it is very likely that his doctrines would have been broader and not so dry as those of Confucius. Considered as a man, his character was nobler and more dauntless than that of Ch'ung-ni. He never made an official lie. Regarded as an active statesman he was far superior to the sage. The latter was in office only four years and did not attain to the position of chief-minister in Lu, whilst Tsze-ch'an was 23 years (not 26, as the Sze ki has it) minister in Chăng, and held out under the most difficult circumstances, toiling and labouring practically for the welfare of his country, whilst Confucius was dreaming of an ideal government which never could be realised. He might well have said to his young friend,

'Grau Freund ist deine Theorie,
Grün ist des Lebens goldner Baum.'

There have been great men in China besides Confucius, and Tsze-ch'an is one of them. 'He was a virtuous man who loved his people and served his ruler faithfully.' Sze ki, chap. 42.

E. R. Eichler.

STORY OF THE THREE UNSELFISH LITERATI.

[The following is a literal translation of the first story contained in the Chin Ku Chi Kuan (今古奇觀) or Curious Stories of the Present and the Past. This book is a collection of tales which by their brevity and simplicity contrast favourably with the prolixity and inordinate length for which Chinese novels in general are so remarkable].

The downfall of the branches of a Judas tree restored the fortunes of a family.
In the Hua wo pavilion brothers slept on the same couch.
In times past, elder brothers lived with younger.
For thousands of years unbrotherly persons feel shame when they recite the poem about the beanstalks.

The object of the above lines is to commend brotherly love, and therein are contained three trite allusions, which I will now explain one by one. To begin with the first, the downfall of the branches of a Judas tree restored the fortunes of a family.

Once upon a time there were three brothers named Tien, who had lived and messed together from their childhood. The eldest married a wife who was known as Mrs. Tien Ta; the second also married, and his wife went by the name of Mrs. Tien Erh. The two sisters-in-law were on affectionate terms and never had a word of difference. Now the third brother was but a child, and lived with his brothers and sisters-in-law, but when he grew to manhood, he also married, and his wife was known as Mrs. Tien San. Now this lady was not a paragon of virtue; and besides, she gave herself airs by reason of being possessed of a considerable dowry. When she saw her husband's relations cooking and eating in common, and keeping no check of each one's private expenditure, she objected to this system, being fond of better fare. So she gave her husband no peace day or night, saying, 'Your common exchequer and property are all managed by your brothers; the receipts and disbursements are all unknown to you; they know what they are about, you are kept in the dark. If they use one article, and charge for ten, or use ten and charge for a hundred, how much wiser are you? Though for the present you may live together, still in the long run you must separate. Supposing

that the family fortunes decline, you alone will be the sufferer on account of your youth. I say that your best plan will be to have a division of the property as soon as possible into three portions, and for each one to go his own way; would you not then fare better, and make a better living? After a time Tien San yielded to his wife's remonstrances and admitted that she had reason on her side, so he begged a relative to inform his brothers that he wished to set up a separate establishment. His two elder brothers at first would not hear of it, but being continually urged by Mrs. Tien San in season and out of season, it only remained for them to yield, and they accordingly divided their landed and personal property into three portions with mathematical precision. There was only left a large Judas tree which they had inherited from their ancestors; it stood in front of the house and was of uncommon luxuriance. Since they wanted to live apart, to whom should this tree belong? Sad to relate, it was just on the point of blossoming, and the matter was hard to decide. Now Tien the elder was the acme of justice, so he recommended that the tree be felled and the trunk divided into three sections, each to receive one; as for the rest of the tree, the branches and leaves, he proposed to divide them by weight. He only awaited the morrow to carry out the idea. Accordingly next day at daylight he called upon his two brothers to go with him to fell the tree, when, having arrived alongside, they found its branches rotten, and its leaves withered and utterly lifeless. Tien the elder, giving it a push, the tree gave way to the pressure, and fell over, exposing all the roots. He propped it up with his hand and then burst out crying aloud. His two brothers said, 'How much was this tree worth, that you should be so much affected by it. Tien the elder said, 'It is not for this tree I am crying, but because I reflect that we three brothers, born of the same parents, are like the branches and leaves of this tree sprung from the same root and must not be separated. From the root springs the trunk; from the trunk the branches, and from the branches the leaves; hence its luxuriance. Yesterday I resolved to split it into three sections, when the tree would not tolerate the division in its living state, and it died of its own accord in the night. We three brothers also, if we separate, will likewise wither and die like this tree, and where will our property be then? It is for this reason I am sad and lament. His two younger brothers on hearing these words were most deeply affected in that they could be human beings and inferior in sensibility to a tree. They forthwith with one accord embraced each other and wept without intermission. They all agreed that they would not submit to separation and vowed to live and mess together as of old. Their three wives, hearing persons crying in front of the house, went out to see what was the matter, and on learning the cause the two elder brothers' wives were rejoiced, but Mrs. Tien San was displeased and loud in her vituperations. Tien San wanted to put away his wife, but his brothers again and again expostulated with him not to do so. Mrs. Tien San was so mortified that she returned to the house and hanged herself. She thus brought retribution on herself. We may dismiss this without further remark and again speak of Tien Ta, who in sorrow again went to look at the Judas tree, when he found that the tree, without the aid of any one, had of its own accord returned to an upright position; its rotten branches had revived and its withered leaves been restored to life: it was even more flourishing than ever. Tien Ta called for his two brothers to come and witness the sight. They were all loud in their exclamations of astonishment. From this time forward the Tien family, for many generations, continued to dwell together.

The allusion to the falling of the Judas tree thus refers to the three Tien brothers; as they were united or separated, the tree shewed its sympathy. Don't listen to wo-

men's talk, or you will fail to understand that brothers, like branches, ought to be united.

The second sentence in the introduction says, 'In the Hua-wo pavilion they slept on the same couch.' The Hua-wo pavilion was situated at Chang-an city in Shan-si and was erected by the Emperor Yuan Tsung of the T'ang dynasty. This Emperor is better known as Ming-huang of the T'ang. When the Empress Wei attempted to overturn the Government and Wu Sanssŭ usurped power, Ming-huang raised an army, and exterminated him, and then succeeded to the throne himself. He had five brothers, all of whom he ennobled as Princes, and they were popularly known as the five Princes. He loved them very dearly and erected a large pavilion, which he denominated the Hua-wo, with the similitude of the Tang-ti tree (emblem of brotherly love) mentioned in the Book of Odes. He constantly invited the five Princes to come up to his pavilion and dine with him; he also had made a large screen called the curtain of the five Princes; inside which was laid a long bolster and a large coverlet. Here Ming-huang and the five Princes used to sleep; in reference to which the following lines were composed. He used to induce them to come with the strains of music. By the time the banquet was ended in the pavilion, the sun was set.

The palace attendants sat up all night trimming the lights, not crediting that the Emperor would remain away so long.

The fourth sentence of the introduction says, 'From time immemorial the recital of the poem about the beanstalks makes [unbrotherly persons] ashamed.'

The allusion is this. In the time of the later Han dynasty Tsao pei, the eldest son of Tsao Tsao, Prince of Wei, deposed the Hans and assumed the sovereignty. He had a younger brother named Tsao Chih (literary appellation Tzŭ-chien) who was of surpassing intelligence, so that his father, when he was alive, ardently loved him and from time to time wanted to make him his successor, though he did not actually constitute him such. Tsao Pei conceived an inveterate hatred of him, and sought occasion to slay him. One day he sent for Tzŭ chien and said, 'The late Emperor used constantly to praise your facility as a poet, but I have not yet put it to the proof. You must now in my presence compose a verse while taking seven paces, and if you fail, I must hold you accountable for deception.' Before Tzŭ-chien had completed seven paces, he had finished his poem, which contained a satirical innuendo. It was as follows,—

'To boil beans, bean stalks were burnt.
The beans in the kettle exclaimed to their brother-stalks,—
"We are sprung from one root;
Why such haste that we should be consumed together?"'

Tsao Pei, on reading this burst into tears, and repented of his former hatred, in reference to which the following lines were written,—

'From of old, the most glorious have not been free from suspicion,
'Danger was incurred in the composition of the seven paces verse.'

Sad to say, notwithstanding the fable about the beans and bean-stalks, hatred amongst brothers was not a thing of the past; in the era of the six dynasties persons of the same flesh and blood have slain and destroyed one another.

I have explained these two or three allusions to old stories merely as a prelude to the tale of the three unselfish literati who established a great fame by refusing property.

This narrative will not treat of any one so jealous as Tsao Pei, nor so accomplished as Tzŭ-chien; but it is superior in interest to that of the three Tien brothers, or to that of the five Princes of the Hua-wo pavilion. If you cannot agree with your brothers, listen to me while I relate this old legend,

all those of you who wish to follow a good example.

'If you want to learn the ways of the world, you must study the books of the ancients.'

The plot of the legend is laid in the time of Emperor Ming Ti of the Eastern Han dynasty. At that time the empire was at peace, and all the people contented with their lot. Within the palace precincts the song of the phœnix was resonant in the wu-t'ung trees, and in the provinces were no undiscovered geniuses doomed to seclusion. As a matter of fact, the mode of appointing able men to official posts was different from that pursued at the present time. Then the selection was not made by competition, but was based on the recommendation of prefects and other officials. Although such things as examination in scholarship and letters and in propriety of conduct existed, still paramount importance was attached to persons being honest. Under this term are included filial piety, disinterestedness, loyalty to the sovereign and love for the people. It was entirely by the manifestation of these qualities that individuals emerged from the ranks and became officials. As things are at present, what a number of aged scholars there are, well provided with testimonials; but if they want to gain their degrees, to what subterfuges they have to resort, and ever it is that rich people have means of getting the advantage of the poor and needy. Even if a person be as filial as Tsêng-san or as self-sacrificing as Pai-i, he will fail to make his name illustrious. But in the Han dynasty the laws were very admirable. Then, if only a person were recommended for his honesty, and proved to be really capable and virtuous, he was certain of rapid promotion, without undue regard to seniority, and his patrons also had their services recorded and received reward; if, on the other hand, the nominee turned out not up to the mark by afterwards proving covetous or disregarding the law, his offence, if trivial, was punished by dismissal, if serious, by confiscation of his property and his patron was also punished. The interests of the patron were thus bound up with those of the nominee, according as he turned out favourably or the reverse. People therefore did not dare to act carelessly, and thus justice was exalted, and the Court free from corruption. But there is no need to dwell further on this. I proceed with my story.

In the Yang-mei district of the Hin-chi prefecture lived a man named Hsü Wu (literary appellation Chang-wên). When he was fifteen years old, his parents both died; and though they left him some property and servants, his family alas! had remained undistinguished, having no influential friends. He had two brothers, one named Hsü Yen, who was just nine years, and the other Hsü Wu, seven years old. Both were therefore young and inexperienced, and followed their brother about everywhere. Hsü Wu went daily with his servants to till his fields and cultivate his garden, and every evening had lamps brought for purpose of study. Whenever he engaged in farming, he made his brothers look on at what was being done, though not strong enough themselves to handle a spade or a hoe. Also when he studied at night, he had his two younger brothers seated at the table by his side, and he taught them how to punctuate, and carefully explained [all obscure passages]. He taught them that the way to become useful was by the practice of self-denial; and if they in any degree did not follow his teaching, he used to go and kneel in front of the family altar, where he would burst into tears blaming himself and saying that his virtue was insufficient to the task of educating them aright, and regretting that their parents were not alive to train them. He would never cease crying until his brothers confessed their fault with tears, and besought him to forgive them, when he rose from his knees. At the same time he

was not irritable, nor did he stand on his dignity, for at home he only used one set of bed clothing and one pillow, and all three used to sleep together.

Thus some years passed, by which time, the younger brothers having grown up, the family affairs began to look more prosperous. People then began to advise Hsü Wu to marry, but he replied that, if he were to marry, he would have to live apart from his brothers, and he feared that in his devotion to his wife he would forget some of his love towards his brothers, and this he would not permit. Thenceforward they used to work in the fields together by day and study together at night; moreover they ate from the same dish and slept in the same bed. A great fame of them spread abroad in the neighbourhood, and he was spoken of by all as the brotherly Hsü Wu. Also some effusions were published about him in the following language.

'The Hsü Wu of the Yang-mei district rests not from toiling in the fields all day, and studying at night. Hsü Wu is educating his brothers to succeed in life; he is more like a parent than an elder brother.'

At that time his fame coming to the ears of the Prefect and Magistrate, they presented a joint memorial recommending him to the notice of the Emperor. His Majesty appointed him a Board Secretary, and the Prefect of Hui-chi sent instructions through the Magistrate telling him to proceed to the capital. Hsü Wu, constrained by the Imperial commands, could not but obey. He left parting injunctions with his two brothers that they were to study hard just as if he were with them, and that they were on no account to be idle, or they would mar their prospects and defy the dying admonition of their parents. He also commanded the servants to be careful and mind their work, and to attend to their masters' behests, to rise early, and sleep at night, and to unite in maintaining the position of the family. When he had finished his exhortations, he packed up his baggage, and, disdaining to ride in an official chair, he hired some chair-bearers himself and got into an ordinary sedan, and with only one attendant set off for Chang-an. In less than a day he arrived at the capital, where he had an audience of the Emperor and received his credentials.

The people of Chang-an having heard of Hsü Wu's reputation for brotherly kindness, vied in paying their respects to him and in making his acquaintance.

The high officers at Court, hearing that he was not yet married, were each anxious to secure him for one of their daughters. Hsü Wu thought to himself, 'We are three brothers in the prime of life and all unmarried. If I were to marry first, it would be very unjust to my brothers; moreover my family for generations have been addicted to agricultural pursuits and to study, and has now been by a stroke of fortune elevated to Court rank. Should I then form an alliance with the aristocracy, my wife would, on the strength of her noble descent, inevitably affect an air of superiority, and not only injure our character of scholarly simplicity, but by and bye, when my two brothers marry into poor families, how will she be able to live with her sisters-in-law? Differences among brothers in times past have mostly been originated by their wives, so I cannot but be on my guard against the inception of a quarrel.' Although at heart he considered and argued thus, still of course he did not give expression to these sentiments. He only put people off from time to time on the ground that he was already betrothed to a farmer's daughter; and that he dared not divorce her and marry again, as he would thus be an object of derision to Sung Hung.* This made the public respect him still more. Then again Hsü Wu was versed in the classics, so, when there were important state affairs about which the Ministers could not come to a decision, they constantly came and

* See Mayers' Chinese Reader's Manual, No. 637.

consulted him, when he quoted precedents appropriate to the matter in hand. It constantly happened that, when their deliberations were crowned with success, it was entirely owing to Hsü Wu's advice, which all considered conclusive and not to be deviated from. The Ministers of State reposed the greatest confidence in him, so that, before many years had passed, he had risen step by step to the post of Censor.

Suddenly one day he bethought himself of his two brothers at home who, though they had studied hard for many years, had not yet been recommended for office by the Prefect.

Fearing that they might have grown lazy and so spoilt their prospects, he wished to return home and pay them a visit.

He accordingly sent a memorial to the Throne in the following terms:—

'Your servant, though of no great capacity, has met with the Imperial favour, and has attained to a brilliant position. He has no means of shewing his gratitude, and now dares to ask to be allowed to retire into private life for a time. There is an old adage which says, brotherly love is the foremost of the hundred obligations of a man's life. I must plead guilty to unfilial acts. First and foremost, I have no posterity; secondly, I have not repaired the graves of my ancestors; thirdly, I have not completed my brothers' education. I am now thirty years old and unmarried; of the five cardinal relations of mankind, I am still wanting in two. I pray then your Majesty will grant me leave of absence to return for a time to my native village, and I hope the day will again come when you will again stimulate the flagging energies of your servant.'

The Son of Heaven (i.e. Emperor) having glanced at the memorial granted him temporary leave of absence to enable him to return home; and commanded him to proceed by Government post in his robes of office to his native village. He also made him a present of twenty catties of gold to defray the expenses of his wedding. Hsü Wu expressed his thanks and took leave of His Majesty, all the numerous Court officials accompanying him as far as the open country to bid him good bye.

The news spread that he was returning home in his robes of office. The people praised him in that a Minister of State had risen from their ranks.

Hsü Wu, having finished on his return the duty of visiting the graves of his ancestors, then returned his credentials, putting forth that, as he was ill, he was unwilling to continue longer in office. After a little time he, with the greatest deliberation, invited his two brothers into his presence, in order to ascertain what progress they had made in their studies. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu were fluent in their answers. They understood the meanings and had a flowing style of composition, whereat Hsü Wu's heart was greatly rejoiced. Further, on inspecting the extent of his property and lands, he found they were many times more spacious than of old, the augmentation being entirely owing to the industry and economy of his two brothers. Hsü Wu then made enquiry as to what virtuous girls there were in the neighbourhood to affiance to his brothers, in order that he might see them married as soon as ever he had completed his own nuptials. Not many months afterwards, he suddenly said to his brothers, 'Hearing that you have decided to live separate from me, I will find you both wives; our property is not inconsiderable, and it is only right that each one of us should set up house for himself. His brothers signified their assent, and he thereupon chose a day to invite all the notables of the neighbourhood to a banquet. It was not till three glasses of wine had passed round that he ventured to allude to the subject of division. He beckoned his servants to come forward and divide the family property into three portions, when he himself took the lion's share saying, 'I now occupy an official position of consequence, and at my door are the insignia of office. I am

therefore obliged to consider appearances. As for you, you are but tillers of the soil, if you get a hut of bamboos or a thatched cottage for yourselves, it is enough. He then examined the land register book, and whenever he saw a piece of fertile land he appropriated it to himself, and gave his brothers all the rocky and sterile, saying, 'I have to entertain many guests and my intimate friends increase in numbers daily; without all this I shall not have enough to meet my requirements. As for you, you are but few and are able-bodied men; with what I have assigned you, you will be able to stave off cold and hunger. I do not mean to let you have greater riches, lesty our virtue should suffer.' Further he annexed all the strong and quick-witted servants, saying, 'Without these, the attendance will be inadequate to my requirements at home and abroad. If you lend a hand to tilling the fields, the dull and clumsy will serve your purpose and the old and feeble will suffice to wait upon you at table. You do not need more servants, who will only waste your substance.'

All the notables, knowing Hsü Wu's previous renown for brotherly affection, took it for granted that in the distribution of property on the present occasion he would accept little and surrender much. Contrary to their expectation he studied his personal aggrandisement in everything, and the portion allotted to his two younger brothers did not amount to half that appropriated by himself. There was here no idea of self-denial but a manifest intention to defraud them. The notables were all very much disconcerted in consequence, so much so that some outspoken old men who could not repress their indignation left the place, and some straightforward and impulsive persons wished to interfere and talk to the two brothers about their rights, but there were also others who on the quiet advised them not to speak about the matter. There were besides men of the world who said that rich men's feelings were different from those of poor men, and that Hsü Wu, since he had become a distinguished official, was quite another person from what he was at first; and kept repeating that outsiders should not divide relations, and that persons who were not family connections had no right to meddle with their affairs. Even if you give them good advice, forsooth, they need not necessarily follow it, and in that case you will have expended your breath to no purpose; if on the other hand you excite the brothers to quarrel and they still carry out their praiseworthy intention of yielding to their elder brother, what is the use of your gratuitously getting into a temper on their account? If the brothers are dissatisfied, they will doubtless argue the point, and would it not be better for us to wait till that time comes, and then step in and arrange the business for them?

'If a thing does not concern you, don't put yourself out about it.'

'If your remarks are beside the mark, don't insist on saying them.'

As a matter of fact Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu, ever since, thanks to their elder brother's training, they understood books and comprehended the rules of propriety, had uniformly attached supreme importance to filial piety; so that, when they saw their brother dividing up the property in this way, they regarded it as quite the correct thing, and were not in the least disconcerted.

The distribution having been effected and the people gone away, Hsü Wu himself lived in the principal house, and Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu occupied small dwellings to the right and left. They used daily to work in the fields with their servants, and in their leisure hours they used to read, asking their elder brother to clear up any doubtful point. This was the usual routine, and their wives imitated their husbands and also lived in perfect concord. From this time forward the notables disparaged Hsü Wu's conduct and pitied his two brothers. They privately made reflections on his behaviour saying, 'Hsü Wu is a sham honest man; the really

honest are Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu. Out of regard for their parents they remember the relationship they bear to Hsü Wu, and listening to his advice agree to anything he suggests, and offer him not the least contradiction; is not this filial piety? Moreover they, reverencing what is right and despising money, allow him to assign them a large or a small share without arguing; is not this self-denial? At first we published his fame abroad throughout the district, and called him the filial Hsü Wu; now we shall have to drop the Wu and say instead "the filial Hsü family" and procure great renown for Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu.' Public opinion being very patent in the time of the Han Dynasty, they published the following squib.

'The pretender to disinterestedness is in office, the truly self-denying live from hand to mouth; the impostor is the possessor of a fine mansion, the genuine only keep a thatched roof over their heads; the false has fertile pastures and gardens, the true have to work with the hoe and sickle; the genuine are gems, the false is but a tile—still tiles are elevated to the mansion, gems are squandered in the wilderness. The true is not appreciated, only the false.'

At that time Ming Ti, who was on the throne, promulgated an edict to seek out men of talent, and ordered the local authorities to enquire for scholars of practical capacity as well as of book learning; to visit their houses and invite them with due ceremony to proceed post-haste to the capital. When this edict arrived at Hui-chi Prefecture, it was notified by the Prefect to the various Magistrates. Now the Magistrate had long been cognizant of the circumstances under which Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu had surrendered their property without any contention; further it just happened to be the time when the notables of the district had united in recommending their self-denial and conduct as superior to their brother's. He therefore reported them to the Prefect; then the Prefect and Sub-prefects, who were familiar with their high reputation, with one consent recommended them for office. The Magistrate came in person to their door, descended from his chair and sent in his card, and having presented to them a piece of black silk and a roll of white, he unfolded to them the purpose of the Emperor to seek out men of moral worth. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu were endless in their protestations (of unfitness), but Hsü Wu said, 'To study in youth and act in one's prime, is the duty of the superior man; my brothers ought not obstinately to reject the Emperor's offers.' They were therefore compelled to fall in with the Imperial commands. Having bade their brother and sister-in-law good-bye, they proceeded post-haste to Chang-an, where they had an audience of His Majesty. Their salutations paid and genuflections ended, the Emperor inquired whether they were not Hsü Wu's brothers. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu admitted such to be the case, and the Emperor then said, 'I hear that your family is noted for its filial piety and and that your self-denial surpasses that of your brother. I strongly approve of it and am greatly pleased.' Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu prostrated themselves and said, 'We are indebted to the overshadowing prosperity of Your Majesty for opening the entrance to official employment to men of talent languishing in obscurity; it is entirely owing to the favour of your Majesty. The Prefect and the Magistrate, not having held your servants as utterly good for nothing, have brought us to your Majesty's notice [lit. have pestered your divine ears with our names]. Your servants having lost their parents in their youth, have been indebted for their education to their elder brother Hsü Wu, and they have sedulously striven to follow his teaching. Beyond cultivating the ground and studying, they can lay claim to no other excellence. They are not in the least degree comparable to their elder brother.' The Emperor hearing this reply was amazed at their self-abnegation and appointed them Censors. In less than five years they both rose to the office of Presi-

dent of one of the nine Imperial Courts. Though their tenure of office was not as brilliant as that of their brother, still the whole Court ascribed to them the virtue of self-denial.

Suddenly one day Hsü Wu despatched a letter to his two brothers, which on opening they found to be as follows:—

'You are but ordinary persons who, attaining to office by virtue of the Imperial edict, have risen to be Presidents of the nine Courts. This is the greatest distinction of which human life is capable. Still the two Su used to say, "know when you have enough, and you will escape disgrace; know when to stop and you will avoid danger." Since therefore your talents are by no means unusual, you ought now forthwith firmly to relinquish office, in order to avoid blocking the way of preferment to others.'

Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu, on receiving this note, at once addressed a joint memorial to the Throne to be allowed to resign their offices, and, on the Emperor refusing, memorialized three times. His Majesty then inquired of Sung Chün his Minister of State. 'Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu entered my service in their prime and have attained to the office of Presidents of Court. I have certainly treated them liberally, still they are continually applying to retire, what is the reason of this?' Sung Chün replied by memorial, 'The three Hsü brothers have implanted in their nature a strong family feeling. At present Hsü Wu has for long remained in the shade (retirement), whereas Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu are pursuing together a successful career at Court; it may be they are scarcely at ease in their minds.' The Emperor said, 'How would it be if I summoned Hsü Wu, so as to have all three brothers at Court assisting in the government?' Sung Chün said, 'I have ascertained that Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu are actuated by a most sincere wish (to retire). Your Majesty would do well to grant for a time their request in order that they may carry out their magnanimous intention, and by and bye Your Majesty can again summon them to undertake official duties; or else, following the precedents set by your predecessors on the Throne, you might appoint them Prefects near their native place, in order to afford them the means of showing whatever ability they may still have left, and they might then *en passant* visit their native village. Your sincere wish to have men of worth in your service would thus be gratified as well as Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu's affection for their elder brother; there would thus by a double advantage.'

The Emperor sanctioned their memorial, and straightway appointed Hsü Yen to be Prefect of Tan-yang, and Hsü Pu, Prefect of Wu (near Soochow). He presented to each of them 20 catties of gold, and gave them 3 months' leave, in order to gratify their longing after their brother. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu having thanked him for his kindness, left the palace and were accompanied by Ministers of State and courtiers as far as a reception hall 10 *li* distant, where they had some refreshment and then bade each other adieu. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu proceeded with the utmost despatch to Yang-mei, and then, after they had exchanged greetings with their elder brother, presented to him the whole of the gold conferred upon them by His Majesty. Hsü Wu said, 'This gold was given you as a mark of the Emperor's favour, you ought not to part with it.' On the morrow Hsü Wu made ready the three kinds of flesh required for an offering (fowl, fish and pork), and taking with him his two brothers proceeded to their parents' grave, and the oblation being finished, he prepared a banquet, to which he invited all the elders of the district. Now the three brothers had all held high office, and though they were not so wealthy as to afford to treat other people unceremoniously, still their fame and social position were brilliant. Receiving therefore their invitation, who (of the elders) would refuse to accept the invitation, and therefore at the time

appointed all the elders arrived almost in their full numbers. Hsü Wu took a goblet of wine in his hands and personally invited them to drink. They all said that at a banquet given by the Duke of Chang-wên in honor of the return of his two brothers, they would none of them dare to claim precedence. At that time there existed among the country people the notion that rank should be taken according to age. Now Hsü Wu had left the service of his country long since but he was still addressed as Duke of Chang-wên. His two brothers were a generation younger than himself, so, though they occupied the honorable position of Ministers of State, still the villagers in accordance with old established custom merely styled them 'elder brothers.' Hsü Wu said, 'The special reason why I have troubled you all to honour me with your presence is that I have a matter very much on my mind, that I wish to make known to you, but you must all drink three full glasses of wine before I dare make a clean breast of it.' All responded to his invitation, and after they had finished drinking in rotation, Hsü Wu directed his two brothers to take a large goblet and get each of the elders to drink his health. All did so, and when the ceremony was over, they said with one voice, 'We old people are beholden to your brotherly affection (for this banquet) and must now beg you to drink our health [lit. borrow a flower to offer to Buddha].' Hsü Wu and his brothers having all three responded, they all said, 'We have now waited long enough for the valuable speech the Duke of Chang-wên (Hsü Wu) promised us, and wish him now to out with it.' Hsü Wu, twiddling his thumbs [as if hesitating to speak], did not say many sentences before he caused the audience to be thrilled in every fibre.

The quail knows not the vulture.
The river spirit knows not the sea god.
How then can the average mind
Fathom the fortitude of the saintly man?

Hsü Wu had not had time to begin his narrative before his tears began to fall, which alarmed everybody so much that they were in a state of great trepidation, not knowing where to turn. His two brothers, much disconcerted, knelt down saying, 'What reason has our brother for being so deeply moved?' Hsü Wu said, 'The matter that affects me has been kept to myself for many years, but to-day I can no longer keep silence about it.' Pointing to Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu, he continued, 'It is solely on account of your incomplete reputation that I have been led to do something very harrowing to my feelings, and to run the gauntlet of a tarnished reputation, bringing discredit on my ancestors and ridicule on my native place. This is why I weep.' He then sent for an inventory which he handed to all of them to inspect. It was in fact a register of lands and buildings, together with a return of income from rice, grain, cloth and silk, extending over many years past. Everybody was at a loss for his meaning, when Hsü Wu again said, 'My primary object in training and educating my two brothers was that they might establish themselves in the practice of virtue, gain a name and add lustre to the family. Unexpectedly my own name first undeservedly came into prominence, and subsequently became distinguished. My two brothers remained at home, assiduously exerting themselves in farming and study, and had not yet received the honour of being chosen by the Prefect and Magistrates for office. I wished to follow in the footsteps of Ch'i Hsi of old who, in making appointments, did not avoid his own family, but the fact was, I was afraid lest people, not being aware of the high attainments of my brothers, should insinuate that they were indebted to their elder brother for office, and thus dim their reputation for ever. I therefore at first mooted the question of living apart and arrogated to my own use the large mansion, rich fields and the strong domestics and waiting maids, taking it for granted, knowing the importance my brothers attached to the

fraternal relationship, that they would not dispute about it. I therefore for a time exposed myself to a reputation for greed, and my brothers thus gained a name for self-denial, and, their merits being assessed by the neighbourhood at their proper value, they were fortunate enough to be offered government appointments. They are now members of the Privy Council, and as they have not disgraced their official position, my object has been gained. These lands, houses, and attendants are all our common property, how can I enjoy them alone? As to the family revenues derived from rice, grain, cotton and silk for so many years back, I have not presumed to misuse the least fraction. They are recorded in their entirety in that register. It is palpable therefore that my delivery of this property to my brothers this day has been my fixed intention, from the first, and I now apprise you of it.' All the elders then at last became aware that Hsü Wu, in the division of property he had effected some years ago, had done despite to his feelings, and were ashamed of their own shallowness in not being able to fathom his actions. With one accord they were ceaseless in their expressions of regret. It only remained for Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu to fall weeping to the ground, saying, 'We are beholden for our good fortune this day to the education we have received from you, to which we owe our success in life. We should never have imagined that you would have been so solicitous on our behalf. We feel quite unworthy of it, and were quite incapable ourselves, unaided, of attaining to such exalted official rank. We have also laid a burden upon you, of which, if you had not yourself alluded to it to-day, we should have remained unconscious. There has never from remote antiquity been known such superlative virtue as yours. It is quite out of our power to make reparation for our own worthlessness. These household goods have been got together by your exertions, it is but right therefore that they should remain in your care. As for us, we have enough for dress and sustenance; you need not therefore be concerned on our account.' Hsü Wu said, 'I have for years been a tiller of the soil, and know full well how to sell in the best market; besides which, office has lost its charms for me; it is only befitting that I should pass my old age in agricultural pursuits, and so fulfil my allotted span. You, my two brothers, are in the prime of life and the fulness of strength, and are territorial Magistrates; it is but right that you should accept of the property in order that you may be able to display official purity in full perfection.' Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu retorted, 'As you have brought discredit on yourself on our account, if we were not only to gain fame but also wanted at the same time to acquire wealth, we should be the veriest gluttons in the universe; not only should we bring shame on our ancestors but also disgrace upon you. We must therefore insist on your taking back the property register, and then it will be possible for us to atone for an infinitesimal portion of our fault.' All the elders, seeing the three brothers engaged in this contest of self-abnegation, each of them unwilling to accept of the property, came forward in a body, and addressed them as follows: 'If the Chang-wên Duke (Hsü Wu) took the whole of this property, he would not display any of his former solicitude for the welfare of his two brothers. Further, if the two younger brothers accepted of it, they would again thwart the laudable object of the Chang-wên Duke. In our humble opinion, the right course would be to divide it into three exactly equal portions, neither taking more nor less than his share: thus all the requirements of fraternal affection on the part of Hsü Wu, and submission on the part of his two brothers, would be satisfied.'

As the three brothers still persisted in their renunciation of their claims, those elders, who on the former occasion were outspoken and offended, came forward and exclaimed in peremptory tones, 'The division

arranged just now is perfectly fair, but should you still persist in renouncing, and simulate virtues in order to purchase fame, bring us the register, and we will divide the property among you.'

Hsü Wu and his brothers dared not make any further objection, and had nothing for it but to leave the matter to them to arrange. They thereupon divided the property into three perfectly equal shares, one for each. The principal house in the centre was assigned as before to Hsü Wu for a residence, while the more contracted dwellings on the right and left were allotted to Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu, with an extra quantity of grain and silk as compensation, so that they might rebuild them some day if they wished. They also divided evenly the attendants (male and female), and the elders were unanimous in rating the division a fair one. Hsü Wu and his brothers expressed their thanks in due form, and then invited them to a centre table to have some refreshment, after which they dispersed.

Hsü Wu, still feeling a little upset on account of his former distribution of the property, decided to take half his share of the fertile land, and found an almshouse for the relief of the villagers. Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu, hearing of this, also contributed some of their property to assist the undertaking. The villagers were amazed, and circulated some verses in their honor:

'The truly self-denying person is Hsü Wu.
Following closely in his steps are Hsü Yen and Hsü Pu.
They did not wrangle, and he would not take the property.
They have built an almshouse for the relief of the village poor.
Was ever such disinterested conduct as this!'

Yen and Pu, touched by their brother's rectitude, bought beef and wine with the gold presented to them by the Emperor, and daily invited the elders of the village to drink wine with their elder brother. In this way their three months' leave of absence passed away, but Yen and Pu could not bear to be separated from their brother, so each wished to return his credentials of office. Hsü Wu again and again remonstrated with them, and took them to task for neglecting a cardinal principle (i.e. service of the Emperor). The two men were therefore obliged to yield, and they went with their families to take up their appointment.

We must again refer to the village elders, who reported in detail to the Prefect and Magistrates Hsü Wu's devotion to his brothers and they in turn memorialised the Throne. The Emperor issued a rescript commanding the local authorities to confer distinction on the family by calling the locality the 'district of brotherly love.' Afterwards the Ministers of State presented a joint memorial recommending that a man of Hsü Wu's extraordinary virtue ought not to be left rusticating in the country, and His Majesty commanded that he be again called to take employment, but Hsü Wu would not comply, and when any one asked him the reason, he said, 'When my two brothers were filling official positions at Court, I gave them this advice, "know when you have enough, and when to stop." If I were now again to accept a commission, I should eat my own words.' Moreover I have heard that of late there goes on at Court a continual party struggle, and that place and power are the things most coveted; so I fear my acceptance of office would not conduce to my happiness. I had rather engage in the congenial pursuit of farming.' Every one respected his magnanimity.

Yen and Pu, on accession to office, carried into practice their brother's precepts, and each exerted himself to the utmost to remain incorrupt; and great was the repute of their administration. Afterwards, hearing of their brother's high resolve not to emerge from seclusion, the brothers agreed together to return their seals of office; and they again returned to their farms and daily accompanied their elder brother in his walks about the country. They attained the great age

of one hundred years and then died, leaving a large posterity, who, generation after generation, did not fail to bear office, and to the present day they are spoken of as the 'brotherly Hsü Family.'

R. W. HURST.

THE HISTORY OF CHINESE LITERATURE,

ILLUSTRATED BY LITERAL TRANSLATIONS FROM CHINESE TEXTS.

I. TRANSLATION* OF A CHAPTER IN SECTION XXVI OF THE FORMER HAN BOOKS BY PAN KU (DIED A.D. 92).

Liu Hin 劉歆, who bore the literary designation Tsze-tsun 子駿, was, when very young, so noted for his masterly acquaintance with the Shi (King) and Shoo (King) and for his skill in prose composition, that he was summoned to appear in audience before the Emperor. During the reign of Ch'ing Ti 成帝 (B.C. 32-7) he held office in the Imperial Household as a Superintendent of Palace servants. During the period called Ho-p'ing (B.C. 28-23), Liu Hin was commissioned to act, under his father Liu Hiang 劉向, as a Collator of the Privy Library books, when he had occasion to give opinions on (the condition of the text of) works bearing on the six fine arts†, on traditional memoirs and historical records, on the various philosophical works, on works on poetry and anomalous verse, arithmetic and divination, medicine and surgery, all of which works he examined (critically). After the death of his father Hiang, Liu Hin was appointed President of the Commission of Revisors (of classical texts). When the Emperor Ngai Ti 哀帝 ascended the throne (B.C. 6), Liu Hin was raised by Wang Mang 王莽, then Minister of War, to the office of a Director of the Imperial Clan, and subsequently further promoted to be a hereditary noble of the sixth rank and a Director of the Banqueting Court. Thus he gained a position of high honour and great prosperity. He continued labouring at the restoration of the text of the Five Classics and completed thus the work which his father had left unfinished. Liu Hin classified the whole of the (existing) literature bearing on the six fine arts, by arranging it in distinct classes under seven departments as detailed in the Catalogue of Literature* (Section XXX of the Han Books). Liu Hin and his father Liu Hiang were the first to deal with the Yih (King) critically. During the reign of the Emperor Suen Ti 宣帝 (B.C. 73-49), an Imperial Mandate had been issued to Liu Hiang (as President of the Commission of Revisors) ordering him to recognize Kuh-liang's 穀梁 text of the Ch'un-ts'iu as authoritative, and after ten years of study he had cleared up all doubtful points. But when Liu Hin joined the Commission of Revisors, he discovered a copy of the ancient text of the Ch'un-ts'iu with the commentary (Tso-chwan) of Tso (K'iu-ming) 左邱明. Liu Hin was charmed with it. At that time there was one Yin

* In this translation the name of each person or place will be given once in Chinese and Roman characters, but subsequently in Roman characters only. Words within brackets are not in the original.—E. J. E.

† Commonly understood to be the sciences of ceremonial, music, archery, charioteering, writing and mathematics.—E. J. E.

* A translation of the Introduction to this Catalogue will be given in next number of *China Review*.—E. J. E.