman disclosed the fact that she was no other than the star Chih Nü,<sup>1</sup> who had been sent down by the Lord of Heaven her father to recompense an act of filial piety; and saying this she vanished from his sight." (No. 691, p. 210.)

The story of Chih Nü is one of the prettiest fairy-tales of China, which is briefly thus: The sun-god had a daughter Chih Nü (star Vega= $\alpha$  in Lyre) who excelled by her skill in weaving and her industrial habits. To recompense her he had her married to Keng Niu the herdsman (constellation Aquila), who herded his

<sup>1</sup> The Spinning damsel, which is  $\alpha$  of Lyre.

cattle in the silver stream of Heaven (the milky way). As soon as married, Chih Nü changed her habits for the worse; she forsook the loom and gave herself up to merry making and idleness. Thereupon her father decided to separate the lovers



by the stream and placed them each one on one side of the milky way, allowing the husband to meet his wife over a bridge of many thousand magpies only once a year, on the seventh day of the seventh month, which is a holy day in China and Japan even now.

Our picture shows Chih Nü vanishing from Tung Yung's sight.

7. The story of Yen-Tze, who while dressed in a deer skin, is here pictured as meeting a robber. (No. 916, p. 276.)
8. Kiang Keh asking the robber chief's permission to allow him to carry away his mother. (No. 255, p. 80.)
9. Luh Sü (who lived in the first century of the Christian era), was liberated by his jailer, when imprisoned for complicity in a conspiracy, on account of the devotion he showed toward his mother. (No. 443, p. 140.)
10. The story of Ts'ui She, nursing her husband's mother.
11. Wu Meng (No. 868, p. 260), exposing himself to mosquitoes.
12. Wang Siang, thawing the ice to catch carp.
13. The story of Kwoh K'ü, who "is said to have lived in the second century A. D., and to have had an aged mother to support, beside his own wife and children. Finding that he had not food sufficient for all, he proposed to his wife that they should bury their infant child in order to have the more for their mother's wants; and this devotedness was rewarded by his discovering, while engaged in digging a pit for this purpose, a bar of solid gold which placed him above the reach of poverty, and upon which were inscribed the words: 'A gift from Heaven to Kwoh K'ü; let none deprive him of it!'" (No. 303, p. 95.)
14. Yang Hiang offering himself to the tiger. (No. 882, p. 266.)
15. Cho Show-ch'ang searched fifty years for his mother who had been divorced from his father. Having succeeded in his purpose he served her the rest of her life. (No. 81, p. 26—27.)
16. Yü K'ien-low, ministering unto his sick father. (No. 950, p. 286.)
17. Lao Lai-Tze plays like a child with his parents who suffer from senile childishness.
18. The same story is told of Ts'ai Shun as of Tsêng Shên viz., that he was recalled from a distance by a sensation of pain which visited him when his mother bit her own finger. During the troubles ensuing upon Wang Mang's usurpation, A. D. 25, when a state of famine prevailed, he nourished his mother with wild berries, retaining only the unripe ones for his own sustenance. On her death, while mourning beside her coffin, he was called away by attendants who exclaimed that the house was on fire; but he refused to leave the spot, and his dwelling remained unharmed. As his mother had been greatly alarmed, in her lifetime, whenever thunder was heard, he made it his duty, after death, to repair to her grave during thunderstorms, and to cry out: "Be not afraid, mother, I am here!" (No. 752, p. 226.)

Our illustration depicts him meeting a hunter in the woods who gives him a piece of venison.

19. Huang Hiang, fanning his father's bed.
20. Kiang She in conjunction with his wife devoted himself to waiting upon his aged mother, in order to gratify whose fancy he went daily a long distance to draw drinking water from a river and to obtain fish for her table. This devotedness was rewarded by a miracle. A spring burst forth close by his dwelling, and a pair of carp were daily produced from it to supply his mother's wants. (No. 256, p. 81.)
21. Wang Ngai comforting the spirit of his mother in a thunderstorm.
22. Ting Lan. "Flourished under the Han dynasty. After his mother's

death he preserved a wooden effigy representing her figure, to which he offered the same forms of respect and duty as he had observed toward his parent during life. One day, while he was absent from home, his neigh-



bour Chang Shuh, came to borrow some household article, whereupon his wife inquired by the divining-slips whether the effigy would lend it, and received a negative reply. Hereupon the neighbour angrily struck the

wooden figure. When Ting Lan returned to his home he saw an expression of displeasure on the features of his mother's effigy, and on learning from his wife what had passed, he took a stick and beat the aggressor severely.



When he was apprehended for this deed the figure was seen to shed tears, and the facts thus becoming known he received high honours from the State." (No. 670, p. 204.)

23. Meng Sung reaping bamboo shoots for his mother in winter.  
 24. Hwang T'ing-Kien (a celebrated poet of the Sung dynasty), performs menial services in ministering to his parents. (No. 226, p. 73.)

Some of the stories seem silly to us: a pickax would have done better service in breaking the ice than the method of thawing it up with one's own body and catching cold; a mosquito-net would have proved more useful than feeding the insects with the blood of a devoted child, etc. Moreover the stolidity of parents in accepting sacrifices of children with equanimity and as a matter of course is to our sense of propriety nothing short of criminal. Still, it will be wise for us whose habits of life suffer from the opposite extreme, viz., irreverence for authority or tradition in any form, to recognise that all of them are pervaded with a noble spirit of respect for parents, which though exaggerated is none the less touching and ought to command our admiration. P. C.

### THE SUPPOSED POEM OF ROBERT BURNS.

The *Universalist Leader* of Boston republished the poem "Words o' Cheer" attributed to Robert Burns, which appeared in the September *Open Court*, and one of its readers has supplied the following information as to its origin.

SIR:

I find on page 1366 of the *Leader* information called for in regard to the poem "Words o' Cheer." I am not really one of your Scotch friends, but I can tell you where I got it years ago. It is taken from Lizzie Doten's *Poems from the Inner Life*, published by the *Banner of Light* in 1871. It is an inspiration poem given while in trance, purporting to come from Robert Burns. The poem consists of thirteen verses. Whoever sent it to *The Open Court* broke right into the middle of it; had they copied the whole of it you would have known *how* it got here, and *where* it came from at that late date. I am in possession of the book and have heard the lady deliver her poems impromptu myself. The likeness of her poems to Shakespeare is equally good. The poem, as printed in the *Leader*, differs a word or two here and there. Probably the one who is passing the poem along wishes you or someone else to acknowledge its merits before giving the source from whence it sprung. The first half of the poem is a "dead give away."

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Mr. Andrew W. Cross, of Riverside, Cal., writes us to the same effect; adding, however, that the language is not that of Burns.

### "SOME FACTORS IN THE RISING OF THE NEGRO."

A NEGRO'S VIEW OF THE QUESTION.

*To the Editor of The Open Court.*

Speculation as to the specific possibilities of an undeveloped person or race cannot be indulged in with any degree of impunity by those who expect to remain within the pale of common sense. Nobody pays much attention nowadays to the Jew's estimate of the Gentiles, or the Greek's and Roman's estimate of the capabilities of barbarians.