
Book XVI

1

The head of the Chi family was going to launch an attack on Chuan Yü. Jan Yu and Chi-lu went to see Confucius and said, "The Chi family are going to take action against Chuan Yü."

Confucius said, "Ch'iu, surely it is you who are at fault? Formerly, a royal ancestor of ours gave Chuan Yü the responsibility of sacrificing to the Tung Meng Mountain; moreover, their territory now lies within our boundaries. Thus they are a bulwark of the state. What reason can there be for attacking them?"

Jan Yu said, "It is what our master wishes. Neither of us is in favour of it."

Confucius said, "Ch'iu, there is a saying of Chou Jen's which goes: displaying your strength you join the ranks, but, finding yourself wanting, you give up. What use to a blind man is the assistant who does not steady him when he totters or support him when he falls. Moreover, what you said is quite wrong. Whose fault is it when the tiger and the rhinoceros escape from their cages or when the tortoise shell and the jade are destroyed in their caskets?"

Jan Yu said, "But Chuan Yü is strongly fortified and close to Pi. If it is not taken now, it is sure to be a source of trouble for the descendants of our master in the future."

Confucius said, "Ch'iu, the gentleman detests those who, rather than saying outright that they want something, can be counted on to offer a plausible pretext instead. What I have heard is that the head of a state or a noble family worries not about underpopulation but about uneven distribution, not about poverty but about instability.¹ For where there is even distribution there is no such thing as poverty, where there is harmony there is no such thing as underpopulation and where there is stability there is no such thing as overturning. It is for this reason that when distant subjects are un-submissive one cultivates one's moral quality in order to attract

them, and once they have come one makes them content. But you and Yu have not been able either to help your master to attract the distant subjects when they are unsubmitive or to preserve the state when it is disintegrating. Instead, you propose to resort to the use of arms within the state itself. I am afraid that Chi-sun's worries lie not in Chuan Yü but within the walls of his palace."

1. The text is corrupt here. In the light of what follows, the passage should, probably, read: "... worries not about poverty but about uneven distribution, not about underpopulation but about disharmony, not about overturning but about instability."

2

Confucius said, "When the Way prevails in the Empire, the rites and music and punitive expeditions are initiated by the Emperor. When the Way does not prevail in the Empire, they are initiated by the feudal lords. When they are initiated by the feudal lords, it is surprising if power does not pass from their descendants within ten generations. When they are initiated by the Counsellors, it is surprising if power does not pass from their descendants within five generations. When the prerogative to command in a state is in the hands of officials of the Counsellors it is surprising if power does not pass from their descendants within three generations. When the Way prevails in the Empire, policy does not rest with the Counsellors. When the Way prevails in the Empire, the Commoners do not express critical views."

3

Confucius said, "It is five generation since patronage passed out of the control of the Ducal House. It is four generations since government came under the control of the Counsellors. For this reason the descendants of the three houses of Huan are on the decline."

4

Confucius said, "He stands to benefit who makes friends with three kinds of people. Equally, he stands to lose who makes friends with three other kinds of people. To make friends with the straight, the trustworthy in word and the well-informed is to benefit. To make friends with the ingratiating in action, the pleasant in appearance and the plausible in speech is to lose."

5

Confucius said, "He stands to benefit who takes pleasure in three kinds of things. Equally, he stands to lose who takes pleasure in three other kinds of things. To take pleasure in the correct regulation of the rites and music, in singing the praises of other men's goodness and in having a large number of excellent men as friends is to benefit. To take pleasure in showing off, in a dissolute life and in food and drink is to lose."

6

Confucius said, "When in attendance upon a gentleman one is liable to three errors. To speak before being spoken to by the gentleman is rash; not to speak when spoken to by him is to be evasive; to speak without observing the expression on his face is to be blind."

7

Confucius said, "There are three things the gentleman should guard against. In youth when the blood and *ch'i*² are still unsettled he should guard against the attraction of feminine beauty. In the prime of life when the blood and *ch'i* have become unyielding, he should guard against bellicosity. In old age when the blood and *ch'i* have declined, he should guard against acquisitiveness."

2. *Ch'i* is the basic constituent of the universe. The refined *ch'i* fills the human body and, amongst other things, circulates with the blood.

8

Confucius said, "The gentleman stands in awe of three things. He is in awe of the Decree of Heaven. He is in awe of great men. He is in awe of the words of the sages. The small man, being ignorant of the Decree of Heaven, does not stand in awe of it. He treats great men with familiarity and the words of the sages with insolence."

9

Confucius said, "Those who are born with knowledge are the highest. Next come those who attain knowledge through study. Next again come those who turn to study after having been vexed by difficulties. The common people, in so far as they make no effort to study even after having been vexed by difficulties, are the lowest."

10

Confucius said, "There are nine things the gentleman turns his thought to: to seeing clearly when he uses his eyes, to hearing acutely when he uses his ears, to looking cordial when it comes to

his countenance, to appearing respectful when it comes to his demeanour, to being conscientious when he speaks, to being reverent when he performs his duties, to seeking advice when he is in doubt, to the consequences when he is enraged, and to what is right at the sight of gain.”

11

Confucius said, “‘Seeing what is good I act as if I risked failing to catch up with it; seeing what is not good I act as if I were testing hot water.’ I have met such a man; I have heard such a claim.

“‘I live in retirement in order to attain my purpose and practise what is right in order to realize my way.’ I have heard such a claim, but I have yet to meet such a man.”

12

Duke Ching of Ch’i had a thousand teams of four horses each, but on his death the common people were unable to find anything for which to praise him, whereas Po Yi and Shu Ch’i starved under Mount Shou Yang and yet to this day the common people still sing their praises. This is probably what is meant.³

3. This chapter is obviously defective. The beginning seems missing. Hence no speaker is mentioned. Neither is there any saying to which the final sentence can refer.

13

Ch’en Kang asked Po-yü, “Have you not been taught anything out of the ordinary?”

“No, I have not. Once my father was standing by himself. As I crossed the courtyard with quickened steps,⁴ he said, ‘Have you studied the *Odes*?’ I answered, ‘No.’ ‘Unless you study the *Odes* you will be ill-equipped to speak.’ I retired and studied the *Odes*.

“Another day, my father was again standing by himself. As I crossed the courtyard with quickened steps, he said, ‘Have you studied the rites?’ I answered, ‘No.’ ‘Unless you study the rites you will be ill-equipped to take your stand.’ I retired and studied the rites. I have been taught these two things.”

Ch’en Kang retired delighted and said, “I asked one question and got three answers. I learned about the *Odes*, I learned about the rites and I learned that a gentleman keeps his distance from his son.”

4. as a sign of respect.

14

The lord of a state uses the term “lady” for his wife. She uses the term “little boy” for herself. The people of the state refer to her by the term “the lady of the lord”, but when abroad they use the term “the little lord”. People of other states also refer to her by the term “the lady of the lord.”⁵

5. This is probably a ritual text which was copied into the blank space at the end of this scroll, and has nothing to do with the rest of the book.

Book XVII

1

Yang Huo wanted to see Confucius, and when Confucius refused to go and see him he sent Confucius a present of a piglet.¹

Confucius had someone keep watch on Yang Huo's house, and went to pay his respects during his absence. On the way he happened to meet Yang Huo who said to him, "Come now. I would speak with you." Then he went on, "Can the man be said to be benevolent who, while hoarding his treasure, allows the state to go astray? I should say not. Can the man be said to be wise who, while eager to take part in public life, constantly misses the opportunity? I should say not. The days and the months slip by. Time is not on our side."

Confucius said, "All right. I shall take office."

1. According to a version of this story in the *Mencius*, III.B.7, it was "a steamed piglet". (p. 127)

2

The Master said, "Men are close to one another by nature. They drift apart through behaviour that is constantly repeated."

3

The Master said, "It is only the most intelligent and the most stupid who cannot be budged."

4

The Master went to Wu Ch'eng. There he heard the sound of stringed instruments and singing. The Master broke into a smile and said, "Surely you don't need to use an ox-knife to kill a chicken."

Tzu-yu answered, "Some time ago I heard it from you, Master, that the gentleman instructed in the Way loves his fellow men and that the small man instructed in the Way is easy to command."

The Master said, "My friends, what Yen says is right. My remark a moment ago was only made in jest."

5

Kung-shan Fu-jao, using Pi as a stronghold, staged a revolt.² He summoned the Master and the Master wanted to go.

Tzu-lu was displeased and said, "We may have nowhere to go, but why must we go to this person Kung-shan?"

The Master said, "The man who summons me cannot be doing so for no purpose. If his purpose is to employ me, can I not, perhaps, create another Chou in the east?"

2. against the Chi family, perhaps under the pretext of restoring power to the Duke of Lu.

6

Tzu-chang asked Confucius about benevolence. Confucius said, "There are five things and whoever is capable of putting them into practice in the Empire is certainly 'benevolent'."

"May I ask what they are?"

"They are respectfulness, tolerance, trustworthiness in word, quickness and generosity. If a man is respectful he will not be treated with insolence. If he is tolerant he will win the multitude. If he is trustworthy in word his fellow men will entrust him with responsibility. If he is quick he will achieve results. If he is generous his fellow men will be willing to do his bidding."

7

Pi Hsi summoned the Master and the Master wanted to go.

Tzu-lu said, "Some time ago I heard it from you, Master, that the gentleman does not enter the domain of one who in his own person does what is not good. Now Pi Hsi is using Chung Mou as a stronghold to stage a revolt. How can you justify going there?"

The Master said, "It is true, I did say that. But has it not been said, 'Hard indeed is that which can withstand grinding?' Has it not been said, 'White indeed is that which can withstand black dye?' Moreover, how can I allow myself to be treated like a gourd which, instead of being eaten, hangs from the end of a string?"

8

The Master said, "Yu, have you heard about the six qualities and the six attendant faults?"

"No."

"Be seated and I shall tell you. To love benevolence without loving learning is liable to lead to foolishness. To love cleverness without loving learning is liable to lead to straying from the right path. To love trustworthiness in word without loving learning is

liable to lead to harmful behaviour. To love forthrightness without loving learning is liable to lead to being unrelenting. To love courage without loving learning is liable to lead to insubordination. To love unbending strength without loving learning is liable to lead to indiscipline.”³

3. Cf. VIII.2.

9

The Master said, “Why is it none of you, my young friends, study the *Odes*? An apt quotation from the *Odes* may stimulate the imagination, endow one with breeding, enable one to live in a community and give expression to grievances.

“Inside the family there is the serving of one’s father; outside, there is the serving of one’s lord; there is also the acquiring of a wide knowledge of the names of birds and beasts, plants and trees.”⁴

4. To these activities the study of the *Odes* must, presumably, be relevant, but the point is not explicitly made. This is very likely due to some corruption in the text.

10

The Master said to Po-yü, “Have you studied the *Chou nan* and *Shao nan*?⁵ To be a man and not to study them is, I would say, to stand facing squarely the wall.”⁶

5. These are the opening sections of the *Odes*.

6. Cf. XVI.13.

11

The Master said, “Surely when one says ‘The rites, the rites,’ it is not enough merely to mean presents of jade and silk. Surely when one says ‘Music, music,’ it is not enough merely to mean bells and drums.”⁷

7. Cf. III.3.

12

The Master said, “A cowardly man who puts on a brave front is, when compared to small men, like the burglar who breaks in or climbs over walls.”

13

The Master said, “The village worthy is the ruin of virtue.”⁸

8. For Mencius’ elaboration on this saying see the *Mencius*, VII.B.37 (pp. 303–305).

14

The Master said, "The gossip-monger is the outcast of virtue."

15

The Master said, "Is it really possible to work side by side with a mean fellow in the service of a lord? Before he gets what he wants, he worries lest he should not get it. After he has got it, he worries lest he should lose it, and when that happens he will stop at nothing."

16

The Master said, "In antiquity, the common people had three weaknesses, but today they cannot be counted on even to have these. In antiquity, in being wild, men were impatient of restraint; today, in being wild, they simply deviate from the right path. In antiquity, in being conceited, men were uncompromising; today, in being conceited, they are simply ill-tempered. In antiquity, in being foolish, men were straight; today, in being foolish, they are simply crafty."

17

The Master said, "It is rare, indeed, for a man with cunning words and an ingratiating countenance to be benevolent."⁹

9. This forms part of I.3.

18

The Master said, "I detest purple for displacing vermilion. I detest the tunes of Cheng for corrupting classical music.¹⁰ I detest clever talkers who overturn states and noble families."

10. According to the traditional interpretation, vermilion is a pure colour while purple is a mixed colour, but by Confucius' time the practice of using purple in place of vermilion was becoming widespread. For Confucius' condemnation of the music of Cheng see V.11.

19

The Master said, "I am thinking of giving up speech." Tzu-kung said, "If you did not speak, what would there be for us, your juniors, to transmit?" The Master said, "What does Heaven ever say? Yet there are the four seasons going round and there are the hundred things coming into being. What does Heaven ever say?"

20

Ju Pei wanted to see Confucius. Confucius declined to see him on the grounds of illness. As soon as the man conveying the message had stepped out of the door, Confucius took his lute and sang, making sure that he heard it.

21

Tsai Wo asked about the three-year mourning period, saying, “Even a full year is too long. If the gentleman gives up the practice of the rites for three years, the rites are sure to be in ruins; if he gives up the practice of music for three years, music is sure to collapse. A full year’s mourning is quite enough. After all, in the course of a year, the old grain having been used up, the new grain ripens, and fire is renewed by fresh drilling.”¹¹

The Master said, “Would you, then, be able to enjoy eating your rice¹² and wearing your finery?”

“Yes. I would.”

“If you are able to enjoy them, do so by all means. The gentleman in mourning finds no relish in good food, no pleasure in music, and no comforts in his own home. That is why he does not eat his rice and wear his finery. Since it appears that you enjoy them, then do so by all means.”

After Tsai Wo had left, the Master said, “How unfeeling Yü is. A child ceases to be nursed by his parents only when he is three years old. Three years’ mourning is observed throughout the Empire. Was Yü not given three years’ love by his parents?”

11. A different kind of wood is used for each of the four seasons so that the same wood is used again after a full year. This practice, presumably, had a ritual significance.
12. Rice was a luxury with millet being the staple food.

22

The Master said, “The man whose belly is full all day and who does not put his mind to some use is sure to meet with difficulties. Are there not such things as *po* and *yi*?¹³ Even playing these games is better than being idle.”

13. While *yi* is the game known as *wei ch'i* 圍棋 in later ages (better known in Western countries by its Japanese reading *go* 碁), *po* is believed to have been a board game in which the moves of the pieces are decided by a throw of dice.

23

Tzu-lu said, "Does the gentleman consider courage to be supreme?" The Master said, "For the gentleman it is morality that is considered supreme. Possessed of courage but devoid of morality, a gentleman will make trouble while a small man will be a brigand."

24

Tzu-kung said, "Does even the gentleman have his dislikes?" The Master said, "Yes. The gentleman has his dislikes. He dislikes those who proclaim the evil in others. He dislikes those who, being in inferior positions, slander their superiors. He dislikes those who, while possessing courage, lack the spirit of the rites. He dislikes those whose resoluteness is not tempered by understanding."

The Master added, "Do you, Ssu, have your dislikes as well?"

"I dislike those in whom being unrelenting passes for wisdom. I dislike those in whom insolence passes for courage. I dislike those in whom exposure of others passes for forthrightness."

25

The Master said, "In one's household, it is the women and the small men that are difficult to deal with. If you let them get too close, they become insolent. If you keep them at a distance, they feel badly done by."

26

The Master said, "If by the age of forty a man is still disliked there is no hope for him."

Book XVIII

1

The Viscount of Wei left him, the Viscount of Chi became a slave on account of him and Pi Kan lost his life for remonstrating with him.¹ Confucius commented, "There were three benevolent men in the Yin."

1. i.e., the tyrant Chou.

2

Liu Hsia Hui was dismissed three times when he was a judge. Someone said, "Is it not time for you to leave?"

"If, in the service of another, one is not prepared to bend the Way, where can one go without being dismissed three times? If, in the service of another, one is prepared to bend the Way, what need is there to leave the country of one's father and mother?"

3

In considering the treatment he should accord Confucius, Duke Ching of Ch'i said, "I am unable to accord him such exalted treatment as the Chi family receives."² So he placed him somewhere between the Chi and the Meng,³ saying, "I am getting old. I am afraid I will not be able to put his talents to use." Confucius departed.

2. in Lu.

3. Both the Chi and the Meng were noble families in Lu.

4

The men of Ch'i made a present of singing and dancing girls. Chi Huan Tzu accepted them and stayed away from court for three days. Confucius departed.

5

Chieh Yü, the Madman of Ch'u, went past Confucius, singing,
 Phoenix, oh phoenix!
 How thy virtue has declined!
 What is past is beyond help,
 What is to come is not yet lost.
 Give up, give up!
 Perilous is the lot of those in office today.

Confucius got down from his carriage with the intention of speaking with him but the Madman avoided him by hurrying off, and in the end Confucius was unable to speak with him.

6

Ch'ang Chü and Chieh Ni were ploughing together yoked as a team. Confucius went past them and sent Tzu-lu to ask them where the ford was.

Ch'ang Chü said, "Who is that taking charge of the carriage?"⁴

Tzu-lu said, "It is K'ung Ch'iu."

"Then, he must be the K'ung Ch'iu of Lu."

"He is."

"Then, he doesn't have to ask where the ford is."

Tzu-lu asked Chieh Ni.

Chieh Ni said, "Who are you?"

"I am Chung Yu."

"Then, you must be the disciple of K'ung Ch'iu of Lu?"

Tzu-lu answered, "I am."

"Throughout the Empire men are all the same. Who is there for you⁵ to change places with? Moreover, for your own sake, would it not be better if, instead of following a Gentleman who keeps running away from men,⁶ you followed one who runs away from the world altogether?"⁷

All the while he carried on harrowing without interruption.

Tzu-lu went and reported what was said to Confucius.

The Master was lost in thought for a while and said, "One cannot associate with birds and beasts. Am I not a member of this human race? Who, then, is there for me to associate with? While the Way is to be found in the Empire, I will not change places with him."

4. The expression *chih yü* is obscure and is likely to be corrupt.

5. Taking *erh* as "you".

6. meaning Confucius.

7. meaning himself.

7

Tzu-lu, when travelling with [Confucius], fell behind. He met an old man, carrying a basket on a staff over his shoulder.

Tzu-lu asked, "Have you seen my Master?"

The old man said, "You seem neither to have toiled with your

limbs nor to be able to tell one kind of grain from another. Who may your Master be?" He planted his staff in the ground and started weeding.

Tzu-lu stood, cupping one hand respectfully in the other.

The old man invited Tzu-lu to stay for the night. He killed a chicken and prepared some millet for his guest to eat, and presented his two sons to him.

The next day, Tzu-lu resumed his journey and reported this conversation. The Master said, "He must be a recluse." He sent Tzu-lu back to see him again. When he arrived, the old man had departed.

Tzu-lu commented, "Not to enter public life is to ignore one's duty. Even the proper regulation of old and young cannot be set aside. How, then, can the duty between ruler and subject be set aside? This is to cause confusion in the most important of human relationships simply because one desired to keep unsullied one's character. The gentleman takes office in order to do his duty. As for putting the Way into practice, he knows all along that it is hopeless."⁸

8. Cf. XIV.38.

8

Men who withdrew from society: Po Yi, Shu Ch'i, Yü Chung, Yi Yi, Chu Chang, Liu Hsia Hui, Shao Lien. The Master commented, "Not to lower their purpose or to allow themselves to be humiliated describes, perhaps, Po Yi and Shu Ch'i." Of Liu Hsia Hui and Shao Lien he said, "They, indeed, lowered their purpose and allowed themselves to be humiliated, but their words were in accord with their station, and their deeds with circumspection. That was all." Of Yü Chung and Yi Yi he said, "They lived as recluses and gave free rein to their words. Thus they accorded, in their persons, with purity, and, in their words, with the right measure for the occasion. I, however, am different. I have no preconceptions about the permissible and the impermissible."

9

Chih, the Grand Musician, left for Ch'i; Kan, musician for the second course, left for Ch'u; Liao, musician for the third course, left for Ts'ai; Ch'üeh, musician for the fourth course, left for Ch'in; Fang Shu the drummer crossed the River; Wu, player of the hand-drum, crossed the River Han; Yang, the Grand Musician's deputy, and Hsiang who played the stone chimes crossed the sea.

10

The Duke of Chou said to the Duke of Lu,⁹ "The gentleman does not treat those closely related to him casually, nor does he give his high officials occasion for complaint because their advice was not heeded. Unless there are grave reasons, he does not abandon officials of long standing. He does not look for all-round perfection in a single person."¹⁰

9. his son.

10. Cf. XIII.25.

11

There were eight Gentlemen in Chou: Po Ta, Po K'uo, Chung T'u, Chung Hu, Shu Yeh, Shu Hsia, Chi Sui and Chi K'uo.

Book XIX

1 Tzu-chang said, "One can, perhaps, be satisfied with a Gentleman who is ready to lay down his life in the face of danger, who does not forget what is right at the sight of gain,¹ and who forgets neither reverence during a sacrifice nor sorrow while in mourning."

1. Cf. XIV.12.

2 Tzu-chang said, "Wherein can a man be said either to have anything or not to have anything who fails to hold on to virtue with all his might or to believe in the Way with all his heart."

3 Tzu-hsia's disciples asked Tzu-chang about friendship.

Tzu-chang said, "What does Tzu-hsia say?"

"Tzu-hsia says, 'You should make friends with those who are adequate and spurn those who are inadequate.'"

Tzu-chang said, "That is different from what I have heard. I have heard that the gentleman honours his betters and is tolerant towards the multitude and that he is full of praise for the good while taking pity on the backward. If I am greatly superior, which among men need I be intolerant of? If I am inferior, then others will spurn me, how can there be any question of my spurning them?"

4 Tzu-hsia said, "Even minor arts are sure to have their worthwhile aspects, but the gentleman does not take them up for fear of being bogged down when the way ahead is long."

5 Tzu-hsia said, "A man can, indeed, be said to be eager to learn who is conscious, in the course of a day, of what he lacks and who never forgets, in the course of a month, what he has mastered."

6 Tzu-hsia said, "Learn widely and be steadfast in your purpose, inquire earnestly and reflect on what is at hand, and there is no need for you to look for benevolence elsewhere."

7

Tzu-hsia said, "The artisan, in any of the hundred crafts, masters his trade by staying in his workshop; the gentleman perfects his way through learning."

8

Tzu-hsia said, "When the small man makes a mistake, he is sure to gloss over it."

9

Tzu-hsia said, "In the three following situations the gentleman gives a different impression. From a distance he appears formal; when approached, he appears cordial; in speech he appears stern."

10

Tzu-hsia said, "Only after he has gained the trust of the common people does the gentleman work them hard, for otherwise they would feel themselves ill-used. Only after he has gained the trust of the lord does the gentleman admonish him against wrong action, for otherwise the lord would feel himself slandered."

11

Tzu-hsia said, "If one does not overstep the bounds in major matters, it is of no consequence if one is not meticulous in minor matters."

12

Tzu-yu said, "The disciples and younger followers of Tzu-hsia can certainly cope with the task of sweeping and cleaning, of responding to calls and replying to questions put to them, and of coming forward and withdrawing, but these are only trifling matters. On what is basic they are wanting. What can one do about this?"

When Tzu-hsia heard this, he said, "Oh! how mistaken Yen Yu is! In the way of the gentleman, what should be taught first and what should come afterwards are as clearly distinguished as grasses and trees. How can one give a false account of the way of the gentleman. It is, perhaps, the sage alone who, having started something, will always see it through to the end."²

2. Tzu-hsia's point seems to be this. If a student is taught, step by step, from the superficial to the basic, then he would have gained something even if he does not, in pursuing his studies, attain his final goal. At any rate, the final goal is something only the sage is supposed to be capable of attaining.

13

Tzu-hsia said, "When a man in office finds that he can more than cope with his duties, then he studies; when a student finds that he can more than cope with his studies, then he takes office."

14

Tzu-yu said, "When mourning gives full expression to grief nothing more can be required."

15

Tzu-yu said, "My friend Chang is difficult to emulate. All the same he has not, as yet, attained benevolence."

16

Tseng Tzu said, "Grand, indeed, is Chang, so much so that it is difficult to work side by side with him at the cultivation of benevolence."

17

Tseng Tzu said, "I have heard the Master say that on no occasion does a man realize himself to the full, though, when pressed, he said that mourning for one's parents may be an exception."

18

Tseng Tzu said, "I have heard the Master say that other men could emulate everything Meng Chuang Tzu did as a good son with the exception of one thing: he left unchanged both his father's officials and his father's policies, and this was what was difficult to emulate."³

3. Cf. I.11.

19

The Meng family appointed Yang Fu as judge and he sought the advice of Tseng Tzu. Tseng Tzu said, "Those in authority have lost the Way and the common people have, for long, been rootless. If you succeed in extracting the truth from them, you should have compassion on them instead of feeling pleased with yourself."

20

Tzu-kung said, "Chou was not as wicked as all that. That is why the gentleman hates to dwell downstream for it is there that all that is sordid in the Empire finds its way."

21

Tzu-kung said, "The gentleman's errors are like an eclipse of the sun and the moon in that when he errs the whole world sees it and when he reforms the whole world looks up to it."

22

Kung-sun Ch'ao of Wei asked Tzu-kung, "From whom did Chung-ni⁴ learn?"

Tzu-kung said, "The way of King Wen and King Wu has not yet fallen to the ground but is still to be found in men. There is no man who does not have something of the way of Wen and Wu in him. Superior men have got hold of what is of greater significance while inferior men have got hold of what is of lesser significance. From whom, then, does the Master not learn? Equally, how could there be such a thing as a constant teacher for him?"

4. i.e., Confucius.

23

Shu-sun Wu-shu said to the Counsellors at court, "Tzu-kung is superior to Chung-ni."

This was reported to Tzu-kung by Tzu-fu Ching-po.

Tzu-kung said, "Let us take outer walls as an analogy. My walls are shoulder high so that it is possible to peer over them and see the beauty of the house. But the Master's walls are twenty or thirty feet high so that, unless one gains admittance through the gate, one cannot see the magnificence of the ancestral temples or the sumptuousness of the official buildings. Since those who gain admittance through the gate are, shall we say, few, is it any wonder that the gentleman should have spoken as he did?"

24

Shu-sun Wu-shu made defamatory remarks about Chung-ni. Tzu-kung said, "He is simply wasting his time. Chung-ni cannot be defamed. In other cases, men of excellence are like hills which one can climb over. Chung-ni is like the sun and the moon which one has no way of climbing over. Even if someone wanted to cut himself off from them, how could this detract from the sun and the moon? It would merely serve to show that he did not know his own measure."

25

Ch'en Tzu-ch'in said to Tzu-kung, "You are just being respectful, aren't you? Surely Chung-ni is not superior to you."

Tzu-kung said, "The gentleman is judged wise by a single word he utters; equally, he is judged foolish by a single word he utters. That is why one really must be careful of what one says. The

Master cannot be equalled just as the sky cannot be scaled. Were the Master to become the head of a state or a noble family, he would be like the man described in the saying: he only has to help them stand and they will stand, to guide them and they will walk, to bring peace to them and they will turn to him, to set them tasks and they will work in harmony. In life he is honoured and in death he will be mourned. How can he be equalled?"

Book XX

1

Yao said,

Oh, Shun,

The succession, ordained by Heaven, has fallen on thy
person.

Holdst thou truly to the middle way.

If the Empire should be reduced to dire straits

The honours bestowed on thee by Heaven will be
terminated for ever.

Shun commanded Yü in like manner.

[T'ang] said, "I, Lü, the little one, dare to offer a black bull and to make this declaration before the great Lord. I dare not pardon those who have transgressed. I shall present thy servants as they are so that the choice rests with Thee alone. If I transgress, let not the ten thousand states suffer because of me; but if the ten thousand states transgress, the guilt is mine alone."

The Chou handed out great gifts and good men alone were enriched.

I may have close relatives,

But better for me to have benevolent men.

If the people transgress

Let my person be punished.¹

Decide on standard weights and measures after careful consideration, and re-establish official posts fallen into disuse, and government measures will be enforced everywhere. Restore states that have been annexed, revive lines that have become extinct, raise men who have withdrawn from society and the hearts of all the common people in the Empire will turn to you.

What was considered of importance: the common people, food, mourning and sacrifice.

If a man is tolerant, he will win the multitude. If he is trustworthy in word, the common people will entrust him with responsibility. If he is quick he will achieve results.² If he is impartial the common people will be pleased.³

1. It has been suggested that these are the words used by King Wu in enfeoffing feudal lords, and may have been used, in particular, in the enfeoffment of T'ai Kung of Ch'i.

This whole passage consists of advice to kings or declarations by them. These kings all founded new dynasties. Shun founded the Yü 虞, Yü 禹 founded the Hsia 夏, T'ang 湯 founded the Yin 殷, and King Wu founded the Chou. It must have been taken from the *Book of History*, although only the saying of T'ang is found quoted in ancient works. (See Ch'en Meng-chia, *Shang shu t'ung lun*, p. 23, and n. 4 on p. 25.) This kind of material was probably used for teaching purposes in the Confucian school.

2. The paragraph up to this point is also found in XVII.6 where instead of *min* (common people) the text reads *jen* (fellow men).
3. This passage is not attributed to any speaker. It seems to consist of a number of unconnected parts on various aspects of government. Although one of these parts, as we have just pointed out, is, indeed, attributed to Confucius in XVII.6, it would be rash to infer from this that Confucius must have been responsible for everything else as well.

2

Tzu-chang asked Confucius, "What must a man be like before he can take part in government?"

The Master said, "If he exalts the five excellent practices and eschews the four wicked practices he can take part in government."

Tzu-chang said, "What is meant by the five excellent practices?"

The Master said, "The gentleman is generous without its costing him anything, works others hard without their complaining, has desires without being greedy, is at ease without being arrogant, and is awe-inspiring without looking fierce."

Tzu-chang said, "What is meant by 'being generous without its costing him anything'?"⁴

The Master said, "If a man benefits the common people by taking advantage of the things around them that they find beneficial, is this not being generous without its costing him anything? If a man, in working others hard, chooses burdens they can support, who will complain? If, desiring benevolence, a man obtains it,

where is the greed? The gentleman never dare neglect his manners whether he be dealing with the many or the few, the young or the old. Is this not being at ease without being arrogant?⁵ The gentleman, with his robe and cap adjusted properly and dignified in his gaze, has a presence which inspires people who see him with awe. Is this not being awe-inspiring without looking fierce?”

Tzu-chang said, “What is meant by the four wicked practices?”

The Master said, “To impose the death penalty without first reforming the people is to be cruel; to expect results without first giving warning is to be tyrannical; to insist on a time limit when tardy in issuing orders is to cause injury. When something has to be given to others anyway, to be miserly in the actual giving is to be officious.”

4. In the light of the answer, the question should cover all five excellent practices instead of only the first.
5. Cf. XIII.26.

3

Confucius said, “A man has no way of becoming a gentleman unless he understands Destiny; he has no way of taking his stand unless he understands the rites;⁶ he has no way of judging men unless he understands words.”

6. Cf. VIII.8, XVI.13.