

The Wisdom of the I Ching

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Introduction

The *I Ching*, or Book of Changes, is an ancient Chinese book of wisdom and divination. Rather than foretelling the future, however, the *I Ching* instead tells us what we should do if our lives are to be in harmony with the forces of the universe that determine the future. In this respect, the knowledge it imparts is far better than a mere foreseeing of future events, for it tells us those actions we might take that are most beneficial for our life on this planet as we face the future. Divination using the *I Ching* is a fairly simple process of finding an answer that is applicable to a particular personal problem. Most readers of the book find it has far more significance if it is applied in this way to a real-life situation. Indeed, much of the book seems to consist of simple-minded truisms. But when a person is in the midst of a difficult and perplexing situation, even a simple but appropriate truism can be an enormous help.

This edition of the *I Ching* emphasizes the wisdom of the book and omits most of the esoteric symbolic images, save as occasional metaphors and illustrations. Thus, it serves as an easily understood introduction to the *I Ching* and a preparation for more intensive study, if that is desired. An Appendix is in preparation and will contain instructions for using the book for divination, which, of course, requires access to all 64 of the hexagrams. Until the entire work is completed, however, it can still be read for an understanding of this profound example of ancient Chinese philosophy.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Isn't the I Ching a pagan religious document? Isn't it contrary to the Judeo-Christian religion?

Not at all. The *I Ching* contains no religious dogma. It is founded on a belief in a Divine Creator, but it is compatible with *any* religion.

Q. Isn't the use of divination contrary to the Bible?

No, it is not. Proverbs 16:33 says, "The lot is cast into the lap; but its every decision is of the Lord." Many biblical characters used forms of divination in order to learn the will of God for their lives.

Q. Can't a person be led astray by the I Ching and encouraged to do an evil act?

Not very likely. The *I Ching* always counsels moderation, modesty and an opposition to what is evil. Only a person who begins with an evil intent is likely to distort its advice and interpret it as counseling to do evil.

Q. Has the I Ching been endorsed by reputable people?

Yes. The renowned psychiatrist, C. G. Jung, wrote a lengthy foreword to the Wilhelm-Baynes edition of the *I Ching* in which he gave examples of his own use of the book. He wrote about the book, "It offers neither facts nor power, but for lovers of self-knowledge, of wisdom--if there be such--it seems to be the right book."

Q. Does a person need to "believe in" the I Ching in order to use it?

Oddly enough, no. In fact, the best way to approach the *I Ching* is with the intent to consider and accept its advice *only* if it speaks to oneself in a meaningful way.

Q. If the I Ching is such a wise, wonderful and enlightening book, why don't more people use it?

Because it is a wise, wonderful and enlightening book. Also, because many people who might otherwise use it have little or no acquaintance with it.

1. The Creative Force

The Decision

THE CREATIVE Force is the very essence of the Universe. It is through the Creative, acting in time, that the power of the Universe is made manifest. It is through this power that all things come into being, whether in the physical world, or in the world of men. Thus, God acts through the creative power in constantly making and remaking the physical universe. All of existence has its beginning in this creative power, which in time manifests itself in the physical world. Man achieves success by aligning himself with this creative power and allowing it to act through him with its attributes of persistence, endurance, and progress in doing what is in accord with the universe, that is, in doing what is right. Success in the highest sense comes from this alignment with the Creative Forces of the Universe. It is through the Creative Power that man first conceives his actions, and after that concentrates on carrying them through. And when he follows through in alignment with the Tao, the way of the universe, his actions are imbued with that power and work their way through time to bring things to fruition. It is in through this power of focusing on the essentials that the superior man is able to accomplish great things. It is in this way that a man is shaped by the Creative and is able to inspire others.

The Maxim

The Creative is always in motion, hence time is its stage upon which it acts out the creative drama. Time is not the enemy, but rather the means. The unceasing movement of time is an expression of the unrelenting power of the Creative. The sage uses time to work out and perfect his existence, always focusing upon his objectives and avoiding distractions.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] The Creative Force is still potential and unrecognized. Nevertheless, the superior man is aware of the potentiality of this force and does not lose sight of the developing possibilities. He is not concerned about the absence of effect, because he knows that all is only at the beginning and not obvious to others. His virtue at this time is patience, and he does not seek to force something into being when the time is not ripe.

2. [9] The effectiveness of the superior man begins to show itself, but things are still in their earliest phases. His position is still modest, though others begin to realize that he is a man that can be counted upon. He is steady and reliable, and his singleness of mind means he is someone from whom important actions may proceed in the future. He is therefore someone to associate with from the very beginning.

3. [9] The superior man's influence begins to grow, and he is able to handle himself well. While others are able to relax, he remains busy with details and involvements. The danger at this stage is that he might get carried away with his own self-importance and lose sight of his mission and purpose. But the truly superior man is not distracted by the pomp and circumstance. He is able to visualize his goals and stick with them, thus avoiding the traps that ambition might lead him into.

4. [9] Now there is a crossroad; the superior man has a choice. He can become an important actor on the world's stage, or he can withdraw from it all and develop his inner self. He can be a man of renown, or he can be a man of great spirit. Neither is right nor wrong. It is his choice, and he is sufficiently developed to make the choice that is correct for himself. He will find, whatever his choice, that it works well for him.

5. [9] Now the superior man reaches the highest levels that any man is capable of. He is able to exert great influence, and is widely recognized as a man of spiritual achievement. While realizing this himself, he is not beset by pride, ambition, or other attachments. Others are glad to make his acquaintance and feel blessed by his presence.

Top. [9] Even in the search for spiritual attainment, pride and ambition can burrow their way in. If a man becomes obsessed with his own self so that he loses his way and his ties to others, he loses his essential humanness and that which connects him to the real world. Thinking more of himself than of his place in the real world, he ultimately fails.

All 9's. When all lines are nines, the hexagram changes into The Receptive, and the Creative and the Receptive blend together to form an inner strength of vision derived from the Creative, and an outer mildness of manner derived from the Receptive. Such a happy combination works well in one's relationship with mankind, and happiness and abundance are the result.

2. The Devoted Subordinate

The Decision

DEVOTED assistant may occupy a subordinate position in the eyes of men, but such a person is indispensable to the creative leader, who cannot perform every task and carry to completion every project alone. Often, the assistant has far greater skills in certain areas than the leader, but it is the creative leader who brings all elements together and pushes the entire work to completion, and the assistant needs the leader as much as the leader needs assistants. When both work together in harmony, there is progress and great things can be accomplished. It is only when the assistant resents what appears to men to be a secondary role, becomes envious and wishes to replace the creative element, that conflict and confusion arise and things come to a bad end. But by following the leadership of the creative organizer and seeking to contribute whatever he can to the joint effort, success can be achieved. Thus, the Devoted Subordinate finds fulfillment, not in a position of authority, and not one with significant recognition, but in the satisfaction of having contributed in an indispensable way to the successful outcome of a joint endeavor. The assistant does not push himself forward into the limelight, nor does he try to seize the direction of the entire endeavor. Rather, he allows himself to be subject to the guidance of others and focuses his energy on making the endeavor succeed. If necessary, he actively seeks guidance and concentrates on planning and the development of means so that his work fits into the overall plan. The ultimate goals towards which he contributes, however, are determined by others, not by himself.

The Maxim

The superior man in the role of devoted helper calls upon his highest attributes for the tasks assigned to him: loyalty, perseverance, dependability, and strength, so that he can ably perform his duties. He exhibits great breadth of character. He faces any crisis with assurance, and his motives are pure in that he seeks not his own aggrandizement, but the success of work involving others. Helping those who need assistance requires a sober maturity, friendliness, and even affection. There is a certain selflessness that finds great satisfaction in helping others succeed with their life and in their endeavors. The Devoted Assistant finds satisfaction in helping others to accomplish important tasks that he working alone might be incapable of. He is reliable, knowledgeable and hard working. He can work with and be of assistance to all kinds of people.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The worthy assistant remains alert to the first signs of deterioration in the endeavors of which he is a part. Since he does not have responsibility for everything, he can stand back and observe problems at their very beginning. Thus he is able to heed the early signs, take precautions against further deterioration, and keep things going smoothly.

2. [6] The subordinate accommodates himself to the needs of the creative leader. He supplies what the leader lacks, and thus makes himself indispensable. He suggests improvements and effective alternatives that enable the creative leader to achieve his goals. He has no motives or goals himself outside of making the work of the creative leader more effective.

3. [6] The effective assistant does not seek recognition for himself or his abilities, for he knows that to do so would undermine the joint effort. He may well have many assets that others are unaware of, and which he keeps concealed until needed. He avoids attracting attention to himself, because that can arouse resentment as well as all kinds of opposing forces that would defeat his usefulness. Even as an assistant, he may well occupy an important position. Nevertheless, his chief attribute is restraint. His aim is the success of the endeavors of which he is a part, not receiving credit for what he does. This will often require a considerable amount of working behind the scenes.

4. [6] In difficult times, one must act with great delicacy and avoid drawing even the slightest attention to oneself. Since he times are difficult, any degree of prominence is almost surely to be misunderstood or misinterpreted. By remaining completely in the background, the subordinate assistant can complete his work without anyone even knowing that he has been actively involved.

5. [6] If the Devoted Assistant is forced into a prominent position, even though he is not and cannot be an independent player, he must act with the highest degree of discretion, sincerity and dignity. These characteristics should reveal themselves, not in mannerisms or haughty attitudes, but indirectly through the way he does things and brings about results.

Top. [6] The man in a subordinate position who tries to assume the position of leadership brings down upon himself every form of opposition from those stronger than he. He causes great injury to himself, to the work he is supposedly a part of, and to all around him. Such

an effort to which he is unsuited by nature can only bring defeat and disaster to everyone involved.

All lines 6's. When the subordinate is combined with the creative, the attributes of both are melded together, so that the man remains steadfast and enduring while working in the pursuit of what is right. Nothing great comes of this, but then nothing harmful happens either.

3. Initial Difficulties

The Decision

The time for getting started creates special difficulties. Everything is in a state of confusion, and it is hard to know how to proceed. There are always obstacles at the beginning of any endeavor because beginning something new means disturbing the established ways that everyone has become accustomed to. But this is natural and occurs every time a man tries to initiate something, to encourage growth and to institute change. The result is always some degree of confusion and chaos at the startup. But if a man persists, the chaos clears up, new ways are established, and the difficulties are overcome.

All advancement is accompanied by difficulty, therefore the presence of difficulty actually holds promise of success. No great work can be accomplished without a struggle, therefore the man who wishes to accomplish something welcomes this struggle. At the same time, it would be foolish of him to try to advance recklessly. A difficult situation means that everything must be handled with care. Assistance at the beginning should be sought from others and active direction provided them. A leader in a new enterprise must blaze the trail and lend encouragement to his coworkers. It is his task to bring order out of confusion by plotting strategy and organizing resources. This requires skill in identifying problems, setting goals, and explaining those goals to others.

The Lines

1. [9] An obstacle at the beginning must be carefully assessed. No mere difficulty should deter a man from the goal he has set out to accomplish; but every problem must be dealt with and not ignored. The right kind of helpers are needed, but these can be found by approaching them gently, not demandingly.
2. [6] A helper who arrives just at a time of difficulty is greeted with suspicion. Is he a true helper, or is he seeking to exploit a difficulty? Even if he is honest, not every person who offers help should be welcomed. It is best to wait until the situation clears before accepting help. A man doesn't really know what kind of help is needed until he has a better grasp of the situation himself.
3. [6] Certain endeavors require expert guidance. A man is foolish if he tries to forge ahead on his own without the proper expertise. Better to abort the enterprise than to risk all on incompetence and incomplete understanding. A wise man does not try to fake his way through difficulties.
4. [6] A man senses his incapacity, but honor and duty demand he proceed. What to do? He must seize whatever help he can to assist him and go ahead. Acknowledging a need is not a

disgrace; rather it reveals a sober assessment of the situation. By bringing together the needed resources, a successful outcome is assured.

5. [9] The man is competent, but others are not convinced. Nothing he says can win them over. If he proceeds with small matters, he can succeed and later do greater things as confidence in him builds. But if he attempts great things in the face of a lack of confidence by others, he is sure to fail, because great endeavors require broad-based support.

6. [6] Overwhelming difficulties at the start make a man give up, and failure is unavoidable. Success never follows from a despairing attitude. No hope can be offered to a man who does not expend his best efforts. At best, he might try again later when he has sufficient resolve to tackle the difficulties.

4. Youthful Indiscretion

The Decision

ACTS OF indiscretion and folly are characteristic of youth, but unfortunately not confined to the young. The young man, being inexperienced, has no background of past experiences to provide him with practical wisdom and thus is likely to approach everything as a novice. He will often take unwise and unnecessary chances in the face of dangerous situations, or he may make repeated inquiries when sufficient information is already available to him to make a decision, if he will only study that information carefully. Lacking knowledge and experience is not a vice; but the inexperienced person should endeavor to find a trustworthy teacher and should cultivate the right attitude towards that teacher. This means that he should learn first of all to be receptive and not to resist instruction. This does not mean that he should believe everything that everyone tells him. But he should recognize his own lack of knowledge and actively seek to understand what he is told and explore it fully before turning away from it or arrogantly asserting his own conclusions. A wise teacher will wait for his instruction to be sought. He only wastes his time and does nothing for the inquirer if he tries to force learning upon an arrogant, doubtful and resistant inquirer. In fact if anything, he only provides the arrogant inquirer an opportunity to practice his ignorance and make it more firmly rooted. If the inquirer is argumentative and only asserts his own limited knowledge instead of seeking to understand what the teacher has to offer, the wise teacher dishonors himself if he even tries to respond. But if the inquirer diligently seeks to understand the teacher, not to assert his own opinions, and works toward his own enlightenment, then success is possible. A man's mind has no room for the teachings of others if it is filled with his own ideas.

The Maxim

The individual who honestly seeks to improve his own understanding will do so by thoroughly examining himself, humbly becoming aware of his lack of knowledge rather than focusing on the knowledge he already has, and carefully identifying and investigating every facet of the area of his inquiry. He should not hurry along, but should dwell on every aspect of his inquiry until he is sure of his grasp of the whole. Not until all areas of uncertainty have been eliminated should he move on.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A person who lacks discipline will not be able to devote himself to the intensive study necessary to master a subject. Discipline does not mean the forced performance of dull routine, however. That only deadens the mind and replaces true inquiry. Discipline means focusing one's attention on the object of study until it becomes clear, until it is understood and can be used. The young child is accustomed to play and expects everything to be fun. But the serious student finds pleasure in working on something that is difficult until it becomes easy.

2. [9] A kind man is patient with inexperienced youth. He is meticulous with explanations to those who find it difficult to comprehend. He takes it as his responsibility to help and encourage such persons, not to ridicule and humiliate them. With tolerance and inner strength, such a man is able to lead large groups of the young and inexperienced.

3. [6] An inexperienced person, seeking improvement, loses his way if he indulges himself in adulation of a strong man that he views as a hero. It is not by becoming a devotee of some admired person, but by developing one's own inner self that a person is able to find his true self. Hero worship is bad for both the worshipper and the object of his adulation, because it focuses on a personal, emotional relationship rather than on the development of independence. A servile relationship only leads to disillusionment.

4. [6] There is little that can be done for one who is caught up in fantasy and unrealistic expectations. Such a person needs to escape his imaginative world and return to reality. The best thing a teacher can do is to abandon such a one to his folly until he comes back down to earth.

5. [6] To be childlike in attitude is to be open to receive instruction. Openness does not necessarily mean being gullible. It means not being arrogant, not being resistant nor full of oneself and one's own ideas. Such a mind is easy to teach, and is the perfect soil for developing a flourishing intellect.

Top. [9] At times, it is necessary to take firmer measures with youthful folly when it persists. But the punishment should be mild, and its purpose must be to educate, not to destroy. The desired end is that the wrongdoer learns to act more responsibly and to abandon his foolish ways. But excessive punishment will only teach resentment and harden attitudes, not serve to prevent a recurrence. The purpose of punishment for pursuing folly is not to inflict retribution, but to change behavior.

5. Waiting Patiently

The Decision

THERE is a danger to be overcome, but it would be a mistake if one tried to rush into things. Those things that Nature and Fate bring must be awaited with patience. Nature cannot be rushed. Destiny unfolds in her own time. Not every occurrence is within the power of man. The man of strength, confident in the workings of the natural, waits with patience, but the weak man becomes anxious and agitated, loses patience and acts prematurely. This proper kind of waiting is not merely wishful thinking, because the man attuned with Nature has the inner certainty that things will come about. Moreover, his confidence

enables him to plan for and work towards a favorable outcome, and this enables him to be successful when events finally do turn favorable. Thus these three elements -- patiently waiting, planning for the future, and diligently preparing for the eventual favorable outcome -- not only help bring about good fortune, but also enable the man to accomplish great things. Really great things cannot be accomplished if the time is not ripe, nor can they be done with casual preparation. Impatience leads a weak man to jump ahead without proper preparation. But a strong man, surveys the field before him with his eyes on where he wants to go, and this enables him to take the proper steps in the order which they should be taken, and to stick with his plan in order to accomplish his goal. All of this also implies that he is perfectly honest with himself, that he faces squarely the course of action that lies before him, and that he then acts firmly and resolutely to bring these things about, all in their proper time. With this kind of patience, foresight and preparation, success is assured.

The Maxim

Confident in his abilities and in the movement of Fate, the man of strength does all that is necessary and then relaxes as he awaits the unfolding of events. He has no need for worry or anxiousness, because he knows that events will work themselves out in their own time and with whatever diligent effort as is necessary. He knows that trying to force things forward can only lead to failure, so he takes his ease and cheerfully allows Fate to unfold.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] At the very beginning, there is a sense that something significant is approaching, but it is not yet apparent. Under such circumstances, it is important to continue with normal activities and not to act prematurely. A premature move at this time is a display of anxiety and exposes one's hand. This could weaken one's position when the time comes to act.

2. [9] Danger gradually approaches, and all become aware that it is imminent. This causes unrest and questions to arise, resulting in disagreements and recriminations. If sharp words are not answered in kind, the feelings they display will develop no further. Those who stay calm at this early stage will retain the presence of mind to deal with things properly when they become full-blown.

3. [9] A premature move places one in an unfavorable position, which does not go unrecognized by the enemy, who naturally try to take advantage of it. But eventually they had to know anyway, and a calm, steadfast attitude that is fully cognizant of the whole situation will allow one to stay on course and avoid catastrophe.

4. [6] Now the danger has grown, and it is very serious. The worst is in danger of happening, and there is no way that it can be avoided. The only course of action is to remain steadfast and let whatever happens happen. Only by keeping calm and a well aware of all that is happening can the situation eventually resolve itself favorably.

5. [9] Even in the worst of battles there are lulls in the fighting. It is important to use these moments to regroup and prepare for the remainder of the struggle, being careful to keep the ultimate goal in mind. One must not allow such quiet moments to deceive oneself into thinking that the struggle is over and to let down one's guard. The person who does not

think ahead, who has no overall strategy, but moves only from moment to moment, becomes fooled by temporary respites, lets down his guard, and loses ground. But the superior man has a broader vision. He recognizes the necessity for taking time out to relax in the midst of an ongoing effort, but he keeps in mind the ultimate goal and the steps that remain to reach it. This brings good fortune.

Top. [6] It seems that the struggle has come to an end in the worst possible way. All seems to be lost, one cannot escape, and all the effort expended seems to be of no use. Things are now out of his hands, and at just such a time, help apparently arrives. But the help is ambiguous, and one cannot be certain of its meaning. Nevertheless, even at this time, when it seems that only disaster is one's lot, it is important to keep calm and steadfast, and not give up in despair. By staying on top of things, everything goes surprisingly well, and the disaster is averted. An optimistic attitude, even in the face of unquestioned defeat, can result in a favorable outcome, whereas pessimism usually brings its own expected ruination.

6. Divisive Conflict

The Decision

CONFLICT arises when a superior man is opposed by associates who are deceitful and strong willed. These people oppose him, and block his every attempt to progress. The only resolution to the conflict is some kind of compromise, and a man should always be alert for ways to settle the differences. Even when one is right and those in opposition are wrong, continuing the conflict only brings injury to all concerned, because both sides become entrenched and unyielding. When this happens, the conflict continues endlessly and eats away at the ability to work together on anything. Such a conflict can be settled by putting the matter before someone whom both sides respect, someone who will find a middle ground. As long as the conflict remains, however, it is not possible to accomplish anything significant, and it is better to bring everything to a halt until the conflict is settled. Great accomplishments require that people work together if success is to be achieved. Division and opposition within cause a dissipation of energy and prevents concerted action. If a man tries to push ahead in the face of conflict, he is almost sure to fail.

The Maxim

Conflicts can be prevented if the interests of opposing sides are taken into consideration from the very beginning. If there is a potential for conflict, it is important that those whose interests are likely to clash divide up the overlapping responsibilities fairly at the start, so that each person understands his rights and is clear on what he is expected to do. When duties are carefully and justly assigned, conflicts are less likely to arise.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] At the very beginning, it is best not to make a big issue of a minor conflict. Find some way to make a reasonable and amicable accommodation over the thing, before it grows into something big. Rather than push things to a definite decision with an adversary who has the upper hand, make a reasonable give and take adjustment. Then, even if some disagreement arises, it will not go far and can be easily settled.

2. [9] If the opposing forces are definitely stronger, and one is not likely to succeed against them, it is better to back-off and concede, rather than pushing things to an open conflict and being humiliated by defeat. An accommodating attitude is like an offer of goodwill, and all concerned are able to avoid taking sides in an open conflict.

3. [6] Seeking recognition for something that is not entirely one's own work only creates distrust and resentment. If one is really the source, then another is not likely to get far claiming credit. Nevertheless, if one is working on behalf of and in service to another, he should not expect to receive public recognition for what he does. His satisfaction comes from seeing that the work is done and that his superior is pleased to make use of it. Recognition under such circumstances is not appropriate, and only detracts from the final outcome.

4. [9] A person may be inclined to enter into a conflict because he thinks there is some advantage to be had, even when he is not entirely on the side of right. If he has the upper hand, he may succeed, even if unjustly. But such a course will not bring lasting satisfaction, and he should realize this and turn away. Only by remaining on the side of what is right does a man live with himself satisfactorily. And when he does this, things turn out well.

5. [9] One need not hesitate to place his case before a strong and fair judge who can be depended upon to do what is right. If one is indeed right, only good could come from employing such a referee.

Top. [9] If, contrary to all good advice, a person persists in conflict without relenting, it may happen that he is actually seen as victorious. In spite of all, he gets his way and overcomes the opposition. But it is as a pyrrhic victory that brings no lasting satisfaction and no good results. He will never be able to rest secure in his supposed accomplishment, and he will be constantly assaulted in his hard-won position.

7. Leadership of Others

The Decision

A GROUP of people represent an enormous amount of force that can be dangerous if it is not carefully controlled. At heart, this dangerous force is capable of anything, but it must be kept under strict discipline if it is to accomplish something worthwhile. Therefore, the leader of a group of people must be the strongest, most important element, and everyone else must be subordinate to him. Everything depends upon his strength as an organizer and planner, and his vision of the goals of the enterprise. He leads, not by brute force, but by the force of his personality which inspires his people with enthusiasm. To do his job, he must be entrusted by the governing authority with the power of his office and complete responsibility for what he seeks to accomplish. Any concerted effort, if led by someone not up to the task, can lead to catastrophic results. Therefore, it is important that the leader of such a group exercise his powers with care and discretion. A good leader does not expect blind obedience to his directives. As much as reasonably possible, he should explain the goals and tasks that lie ahead so that the people he leads fully understand the danger, the reasons why certain actions will be taken, and the results being sought. When a people fully understand the purpose of their mission, they can act in individual ways to promote the success

of the concerted effort. People cannot give their fullest attention and effort to an aim they do not understand, and they cannot be unified in their effort if each individual has a different idea about its purpose. By taking his people into his confidence in this way, the leader also helps prevent this dangerous force -- this basically unruly mass of people -- from getting out of hand and pursuing destructive ends. Above all, the group must pursue rightful ends in a rightful way. Moral rightness is as important with groups of people as it is with individuals.

The Maxim

The potential for great power exists in masses of people even when it is not apparent, even when the individual members go about their ordinary tasks. They stand ever ready to be marshaled into a directed force as needed for carrying out great undertakings. The leader of such a mass of individuals must be one who is loved and respected. A people who live under fair and just direction become strong because such conditions provide them with room for each to develop as strong individuals. Their well-being and happiness are an essential ingredient, because their best functioning is essential to the whole, just as the benevolence of the whole is essential to their best functioning.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] From the very beginning of a joint effort, right and justice must prevail, and the enterprise must be conducted in an organized fashion. The aim and purpose of the joint effort must be meaningful and made clear to all participants if their loyalty and enthusiasm is expected. Without this element of genuineness, the enterprise is sure to fail. The good leader, therefore, is careful to make clear to all members of the group the purpose of the enterprise and as much about how it will be conducted as is reasonable.

2. [6] He who fills the role of leadership must consider himself a part of the group he expects to lead. His fortunes are tied together with theirs and theirs with his, and he accepts responsibility for all. Only someone who can accept this great responsibility is worthy to be a leader. Whatever honors or recognition he receives is not his alone; it is bestowed upon him as the representative of the group, and each member should look upon such honors as being given to him also.

3. [6] If the leader lacks a clear vision of the group's purpose, if the members of the group are left to their own devices and have no clear understanding of where they are going or what they should be doing, misfortune is bound to result. If there is no proper leadership, if every member of the group is left to rely on his own inept or inadequate vision of the goals of the enterprise, how can it succeed? Without a unifying vision and a clear definition of means, how can a difficult objective be achieved? Uncertainty leads to wasted effort and time lost, and is a sure way for a concerted effort to become unraveled.

4. [6] Retreat is not a disgrace when one is up against impossible odds or an unbeatable foe. Rather, to continue to struggle against such insurmountable difficulties suggests a stubbornness or a failure to carefully calculate the chances for success, and this could only lead to a great catastrophe. But a carefully planned retreat saves the enterprise, avoids catastrophe, and opens the possibility for a renewed struggle at a later time when a more favorable outcome may be expected. A leader who continues in the face of certain defeat just to avoid

the appearance of cowardice is not strong but is weak, because he is being guided by fear and a misplaced sense of honor, rather than an intelligent and responsible assessment of the situation. The important thing is the goal of the enterprise, not a mere appearance.

5. [9] The leader of a group should be a man of thorough experience and vision. If a younger man with little experience who lacks a clear understanding of the problems that lie ahead is put in charge, all of the effort, which should be carefully directed, will lead to misfortune. Without a unifying vision and a central command, the element of danger which is inherent in any mass of people can easily surface, allowing the enterprise to get out of hand and people to indulge in destructive behavior. If uncontrolled, the struggle becomes a mob action and the purpose of the struggle degenerates into whatever each member thinks it may be. This is a prescription for chaos and disintegration.

Top. [6] When the end has been achieved, when the struggle is finally over, all those who aided the effort should be rewarded generously. But it is important that even faithful helpers not be given rewards and responsibilities of which they are not worthy. Let inferior helpers be rewarded with material gifts, but not with positions in which they may do harm and undermine the whole purpose of the struggle.

8. A Community Working Together

The Decision

A STRONG man in a leading position brings people together so that they can form a community and successfully work with one another. While the man is the central figure of the whole group, he is also a part of the group. The group needs him, just as he needs the group in order to accomplish what must be done, and a bond is formed. Although some tasks can be done by individuals working alone, most really great endeavors require the working together of large groups of people. Different people, all possessing different skills, can complement one another and provide an array of usable skills that no single person can possess. This cannot happen, however, unless there is a person at the center who coordinates and directs the entire enterprise, and that person must be well-qualified for the position of leadership. Being the center of the activity of a large number of people is a serious responsibility, and requires vision and understanding, a magnanimous spirit, a steady sense of fairness and justice, and physical endurance. These are exceptional abilities, and the individual who aspires for this position of leadership should inquire of the Oracle once again to be sure that he is qualified for the job. Anyone who is not fully qualified to be the center of a great endeavor will cause those associated with the enterprise to have a sense of futility, and prevent a more effective effort from taking place, and that in turn will probably make things worse than they are now. If an inept attempt becomes by default the only attempt, it were better that no attempt at all be made. But a well-organized program will attract competent people who might otherwise hesitate to associate with a wasteful and futile attempt. Moreover, it is important that a good team be formed at the beginning so that members will have a complete understanding of the development of the enterprise and will participate in the evolution of the group. A group working together develops skills as a group. Persons coming too late will find themselves "outside the loop," and may not be able to catch up. All members of the group understand the group's pur-

pose. But if a person has that understanding and is nevertheless not really qualified to lead the group, he should step aside and leave that job to someone else. He could serve as an regular member, or perhaps he could join some other group.

The Maxim

Social groups are able to stay together because each person feels himself a part of the group and shares with other members a common interest in all efforts to keep the group going. A true leader helps all members feel that the group's interests are their interests, and that they need the group just as the group needs them. This commonality of interests provides strength to the group and makes it a meaningful part of the lives of each member. It is this kind of beneficial interaction between members that enriches the lives of all.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The ties that bind a group together rest upon sincerity and an honest relationship with one another. If a person does not honestly believe in the group and its mission, he not only cannot be a leader of the group; he cannot even be a good member. But when this spirit of genuineness pervades the entire group, it attracts good fortune, and activities meet with success.

2. [6] If requests come in from authorities and the leader responds with perseverance and enthusiasm, he can bring the entire group along in a spirit of mutual engagement. But if the cooperative arrangement is just to use the resources of the group to win favor for the leader from the authorities, the leader disgraces himself and violates the trust his group has placed in him. He not only demeans himself, but he embarrasses the group as well.

3. [6] Not everyone with whom we come in contact with is a member of the group of our principal affiliation. It is important to form friendly associations with such people, but this must not be at the same level of intimacy as with one's own special group. Not everyone is entitled to such an intimate association, and to assume they are can lead to unfortunate results. Kindness and generosity is proper with such people, but not a sharing of confidential matters that belong to one's own intimate group. That would be a violation of trust and would undermine a proper relationship later with the group.

4. [6] In a long-established group, the leader is well-known and the respect and honor with which members hold such a leader may be openly expressed. But such expressions should always be within the bounds of propriety and not be overdone. Respect and loyalty are conducive to good fortune.

5. [9] A leader of a group exercising proper decorum receives others freely, but neither entices them, nor attempts to persuade them. All business is conducted completely above board. They come to him of their own choice, knowingly and without any pressure whatsoever. In this way, all associates feel free to express themselves. They are not being forced or pushed, they feel free to come and free to go, and they do not feel they must defend themselves from manipulative pressure. All relationships are open and without force, and if members join together closely, they do so because they want to. If the leader has all the strengths and qualities necessary to lead, those who wish to associate will do so, and the relationship works out favorably for all.

Top. [6] If a person is uncertain whether he wishes to be a part of the group or not, a good relationship cannot be formed. And if the association does not begin well, it cannot end well. Early on, a person must decide whether he can be a devoted member of this group or not. Lingering doubts and lingering mistrust are not the materials of a good relationship, and failure is inevitable.

9. The Power of the Modest

The Decision

EVEN the small and seemingly insignificant can have the power to restrain and control great forces, but such restraint is a very delicate matter and requires great finesse in order to pull it off. It is not a time for significant action using great force, because great force is being held in check by the prevailing powers. Therefore, a person must use the only things available to him: gentle persuasion, good humor, and diplomacy. This does not mean the situation is hopeless; in fact, it is filled with potential. But the obstacles are too great, and the forces arrayed against oneself are overwhelming. It is not a time for beginning a grand new project. Nevertheless, some success is possible using modest means and convincing reason, but it is not possible to exercise direct control over outcomes. This requires a strong inner constitution intensely focused on the goal, but a gentle outward manner that is inoffensive and conciliatory.

The Maxim

There comes a time when a man can have but little effect upon the outside world. He no longer has great influence, and his attempts at moving forward are met by the negative responses of his associates. Rather than waste his substance in repeated, futile efforts to force his way ahead, the superior man pauses and directs his attention to refining his character through quiet reflection. If association with others is generally unproductive, he enjoys moments alone in quiet meditation.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man of ability and strength is accustomed to forcing his way ahead. But when that path is effectively blocked, he leaves off being forceful, and remains in readiness to go forward or back as the situation requires. Good fortune will be the result, because he is not testing his fate, and he stands ready to utilize whatever opportunities open to him.

2. [9] The man is surrounded by people like himself who wish to advance, but are being held back. He immediately recognizes that were he to make the same attempt, he would meet the same fate, so he holds back and avoids an embarrassing set-back. Things work out well eventually, because he does not exert himself against the spirit of the times, but waits for a favorable moment.

3. [9] The situation appears deceptively favorable. The man thinks he has sufficient power to move ahead, but he is mistaken. The times favor opposing forces, even when they appear to be weak and inconsequential. The man cannot understand this, because everything ap-

pears favorable, so he makes a forward movement anyway. The result is an embarrassing failure.

4. [6] When a person is in a subordinate position, his greatest asset is honesty and truth. If his advice is consistently directed toward what is right and just, even though the situation is threatening and is potentially extremely dangerous, he need have no fear, because he knows that in the end, right will prevail. The powerful man listens to him and recognizes that the rightful path is best, and things work themselves out favorably.

5. [9] If a person has little personal power but is loyal to those with whom he is associated, he can nevertheless exert great influence, provided of course that loyalty does not mean obsequiousness and pandering. Loyalty receives confidence and trust from those to whom one is loyal. This mutual relationship combines the resources of all those associated together and is thus beneficial to all concerned.

Top. [9] Success is within the man's grasp, but it has been achieved by modest means and is such a delicate thing, it could easily be undermined by a bold move. Because it is so uncertain, it would be a great mistake if it were taken for granted and brought into being by a final display of forceful effort. It has been gained by holding back and being receptive rather than by exerting power. If, in these final moments, one were to suddenly switch and push forcefully ahead, all one's efforts would be brought down. The superior man is therefore content with the way things are going, the extent of success achieved, even if it has not gone as far as one could wish. To push it further will only bring it all down.

10. Proper Conduct

The Decision

A PERSON who must deal with another who is much stronger, or in a much stronger position than he, avoids the danger that such a relationship naturally suggests by behaving good-naturedly. He may need to place demands on the stronger person, but by doing it with good humor, the stronger person is amused and not offended, and takes it all in good humor. A genuinely strong person who is aware of his strength does not feel threatened by a weaker person, even when that weaker person importunes upon him. Only insulting and presumptuous actions evoke his anger. Therefore, a weaker person approaching a stronger person with pressing needs may find himself in a dangerous position and unable to force the stronger to comply, but he can obtain what he asks of the stronger by presenting his case honestly and straightforwardly, and with proper respect and conduct. There is no question in anyone's mind that the stronger could crush the weaker without hardly exerting himself, if he so chose. But the weaker avoids that fate by keeping in mind his lesser status, and by bridging that gap with a pleasant attitude.

The Maxim

When differences of status or position are inherent in the nature of things, no conflict arises. Men can never be equal in every respect, and men will naturally differ in every possible attribute. But difference in rank, status, or position within a society must never be arbitrary or based on favoritism or on an assignment using unfair or unrelated criteria. If it is, it is in-

evitable that resentment and conflict shall arise. But if a difference in rank is based on merit or inner worth, then people everywhere recognize that the difference is based on criteria that are fair, rational and reasonable, and they readily accept it.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man who is not involved in a complicated relationship with others remains free of any obligations. His simple life-style allows him to follow his own inclinations, but the simplicity of his activities means he does not have much influence. If he is content with that, all is well and good. He will accomplish things on a small scale without any problem and will enjoy the satisfactions that come from minimal involvements in the world. If, on the other hand, he is dissatisfied with such simplicity and has a gnawing desire to improve his situation, his interest will be in advancing himself, not in accomplishing something. Success in such ambitious undertakings means he will become arrogant and materialistic.

2. [9] If a man chooses the quiet life of a man of wisdom and remains apart from the turmoil of the world, content with his basic needs and not desirous of material acclaim and rewards, he can travel through life peacefully, untroubled by the earthly cares that beset those who seek greater involvement. He can observe the ways of the world while being uninvolved himself. His quiet life-style means he does not challenge the forces that throw the lives of other men into disarray.

3. [6] If a man chooses to ignore his own limitations and plunges ahead into worldly involvements regardless of the difficulties and his lack of abilities, he will overextend himself and expose himself to great dangers. Such recklessness is sure to bring on great difficulties and possibly disaster. This kind of commitment is justified only when a person must rise in defense of something that cannot be abandoned or neglected, or for someone to whom he owes total loyalty.

4. [9] The situation may be dangerous, but the man is convinced he has the power to prevail. Nevertheless, he hesitates out of caution and a natural fear of the possible consequences. His lack of confidence, however, is his biggest problem. If he has the capacity to prevail, he will be successful in spite of the danger.

5. [9] A man recognizes that he must stand up and take charge of the situation, regardless of how dangerous it is. But as long as he remains fully aware of the danger and carefully calculates his actions based on that awareness, he can succeed. Full awareness of the situation enables him to judge exactly what he must do at each step of the way in order to insure that everything works out well. Maintaining his attention on the danger will help prevent him from falling into it.

Top. [9] In the end, how can a man know if his efforts will be successful? It is to look at the consequences that followed from the actions he has taken. If the effects that follow from actions taken are favorable, then the results of the entire effort will be good. It is difficult for a man to understand his own motivations in everything he does. Often he acts instinctively, thinking that whatever he is doing is for the best. But if he looks at the effects that his actions have, if he observes the responses that follow from what he does, then he will know whether he is acting correctly and whether in the end things will turn out successfully or not.

11. A Time of Harmony

The Decision

A time of peace and harmony is conducive to advancement and prosperity. As in spring, all things work together to bring about robust growth. Dissensions evaporate as persons of different status are able to work together in mutually beneficial relationships. When the wise and enlightened are in control, even evil forces fall under their influence and are able to make improvements. Men's passions are ameliorated in such times, and their attention is turned toward worthy objectives. All that is inferior is pushed into the background, and the superior, taking advantage of the harmonious times, are able to operate freely. This produces a time of good fortune and progress.

When men are able to work in harmony and cooperate with one another, they are able to plan and organize their time and efforts in ways that are highly productive. Progressive ideas are welcome. Cooperative ventures are embraced. The abundance that occurs in a time of peace and harmony is directed towards proper ends, and resources are utilized efficiently. It is this harmonious relationship with even the forces of nature that produces great abundance, prosperity and success.

The Lines

1. [9] When a capable person sets out to accomplish things in propitious times, good helpers are attracted to the possibilities and join in gladly in the work that needs to be done. Good people want to be a part of a flourishing enterprise, and are gladly connected to the leader with similar objectives.
2. [9] Every person is able to contribute something to an enterprise, if they have a willing attitude. A leader, therefore, bears with those of lesser ability and tries to draw from them whatever they are capable of contributing. There is much work to be done, and some of it is quite difficult. Hence, everyone's contribution is needed and of value, and the attention of all should be directed towards the goals of the enterprise, not merely personal advancement.
3. [9] Good fortune never moves forward forever. There are always setbacks and periods of decline. Therefore, in times of good fortune, the wise leader is always aware that it will sooner or later run its course. And through whatever turns of Fate that come his way, he remains steadfast and focused on his worthy objectives.
4. [6] In times of success, the good leader is still approachable. He is not carried away by his good fortune and does not focus on his own advancement. He is generous to the lowly, because he knows that every man, regardless of his station, has a role to play and a contribution to make in this world.
5. [6] A person of great ability is capable of working under the direction of someone of lesser status without asserting their superiority. Such a submissive relationship is conducive to harmony and permits the accomplishment of necessary tasks.

Top [6] Change brings about the end of good fortune and prosperity. Decline is inevitable, and violent resistance would only make matters worse. All a person can do is keep to his

worthy goals and be supportive of those around him that are in agreement with his intentions.

12. A Time of Inactivity

The Decision

In a time of inactivity, the harmony necessary for the creative powers to function properly is not present. Any actions taken in such a time will be unproductive and futile. There is a time and a season for all things, and this is not the time for great accomplishments. Nothing seems to work; everything is in disarray. All the forces that promote creative activity are absent. Inferior people are gaining power, and the superior man is ignored and without influence. What is a superior man to do in such a time? Shall he become a part of the general level of inferior activity? Shall he throw in his lot with everyone else? No! Never! In such a time of decadence and decline, the superior man retires from the current scene. He holds on to his principles and awaits a time that is more conducive to their implementation, when his influence can have some effect.

The Maxim

When inferior people are in ascendancy, there is a surge of pointless, meaningless, inane activity that is all display, that has no depth and no significance. Men do not trust one another because they intuitively recognize the inferiority of others. The superior man may be invited to participate in this folly, but he should decline, no matter how enticing the offer. He knows that he can have no real influence on what proceeds, and to attempt to do so would only put him in conflict with the others. He would only waste his energies and demean himself. Therefore, he works on his own development in solitude rather than waste his substance in pointless pretense.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The superior man encourages associates to retire from the fray as he does. Such a withdrawal at this time promises the opportunity for personal growth and development and for regrouping at a later, more propitious time, whereas continuing with an active struggle in a time when one can have little or no influence will only result in embarrassing waste and failure. It is of much greater importance at such times to preserve one's integrity.

2. [6] There is no doubt that inferior people would welcome the superior man if he would join with them and provide much needed help. But he declines to participate, since he knows that there are no real gains to be made, and his participation would only produce embarrassing failure. Inferior people are always searching for something, even if they have insufficient depth to recognize and follow a rightful path. But a superior man recognizes that it is more important for him to maintain his integrity than to assist people who cannot be helped, no matter how much they desire it.

3. [6] Inferior people who occupy leadership positions undeservedly begin to recognize the tenuousness of their position and the vacuity of their philosophy. They are embarrassed by

their own lack of ability, even if they are unwilling to acknowledge it openly. This, at least, is a mark of some progress.

4. [9] The time of inactivity draws to a close. A man who assumes a leadership role on his own authority cannot fulfill the needs of the time. His efforts will likely end in failure. But a man who feels with certainty that his taking a leadership role is in accord with the will of Heaven and with the forces of Fate will be able to find a rightful path and will be a benefit to those who accept his leadership.

5. [9] The time of inactivity is over. The superior man returns to a position of great influence, but he avoids over-confidence. He does not rely on assumptions of his own powers, hence he is always aware that he may be inadequate for the task. He questions his every action and recognizes fully what would happen if things go wrong. He does this in order to be certain that what he does is correct and will succeed. By remaining so cautious, however, he is able to succeed.

Top. [9] Although the time of inactivity is over, it does not end without the active contribution of the superior man. Things do not bring order to themselves; someone must furnish the energy and the direction while keeping the goal in mind in order to lift things to a state of order. Therefore, the superior man overcomes the stagnation through deliberate acts, carefully planned and executed.

13. A Productive Association

The Decision

A MAN with an accommodating nature can bring intractable men together into a peaceful union by acting as a source of clear vision. Such a union has great strength, because it combines the purpose and vision of a quiet and modest fomenter with the capabilities of strong and competent performers. With such a union of personnel, great things can be accomplished and dangerous tasks brought to a successful conclusion. Men with such strong, independent dispositions cannot be united except for purposes that are important and beneficial to mankind. The leader of such a group cannot appeal to such people with purposes centered around himself, but must have goals that are transcending -- things that inspire men to give their very best to a higher calling. The leader of such a group, therefore, must be dedicated, inspiring, and with a vision that exceeds the ordinary. He must be able to "light a fire" under men, not with deception or false appearances, but with real insight and discernment. His is a quiet strength however, because the people he works with are not fools, but hard-nosed realists themselves. He cannot make headway with them unless he is able to reveal to them a direction that they can agree with unquestionably.

The Maxim

A group of competent people working together cannot attempt difficult tasks and accomplish great goals casually or incidentally. Any group of competent people has individuals with different and varying skills. Any complicated task that is attempted requires an array of abilities that are not found in a single man. If great deeds are to be brought to fruition successfully by a

group of people, their varying skills must be coordinated with the different demands of the task. This cannot be left to happenstance, but must be planned and arranged carefully. If every man is expected to help out without being given some kind of direction, no great task can be accomplished. Competent men recognize the need for organized effort and look to the person in charge to supply it.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] From the very beginning, duties and responsibilities should be clearly understood by all. When the group enters into actual contact with the situation, there should be no doubts or misunderstandings about aims and means. Any dealings conducted behind the backs of other participants could only lead to disenchantment and failure.

2. [6] The formation of factions within the group must be eliminated by all means. If the leader has his favorites, if others are isolated from the main purpose and left free to pursue their own interests, this only encourages actions that work contrary to the group's overall purpose. This will result in mediocre work and failure.

3. [6] If the members cannot trust one another, if factions plot against other factions behind their backs, the strength of the group is dissipated and they cannot come together to accomplish anything important. All effort is diverted into calculations of one group against another, and the great and worthy purpose of the whole group is forgotten. Those who oppose the group cannot be overcome with such divisions, and the group begins to disintegrate. In time, all the good intentions have come to nought.

4. [6] Eventually, the divisions within the group are seen as counterproductive. It is impossible to make advancement when members are at odds with one another. But happily, the futility of it all begins to be universally recognized. The group is unable to advance, but the causes are clearly seen. This is good, because faults that are recognized can provide insight into the means by which they may be corrected.

5. [9] Members of a group may be at variance with one another, but deep down, they realize that they are all on the same side. Problems arise, and they must deal with them, but they recognize that the best path for them is to settle their differences and find ways to work together. It is a hard struggle, but in the end, they are happy to be working together.

Top. [6] When the fire that was present in the hearts of the members has gone, the members find they are still associated with one another, even if the initial attachment has grown weak. The work of the group is not finished, but all keep working towards it, realizing that it is a worthwhile thing and that all should focus on completion, even though the enthusiasm is no longer present.

14. Modesty in a High Position

The Decision

A person in a high position who is modest attracts to himself people of great ability. They come to him because they know that their voices will be heard and their contributions can be effective. An arrogant, immodest person attracts sycophants who seek only their own

advancement and care little for great accomplishment, save as it advances their own interests. But a modest person can bring together great talents who have clear vision, and they can then unite to produce real advancement. Great men do not submit to tyrannical leadership, neither do they wish to enhance the pride of an autocrat; only a leader who will permit them to use and express their own great abilities can win their allegiance. Such a coordinated accumulation of great talent promises the highest degree of success possible.

The superior man who is modest becomes a great moral leader. Such a man must deal with matters of both good and evil. He shows direction, not by fiat and command, but by his offering of policies that genuinely promote good and stand up against evil. In this way, he brings all actions within the beneficial forces of Nature, and this can only promote favorable conditions for all he has influence over.

The Maxim

The superior man who is modest is capable of becoming a great moral leader. In the course of his working with others, such a man must deal with matters of both good and evil. He shows direction, not by fiat and command, but by his leadership in policies that genuinely promote good and stand up against evil. In this way, he brings all activities within the beneficial forces of Nature, and this can only promote favorable conditions for all over whom he has influence.

The Lines

1. [9] At the beginning of an enterprise, the great leader has not been tested and he is naturally free of mistakes. Yet he should realize that there are many difficulties yet to come, and that he must not assume he can expect great results just because things start off smoothly. He should pay close attention to problems as they arise and not succumb to overconfidence.
2. [9] The leader must know how to make use of the human resources at his disposal. By gathering to himself highly competent and willing helpers, he is able to accomplish far more than he possibly could working alone.
3. [9] A great leader who is modest devotes his talents to great works that will benefit all. He realizes that for his work on this earth to endure, he must give it away in this manner. The lesser man cannot do this, because his efforts are all directed to his own enrichment. As a result, the lesser man's works expire when he does.
4. [9] The great leader must associate with the wealthy and powerful. It is important that he avoid being caught up in their world of intrigues and accumulation. If he keeps his eyes on the work he wishes to accomplish, he will not be distracted and make mistakes.
5. [6] The dedication of the great leader attracts many followers. His honesty and commitment win them over. But the accolades of the crowd can induce him to lower himself to coarse and ignoble behavior, and thus undermine the great influence he has built up. Thus, a great leader maintains dignity in order to pursue his worthy goals.
6. [9] At the height of his achievement, the great leader who is modest receives honor and respect. His selfless devotion to the general good is recognized, and Heaven itself seems to favor him, because all that he does accords with the movement of Fate.

15. Modesty in a Superior Man

The Decision

A MAN who is modest will be honored no matter what his station in life. That which is proud and exalted is in time brought down, and that which is humble and modest is in time recognized and respected. This follows the law of the reduction of extremes, for whenever anything reaches its furthest point, it tends to move in the opposite direction. The fate of men follows a similar law, bringing decline to the proud, and honor to the modest. The same law influences the sentiments of men, for they resent the actions of the boastful, but are kindly disposed towards those who are temperate. The destinies of men are subject to immutable forces, but a man has the power to influence his destiny by aligning himself with those forces that will be beneficial and thus bring happy and successful outcomes to his life. Whatever a man attempts to do, if he is modest, he will attract to himself respect and appreciation from decent people. By working quietly and modestly, without drawing attention to himself, a man can accomplish what he wants to do without stirring up resentment and negative feelings. On the other hand, the man who broadcasts his accomplishments, who draws the attention of all to the ways he has been able to advance himself, will find that everyone is disinclined to assist his further advancement, and does everything they can to bring his progress to a halt.

The Maxim

Since it is the law of nature to reduce extremes, the superior man in a position of leadership brings down those things that have gone too far and brings up those things that have been neglected. In his judgments when allocating resources, he reduces those who have received much and increases those who have been slighted. In all things, he aims for a moderation that will sustain each one, but none at the expense of another. And if, for good reason, certain elements are temporarily favored, he later favors other elements in order to compensate. Thus, all elements, over time, receive equal nourishment and none have good reason to complain.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] If a man is faced by a difficult and complicated task, his work is made easier if he can do it without interference, and that is made possible by not having a lot of announcements and fanfare beforehand. Stirring up a lot of attention enables some people to think of all kinds of objections and reasons why it should not be done, whereas going ahead, doing it, and getting it over with avoids all those who think it their duty to oppose anything new.

2. [6] A modest frame of mind cannot but manifest itself in modest behavior, and this attracts good fortune to a man because it does not arouse opposition and negative feelings in those around him. Inferior people resent others who makes a show of their accomplishments, and do everything they can to defeat those they envy. But a modest man does not awaken such negativity, and this allows good fortune to come his way. He is able to exert great influence upon those who benefit directly from his actions, and those who are merely observers and could only offer interference have their attention focused elsewhere.

3. [9] Distinguished actions bring with them a distinguished reputation, but therein lies a danger. If a man takes himself too seriously, if he is too concerned with his reputation and his legacy, he becomes self-centered, and that can interfere with the work he is trying to accomplish. He stops thinking about the necessities of the work, and replaces that with thoughts of the necessities for his reputation. But if he focuses on the work he must do and remains modest, his attention remains where it should. By remaining modest, he wins the approval of those who can help him in his work. He is able to concentrate on the contribution, rather than the contributor, and this enables him to bring his contribution to a commendable completion.

4. [6] A modest man is able to share the limelight with his subordinates, and does not try to hog it all for himself. If he provides recognition for those working with him, he gains respect for himself, because that is taken as evidence that he is not just a self-promoter. The inferior person cannot do this. He thinks only of how he can garner recognition and acclaim to himself, will try to deceive others regarding his own merit, and will often take credit for something when it rightly belongs to someone else. And there are also those inferior men who avoid recognition for themselves or anyone else connected with them, mainly because they have done nothing and fear the fact becoming known or having their true merit scrutinized. But the superior man who is modest is neither modest to a fault, nor does he conceal the recognition due his associates. He carries out his responsibilities with care and balance.

5. [6] If a man is modest, this does not mean that he is weak and ineffectual. It does not mean that he will not take stern measures when these are called for, nor does it mean that he hesitates and holds back from taking charge when action is required. When he is called upon to act, he does so not from a position of personal authority, but from his being the person responsible for the position that he holds in the community. It is not a matter of some exalted idea he has of himself, but simply a matter of doing his duty with fairness and objectivity. Even if harsh measures are necessary, he carries them out with resolution and dispatch, but not as an egotistical assault.

Top. [6] When a person is attacked for failings or weaknesses, he sometimes thinks he is being modest by not coming to his own defense. But this is misplaced modesty. Or he may try to escape blame by blaming someone else, which is weakness and cowardice. Again, he may back down under pressure and withdraw, saying to himself that he is being guided by modesty. But that is self-deception. The superior man exercises modesty by facing a situation directly, boldly, and fearlessly, carefully examining himself and his subordinates for any faults. His modesty expresses itself in his willingness to be perfectly open regarding any mistakes he may have made and not pretending he is so superior that it cannot be he that is at fault, and thus blame must be placed elsewhere. In this way, modesty includes both strength and courage.

16. An Enthusiastic Following

The Decision

A LEADER meets with enthusiasm from his subordinates because they look up to him with honor and respect. He gains their respect because he understands the people he leads and empathizes with their spirit. It is this mutual respect and understanding that is the basis of

their relationship. Enthusiastic following unites men for the performance of great tasks, and prevents pockets of opposition and negativity from arising that might undermine the success of an endeavor. A superior man cannot obtain enthusiastic support for just any measure that he arbitrarily chooses, neither does he evoke enthusiasm simply on the basis of his personal magnetism. Evil men who lead their followers down wrongful paths base their leadership on such personal attraction. But the superior man bases his leadership on his insight into the minds and hearts of those he leads, and he formulates policies and issues directions that are in harmony with their own interests and character. Thus he leads along a path that is natural and agreeable with the forces of Heaven and with the best nature of man. When a man is in harmony with these universal forces, he follows the path of least resistance. Contrary to the usual understanding of "least resistance," this does not mean he follows an evil path because it is easier to yield to temptation than to resist it. Rather, this means that the superior man follows the path that is in accord with universal forces and that does not constantly meet with natural obstructions. It is not a matter of succumbing to personal weaknesses, but of moving ahead and avoiding external obstructions in one's path. The path of least resistance is the one that is favored by natural forces. Rules and regulations that are rightful and in accord with the nature of man find ready acceptance, whereas those that are contrary to what is natural only create resistance and opposition.

The Maxim

A righteous ruler recognizes the social customs of his people and the means of expression for the spirit of the people. People are united together by unseen forces. Whether in music or in religious observances or in any other social activities that enable the whole people to express their enthusiasm and devotion, a leader encourages such sentiments and participates in them himself. Such exercises, by giving expression to the people's spirit and enthusiasm, enable that enthusiasm to intensify the devotion of the people and uplifts their spirit. Great undertakings cannot be accomplished without this unity of spirit and sense of togetherness that participation in social activities and ceremonies creates. Divisiveness and opposition are eliminated by such activities in which all participate. The sharing of emotional experiences has a unifying effect.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A man who tries to impress followers with himself or his background in hopes of stirring up enthusiasm for some task in which he has an interest only invites disaster. Enthusiasm should never rest solely on the leader's personal qualifications or charisma. Those sycophants caught up in such hero-worship can easily be led down a harmful path. Enthusiasm should be centered on worthwhile goals and on the work to be done. It should be a dedication to a cause that unites people together and enlists their best abilities and the best aspects of their character.

2. [6] A superior man does not allow himself to be misled by a deceiver. While others may be taken in by tricksters, he immediately recognizes the ruse being attempted and perceives the intent of charlatans from the very beginning. He is not fooled by pretenders, but remains as steady as a rock. He does not flatter those leaders who would mislead him, and counsels those who look up to him for directions and advice to avoid becoming followers of such men. He detects the very first signs of deception and does not hesitate an instant in

making his exit from such a gathering. In this way, his path avoids sorrowful ends and leads to good fortune.

3. [6] If a man is taken in by deception and becomes an enthusiastic follower of a charismatic swindler, he will find himself dragged into an unfortunate outcome. He is in danger of losing his fortune and his sense of self-respect. Only if he recognizes the peril and seizes the moment to escape will things turn out well.

4. [9] A superior man can gather others together and win their enthusiastic support with his infectious vision. He sees clearly what needs to be done, and does not hesitate to take the leadership in accomplishing it. This clarity and his complete sincerity win people over, and they become convinced to join in and do their part. The feelings are mutual. The superior man trusts these followers, they trust him and his insight, and together they go on to success. He unites them, not through trickery and foolery, but through confidence in a shared vision.

5. [6] A man has the capacity to be an enthusiastic follower and to do outstanding work. He is sincere and wishes to dedicate himself to some worthy cause, but his enthusiasm is held in check. He is not able to make a connection that will allow him to function freely and develop; his readiness to contribute of his talents finds no channel that will properly utilize his abilities. But there is an advantage to this. He does not waste himself and his enthusiasm on some task that is not worthy of him. This obstruction to the realization of his powers serves a good purpose, in that it enables him to hold off until something worthy of his talents comes along later.

Top. [6] A man finds that his enthusiasm has been lavished on some task that is not to his credit. At first, his enthusiasm knew no bounds, but now he feels let down and discouraged. What he was enthusiastic about turns out to be an empty goal not worth pursuing. But if he has given it a fair chance, if he has explored it fully and finds it truly wanting, there is no great harm done. His contributions were offered honestly and whole-heartedly. He now realizes it was all a mistake, but he is still capable of stepping aside and directing his energies into some other endeavor. There is nothing wrong with that. His experience has made him the wiser, and he is free to go on to something more worthy of himself and to be successful with it.

17. Encouraging Followers

The Decision

A MAN induces others to follow him by showing deference and consideration, and by making the occasion a happy and productive one for them. Success comes to him, not from compelling others to follow through force or trickery nor from focusing on his own needs and wishes, but from adapting himself to the needs and wishes of those he is trying to induce to follow him. It is not a leader's self-interest that attracts others, but his accommodating and satisfying the interest of others that gives him great influence. It has been said that it is not from the benevolence of the merchant that we obtain the goods he sells, but from his regard to his own interest; but this is true only in a certain limited sense. It is the merchant's ability to adapt his wares to the needs and wants of his customers that cause the

latter to visit his shop. He would quickly find himself with few customers indeed if he offered them only what he wanted, and did not adapt his offerings to what his customers needed and wanted. He who would attract others to follow him must first observe first-hand and clearly what it means to be a follower and to have interests that a leader should enable him to fulfill. Only when such needs of followers are fulfilled will a leader have that enthusiastic agreement that is necessary if they are to follow his leadership. He may think that he can obtain some following by overt or hidden compulsion, and perhaps there are small numbers that will submit to such influence, but most are turned away by underhanded tactics. A general, enthusiastic following is not obtained by such means. Even then, however, success comes from appealing to the needs and wants of people that are conducive to what is truly beneficial to the followers, not what appeals to their baser motives. In all such inducements, there is always the moral element. But when all these conditions are fulfilled, great success will be the outcome.

The Maxim

The superior man adapts himself to the demands of whatever situation he finds himself in. He recognizes that there is a time for activity and a time for rest, for if he does not take proper rest, he cannot conduct his activities optimally. Periods of rest are as much an adaptation to life's demands as are periods of activity. No man can continued in a prolonged effort with a happy, productive attitude if he does not allow himself periodic occasions when he has a change of scenery and a time for recuperation.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] Times change, and a man must adapt to changing times, though always maintaining his principles based on what is right. He who does not change and adapt with the times soon finds his circle of followers growing smaller and smaller and his prospects growing less and less. Hence, it is important that the man not surround himself with just followers who agree with him, but that he go outside his own circle and listen to the views of all kinds of men, even those who disagree with him or consider themselves his enemy. He remains in touch with his followers, but he also remains willing to reach out to others and to know and understand them in order to maintain the broadest of views.

2. [6] A man must choose carefully those he associates with. If he wastes time with unworthy characters, he will not have time for more worthy companions. Moreover, unworthy associates tend to drive away those more worthwhile, who may be more discerning and particular than is the man and find such persons distasteful. Since unworthy companions tend to distract a man and lead him into unworthy actions, his inattention to the quality of his associates will mean that his efforts will come to naught.

3. [6] Association with persons of high quality improves a man's character and his fortunes. Though he may lose some companions who are uncomfortable with those who are more worthy, the loss is not significant and is more than made up for by the advantages he gains to his life and work from persons who have more to contribute. The right choice is clear, but still the man must decide: does he want to improve himself and better his opportunities, or does he want to waste his time and substance with persons who are unworthy and fritter away things that are important?

4. [9] A man in a prominent position may attract unworthy associates who recognize his good qualities, and he allows this merely because he chooses to overlook their inferior qualities. Such people, however, are only using him for whatever advantage it may bring them, and will do whatever it takes to win his favor. If the man surrounds himself with those kinds of parasites, he will surely meet with misfortune. It is necessary that he ignore their flattery and look beyond the feeling of importance such people give him. If he can focus clearly on his goals and the principles he knows to be important, he will be able to see these people as they are and not be distracted from what it is he wishes to accomplish.

5. [9] Every person stands for something, whether he has articulated it clearly or not. This is what defines his character, determines his choices, and forms his destiny. If he devotes himself to that which is honest and true, that which is just and right, and that which is beautiful and uplifting, his life will be enhanced, and he will find success and satisfaction on his path.

Top. [6] A man may have lived a productive life of service to mankind, he may have struggled with difficulties and improved himself until he now occupies a place of respect, and he may feel that the time has come to withdraw from the world of men and enjoy a time of repose. But if a person who fully appreciates the man comes forth and entreats him to take on yet another worthy effort, he may do so, and he and his follower will both benefit from the effort. The result will be a worthy contribution to mankind, together with well-deserved honors and recognition to the man.

18. Eliminating Stagnation and Decay

The Decision

A STAGNANT situation has developed caused by neglect, carelessness and procrastination. It is necessary to take some sort of positive action in order to remedy the situation. Nevertheless, the prospects are excellent, because whatever deterioration has been caused by a failure to act can be corrected by taking carefully considered steps to undo the results of the neglect. It is necessary, however, to take resolute action: carelessness was the cause, and carelessness must be eliminated. This is not the sort of thing that can be initiated with little aforethought, however. Situations that develop through carelessness invariably have long-developed and complicated causes. That being so, it is necessary to plan carefully the corrective measures and calculate the steps necessary to undo the messy situation with particular attention to its causes. Then, once corrective measures are begun, it is necessary to follow-up on the remedy and make sure that the careless ways that caused the problem in the first place have not returned. Carelessness and neglect are matters of habit, and habits are not eradicated at a single stroke. Constant attention over a long period of time is necessary before the care and effort that should have been employed all along now becomes habitual. The good news is that it can be done. It is not an impossible situation.

The Maxim

The superior man becomes a leader of others in two ways: he not only identifies weaknesses and decay in the people's attitudes, but he also points the way to a positive path that should be

taken. It is not enough merely to criticize and to point out faults and wrongdoings, although that should not be neglected either. But the superior man must do more than just condemn; he must also outline a better way that will replace what he has criticized. All human actions are capable of being improved, and it is often easy to criticize and point out the need for improvement. But devising an actual program of improvement is much more difficult. Encouraging people to adopt the improvements and providing positive reinforcement requires much more insight and ability, as well as a friendly attitude that is supportive of people when they take the necessary steps to improve.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The root causes of stagnation and decay extend back into the distant past. The habits that produce decline become well-established over time. But it is the nature of decay that it is unacceptable. Everyone recognizes it, even if only unconsciously they know that something is wrong. Therefore, the decay is not so well-entrenched that it cannot ever be corrected. But it must not be ignored. Only when one retains clearly in mind the idea of how things should be can the correction be made.

2. [9] Decline that arises out of inadequacy should not be condemned too severely. After all, a person should not be treated with contempt for something over which they have little control, something they could hardly help doing. The idea is not to execute judgment and make people feel guilty, but to improve the situation. And that is best done through kindness, encouragement, and every form of assistance that will enable those who have allowed things to decline to make them better. They must be shown the way, and helped to acquire the means to follow it.

3. [9] It often happens that, in pursuing the correction of long-standing mediocrity, a man pushes too hard. This naturally causes some unhappiness and even resistance. No one is perfect, not even the corrector of imperfections. But no great harm is done. It is better sometimes to push too hard than not hard enough. All will be forgiven when the situation is finally made better.

4. [6] Permitting mediocrity that is long-standing to continue cannot bode well. These things are difficult to correct, and it is always easier to let things slide and to continue with the same inadequate ways that have been used in the past. Everyone is used to the careless ways they have always worked with, and changes will require a major overhaul. If circumstances are such that increased responsibilities are bringing greater demands, while entrenched inadequacies are beginning to reveal how really bad things are, and *then* a person still is too weak or indifferent to change them, things will only go from bad to worse. This is a prescription for disaster.

5. [6] If a person lacks the ability to correct long-standing corruption, he should not just ignore the problem. Anything he does will be better than leaving everything as it is. He should solicit as many suggestions and as much help as he can find. Even if he cannot completely correct the situation, any improvement that he can bring about will be recognized and be to his credit.

Top. [9] Not every man need be a crusader or a reformer. Even a superior man, who is fully capable of correcting the decline he sees all about him and leading the way to reform, need not become involved if he chooses not to. But this does not mean that he should feel free to take the easy way out, sit back and criticize, and leave it to others to do the hard work of reform. As a man of superior dedication, it is not his option to do nothing. Rather, he should work on the refinement of his own character and aspire truly to be a sage, together with whatever dedicated activities such a path may require of him. This might well mean as much or more hard work than the job of the reformer. And this, too, has benefits for mankind.

19. A Time of Expansion and Growth

The Decision

A TIME of expansion holds promise of blossoming into a period of greatness in which a superior man works closely with others and is able to lead them into a time of joy, peace and progress. Although the times are favorable, it is still necessary to work diligently in order to take advantage of the favorable times, because they will not continue indefinitely. Right now is the opportune time to pursue an important project. Others are receptive to new ideas and will join in and help. Personal growth is favored. After the good times have run their course, there will be an inevitable decline of fortunes and a change to a time of no progress. But if the man proceeds with energy and determination in an effort to accomplish as much as he can right now, recognizing that less propitious times are down the road, he can be prepared for the inevitable change and not be suddenly overtaken by it. If one is prepared for a decline of fortune, the impact will be less severe. Just as autumn follows spring and summer, so the fortunes of men flourish and then decline. But if, like the squirrel and other beasts, one prepares for the coming change of seasons, it will be easier to endure.

The Maxim

A superior man is always ready to give of himself and to nourish and teach those about him. This he does, not because it adds to his sense of importance, but because he genuinely cares for them and feels joy in witnessing their success. He has genuine compassion and concern for all of humanity, and receives satisfaction from helping others to improve themselves and to find a better life. Because it provides so much joy to him to do this, he is without limits in his efforts on behalf of others.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] At the outset, the time is favorable for beginning worthwhile projects, and these are supported by some important people. Superior men are encouraged by this and gladly become part of the joint effort. But it is important that a person not be swept along by the general enthusiasm and lose his sense of direction. Only by persisting in what is right can good fortune be assured.

2. [9] If those in a higher position favor the expansion and a man has the ability to work diligently and carefully without the need of an overseer to direct his every move, things will turn out well. Although he is well aware of the nature of such times of growth and expansion and realizes that after a period of rapid growth, a time of decline inevitably sets in, yet he does not allow such sober thoughts to deter him. For the time being, everything furthers his advancement, and he goes along with it without hesitation, living fully in the present moment.

3. [6] In a time of expansion, a man enjoys the fruits of his abilities. He is at the height of his powers, has been able to accomplish great things, and he is viewed with honor and respect. But it is at just such a time that he easily slips into being overconfident. He begins to act

careless, as if nothing could reduce his position. But this is a mistake, and will surely lead to disaster. Nevertheless, all need not be lost. If he comes to his senses in time and sees the extent of his carelessness, he can begin to act more responsibly and rescue himself from an unhappy fate. The moment of weakness can be rectified, and any damage caused by his temporary lapse can be corrected.

4. [6] The superior man identifies competent subordinates in whom he confides, and whom he elevates to serve as trusted assistants. In selecting such persons, he pays no heed to judgments based on superficial distinctions and unrelated marks of status, but looks at their character, their abilities, and their dedication to the work that needs to be done. He puts such competent persons in positions of influence, and this move makes a substantial contribution to the success of his efforts.

5. [6] A man in a high position needs assistants who are able to help with the various parts of his activities. In selecting such persons, he is careful to choose those who are highly capable, and those who have the ability to work on their own without constant supervision. He then allows them to function independently, knowing that he can depend upon them to do what is right and to work efficiently for the success of the enterprise. He places his trust in such highly competent assistants, knowing that the best, most competent people are unwilling to work in situations where they do not have the freedom to make decisions and to act in accordance with their own best determinations, being responsible to higher authority for the results, but not dependent on those in higher positions for how to proceed.

Top. [6] The superior man who has left the everyday world in order to pursue the life of a wise sage may sometimes be persuaded to return and lead others for a particular endeavor. This is highly beneficial to all those with whom he works, for he is able to give them the benefits of wisdom acquired over many years of experience and through long hours of study. Such a return to the mundane world of man may seem like a lowering of his standing in the eyes of some, but it does him no harm, and it contributes greatly to the benefit of all concerned.

20. Contemplation of the Meaning of Life

The Decision

A SUPERIOR man serves as a leader and as a model of how to think and act to all associated with him. He takes this responsibility seriously and carefully studies the laws of rightful action and the nature of man in order that his conduct will be always correct. He realizes that others look up to him, therefore he seeks to set a good example. Whatever he does, he does with the utmost honesty and sincerity. It is this high level of integrity that most impresses those associated with him. Even if they do not agree with everything he does, they recognize that his intentions are invariably honest. Although the task is fraught with great difficulty, he seriously contemplates the life of man in this universe and wherein consists rightful action. It is this desire to look deeply into the nature of things that causes his influence to be as powerful as it is and enables him to produce a beneficial effect in the lives of all around him. He, in addition, applies his full attention and concentration towards developing himself, and this enables him to penetrate deeper and deeper into the meaning of life and to express that meaning in the conduct of his own life. Without doing anything directly

to affect others, his concentration has a profound effect upon them merely through his living example.

The Maxim

The superior man mingles with people and does not hesitate to join with them in the ordinary course of living. He observes people -- how they live, how they act, what motivates them -- not in order to control them or to influence them, but to understand them and to see into their hearts. But inevitably, his associating with them does have a great influence. He is enriched by associating with other people, but they are also enriched by his moving amongst them. His influence comes, not from anything specific he says or does, but from the totality of his presence.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] It is no disgrace for an ordinary man not to understand exactly what it is that gives the superior man the influence he has. This is only made clear by intensive study and contemplation. But for a superior man to be unaware of the elements of character that enable him to be a leader that people look up to draws into question his qualifications for being a leader. In order for him to fill a position of leadership, he should have a complete understanding of the meaning of moral leadership and how what he says and what he does influences others. He must see clearly how his life can be an inspiration and a guide to those he leads.

2. [6] A man of ordinary abilities is not able fully to comprehend how he affects others by the way he thinks, speaks and acts. In doing such things, he merely reacts to how outward circumstances affect himself and his own self-interests. He is not quite able to think in a broader context and see how others might think and feel about what he does. He does not judge right and wrong by how things impact upon groups of people, but only how things impact upon himself. In addition, he does not understand what drives another's actions and what another's motives might be. Here also, his concerns are all centered around himself, and he does not grasp what are the needs and wants of other men, especially if they differ from his own needs and wants. This is sufficient for ordinary persons who need not think of anything beyond themselves and their own immediate concerns. But this is woefully inadequate for a man who is responsible for others, for negotiating with others, and for making decisions that will affect the lives of others. Such a self-centered, inadequate viewpoint can only lead to poor judgments and mediocre outcomes.

3. [6] Ironically enough, a man begins to understand others by contemplating himself. Not, of course, by thinking only of himself and his own needs and interests, but by gaining insight into himself and how he is led by his own self-interest, often to the exclusion of considering the effects that what he does has on others. When he begins to see in these broader terms, he begins to understand how other men are often led by the same self-interests. But he also can begin to understand how other men have certain real needs and interests that his own self-concerns often ignore. With this knowledge, he begins to acquire an enlarged vision of not only himself, but of his place in the world of others. When he can do that, he can make decisions that encompass the interests of larger groups of people. His mind extends beyond himself, and he is able to think in more objective terms. He begins to under-

stand that self-knowledge is not really centered on "ME" but on the place that a person occupies in the world as a whole. With this broader vision, he can see how what he does affects others, and with that in mind, he can tell whether some particular action leads to the progress or the setback of those he leads.

4. [6] If a man is of such a high inner development that he understands those things that are conducive to the advancement and growth of societies of men, such a man should be taken in and honored with a position of great responsibility. He is able to judge those measures which are rightly taken, as well as those measures which are not conducive to the general welfare. He should be allowed the freedom necessary to act upon his wise judgments, and should not be used merely for his technical skills and abilities to promote policies formulated by others. His vision and influence are invaluable, and nothing should be put in his way that might impede his exercising command.

5. [9] A leader of men should subject himself to careful self-examination, and in examining himself, he should not just make a value judgment upon his own motives and acts, but he should look to the effects that he has produced. The opinions and criticisms of himself by himself or by others have little meaning up against the real results of the actions he has taken. Have the results of his actions been good? Has he influenced others to do things that must be judged good? Has mankind benefited by what he has done? Are the lives of people better for what he has contributed? If so, then he has every right to feel satisfied with himself as a leader and benefactor of men, for it is by the fruits of a man's life that he must be judged.

Top. [9] Whereas the leader of men looks to the results of his actions, the sage considers whether his actions are free from evil. The results of the life of the sage occur in the world of the invisible, and are not readily discernible by men. His influence operates on the spirit of man, and who can measure such an effect? He is free of self-concerns and is not involved in the day-to-day life of ordinary men. He heads no projects and pushes no great works to completion. But he contemplates the life of man and discovers that for him, avoiding doing injury of any kind to others is his highest good.

21. Breaking Through Obstacles

The Decision

AN OBSTACLE that stands in the way of the harmony that should characterize a group's activities must be forcefully eradicated. Only then can the work of the group proceed to a successful conclusion. Obstacles to group unity are not caused by outside forces, but by persons within the group who sow discord. Such persons do not genuinely support the group's mission and seek to discredit those who do. Persons of such a caliber have no place in the group, and the longer they remain, the more confused and demoralized the group will become. Moreover, these persons are not likely to leave of their own accord; they feel within themselves a sense of power in being able to disrupt the group and to stand in the way of an effective organization. They pretend that they are doing "what is right," but in truth they have no positive program. They are nothing more than obstructionists, and unless they are removed immediately, they will end up doing permanent harm to the group. Indeed, they may cause the disintegration of the group and the complete failure of its mis-

sion. Therefore, the strongest measures are called for in order to bring their opposing actions to an end. Nevertheless, these strong measures must be taken with fairness and justice. Physical violence or verbal attacks would exceed what is necessary, whereas a mere private discussion of the problem with the offenders would provide them with the opportunity to justify their actions and continue their disruptive behavior. What is needed is a combination of the two in which a full and outspoken explanation is combined with resolute action. This accords with the nature of the leader, who should be open-minded and friendly to all, but respected for his wisdom and just conduct.

The Maxim

Penalties for wrongful acts should be clearly established, suitable to the offense, justly and equally administered, and speedily executed. Laxity in any of these elements undermines the group and breeds disrespect for its organizational integrity. Such carelessness in fact encourages violations because it suggests that wrongdoing is not seriously opposed by the group, and the reality is, this is true! A social group that cares little about offenses that undermine the purposes of the group or that do injury to respectable members of the group, is surely a society that is in a state of disintegration and decline. If it continues down this path, the end result can only be chaos and downfall.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] The penalty imposed for a first and minor offense should be mild. The purpose of the penalty is not to destroy the wrongdoer, or to make a healthy relationship to society impossible, but to serve as a warning and to provide incentive for the offender to correct his behavior. A young man, prone to following the path of wrongdoing, can be diverted from that path, brought to his senses, and given incentive not to suffer even worse penalties, by being given a mild but real punishment for his first offense. If, on the other hand, he is let off too easily, he will be encouraged to commit additional offenses by the light way he was treated; and if he is dealt with too severely, he will be embittered by the unjust severity and converted into an enemy of the society looking for revenge. Only a skilled judge can determine the exact punishment that is proper for a given offender.

2. [6] When the difference between right and wrong is clear, and a person persists in doing wrong, it is easy to be excessive in meting out punishment. Nevertheless, no great harm is done, since some degree of punishment is surely merited, and the hardened sensibilities of the wrongdoer suggests severe treatment is appropriate.

3. [6] If a man lacks the official authority to correct a wrongdoer, and if the wrongdoer has no respect for him for that reason, the man may feel inadequate for the task and unable to be effective in changing the wrongdoer's behavior. Yet, wrong has been done, and some kind of correction must be imposed, whether it has a corrective effect or not. This might cause difficulty and embarrassment, and the wrongdoer may feel only contempt for the man, but he is justified in proceeding regardless of the awkwardness of the situation. No wrongdoer should be allowed to escape punishment just because he has no respect for the punishing authority.

4. [9] There are times when wrongdoers are powerful men themselves, and in powerful positions. Prosecuting and punishing them presents grave problems, and this places the man

up against a formidable opposition. But in spite of the difficulty, a man can succeed against powerful wrongdoers. Their great weakness is that they are in the wrong and deserve to be brought to task for their acts. Nevertheless, this requires that the man be firm in his dealings and inflexible in his pursuit of justice. If he recognizes the difficulties, and faces up to each one of them squarely, he will succeed in the end. Even powerful wrongdoers must be brought to task for their offenses.

5. [6] A situation involving wrongdoing may be clear, but it may still involve great difficulty. It would be easy, because of the complexities, to overlook the extent of the problem and to place limitations on those matters that are being investigated. But that would be a mistake. A person must be thorough, but remain absolutely thorough and fair. He must not pretend to ignore certain aspects of a problem in order to make the task easier, neither should he let a wrongdoer escape responsibility just because the matter is too complicated. The man's responsibility is to be honest, fair, straightforward, and thorough, and that is the only way that he can competently bring the matter to a successful conclusion.

Top. [9] If a man is beyond redemption, if he refuses to modify his behavior, and if no amount of punishments have an effect upon him, then he is truly in an unfortunate state. His wrongdoing has made him an enemy of society, and his obstinacy makes it certain that he will never be reconciled. Such a man will never find a fulfilling destiny. His situation will only grow more desperate with time.

22. Aesthetic Form

The Decision

WORK of man is enhanced by its pleasing form, but this is merely a matter of its outward appearance and should not be considered the essential value. As a general rule, a solution to a problem that has beauty of appearance will also be found to be the one that is well-organized and closest to the truth. Beauty of form, therefore, is the mark of successful completion. But if instead it is given the main emphasis, if the appearance is given precedence over the substance, then it defeats the purpose of the enterprise. The power and essential purpose of any intellectual or physical work is the content, not the outward appearance. Unadorned content, however, can be boring and not pleasing to the mind. Thus, outward beauty of form contributes a needed element to the final completion of any human endeavor, and none are really complete without it. But outward beauty of form without essential content is an empty shell -- attractive, but false and misleading. Human traditions, religious ceremonies, and national celebrations are enhanced when they are conducted in beautiful surroundings and accompanied with beautiful music and pageantry. But when such ceremonies lose their real significance and become mere show and empty display; when the celebration becomes of greater significance than the thing celebrated, such beauty is meaningless. There is beauty and symmetry in good speaking and good writing. There is a symmetry, and therefore a beauty, to the way things are ordered in time, so that chaos and confusion are avoided, and all the elements necessary to complete a work are included in their proper order. But all of this is merely the finishing touches to an otherwise solid and substantial work. Nevertheless, if a man brings beauty of form to his works of substance, he becomes capable of doing great things.

The Maxim

Beauty of form adds the finishing touches to anything that is done well. But it is a finishing touch, and should never determine the shape of the substantial work it graces. A man knows that his work is well-done when it has a beauty of form to it. But he does not add or leave out anything of substance just to make his work appear more beautiful. It is a way of ending things nicely, but it should not be used to determine what the ending will be. It is the essence of proper and civil conduct, but one does not make policy decisions based on which has the nicest appearance. The beauty of quiet contemplation is a necessary part of any man's spiritual journey, but the essential thing is where the contemplation takes him, not the contemplation itself.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A novice who is not really the kind of person who should put on a big show must take responsibility for his own progress and how he conducts himself. He avoids pretentiousness, and if there is an opportunity to pretend he is someone he is not, or that he is of a rank that he does not deserve, the person of integrity rejects such artificiality. He prefers to be who he is and present himself as he is, rather than gaining ground by being a fake.

2. [6] To turn one's entire attention to form and appearances betrays a certain ego-centeredness. Such a man is not bent on accomplishing any great and substantial work, but only in having the appearance of someone who is important. He spends all his time and effort on cultivating that appearance rather than actually performing the necessary work. Only when his own accomplishments are coordinated with the image he portrays is he without blame.

3. [9] After a man has made a certain amount of advancement, he finds himself in very comfortable circumstances. He is pleased with himself, with his life, and with all the fine things that his life has brought him. It is easy, however, for the pleasantness of his existence to swallow him up, so that he abandons the efforts that are needed for him to continue to advance. He loses the enthusiasm of the determined effort that got him this far. But his entire future depends upon his breaking out of this stage of indolent self-satisfaction.

4. [6] A man is faced with a choice: to continue to pursue life in the fast lane with its flash and glitter, or to return to a simpler mode of living that includes more substantial relationships and opportunities to develop his mind and himself as a person. He knows instinctively that the superficial existence is not for a man of substance, yet there are many aspects of that life that are enjoyable and that he will surely miss. The opportunities for a simple but richer life are before him, and the choice is clear, even if reluctantly made.

5. [6] If a man withdraws from a life of ostentation to one of simplicity and substance, he may find that there are not many who share his sentiments. He wonders what he has to offer to those who do, and after taking inventory finds that he has very little. But this should not deter him. It is not the flashy, ostentatious things that impress real companions, but honest friendship, good conversation, and genuineness of spirit. And this illustrates the difference between the ostentatious and the real. The former companions have no mind things that matter, and the latter care for nothing else.

Top. [9] The sage has perfect beauty of form in everything he does. But this is beauty without ostentation, and appearance without pretentiousness. Rather than being an outward, added element, the graciousness of the sage reveals his inner self, so that everyone who comes in contact with him experiences him in depth and fullness. His simplicity, tranquility and clarity are a window revealing the sincere beauty of his inner being.

23. A Time of Disintegration

The Decision

THE WAY by which inferior forces overcome those that are superior is not through a direct, frontal assault (which is not likely to succeed against superior strength), but by working gradually and through stealth to wreck the enterprise from within. If this goes unnoticed for long, the superior forces are eventually weakened and collapse upon themselves. When the times are such that inferior men are in ascendancy, it is inadvisable for the superior man to attempt any great work. The problem is to maintain oneself free from injury, and this is best accomplished by recognizing the bad times, remaining quiet, and waiting for a more favorable time to proceed. This suggests no fault in the superior man. In fact, his fault would be to ignore the signs of the times and forge ahead at any cost, regardless of the lack of favorable circumstances to support his effort. But wisdom is not so foolish and unseeing. Wisdom recognizes that there are times that are not conducive to advancement, and in such times the superior man does not foolishly expend himself when he knows it will do no good. That would be a complete waste of resources, which is not typical of a superior, man. Therefore, he conserves his strength, remains quiet, and waits the development of better opportunities in the future.

The Maxim

A man occupies a high position because there are others -- sometimes many others -- who look up to him for leadership and give him loyalty and support. He, in turn, is dependent upon them, for he cannot do everything himself. They, in effect, are the foundation upon which his position rests. If he withdraws into himself and, whether from pride, ignorance, or self-centeredness, fails to utilize this broad base of support as fully as he might, he denies himself the multiplicity of talents, skills and ideas that a diverse group of interested subordinates can give him. He then runs the risk of not being as effective a manager as he might be, and, indeed, runs the risk of a total failure of the enterprise he heads. Similarly, the people who support him have an equal duty to give their best to the common effort and put their hearts into the goals of the enterprise. When both conditions prevail -- the receptivity of the man in a high place, and the loyalty and support of those in a subordinate position -- both the man and his people will make their own prospects secure.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] When inferior men invade those people who are the foundation upon whom the superior man depends, they begin undermining his support and turning people against him. Those who remain true to him are attacked and their reputations besmirched. No one remains who is loyal to the man. He is nominally in charge, but there is nothing that he can

do. Disaster appears imminent, and there is no rescue in sight. All that the man can do is wait and hope that things will work themselves out on their own.

2. [6] Once entrenched, inferior people begin taking control and seek to discredit the superior man himself. He sees this, and is troubled by it, but there is no one that he can turn to. His subordinates have deserted him, and no one above him even cares. He faces the crisis quite alone, and his enemies are waiting for him to make a wrong move. This is a very delicate situation. Since the superior man is entirely vulnerable and standing alone, his best course is to avoid taking action and remaining out of the line of fire. If he were to vigorously defend himself and try to forge ahead, he would only meet with disaster.

3. [6] A man may find himself compelled to associate with evil people because of commitments he has made to others. It would be a bad situation, except if he were forced to deal with them alone. Fortunately, he has ties to a superior man who acts as a guide and inspiration, so that the evil environment leaves him unscathed. This means he is not part of the corrupt people around him, but that is what keeps him from himself going down a wrong path.

4. [6] When misfortune arrives, it cannot be avoided and must be endured. But even in defeat, the superior man adheres to his principles. He is well aware that all things are subject to the law of change. He remains true to himself, endures the adversity, and looks forward to emerging in time from disaster, just as he, in time, happened upon it.

5. [6] At last, the inferior elements that had been so threatening finally relent and submit themselves to the leadership of superior men. The inferior no longer seek to undermine the efforts of superior men, but back down, realizing that their best interests are promoted by the best people, not by evil designs. Moreover, even inferior men caution other inferior men to adopt the course laid out for them by the superior man. When this happens, everyone -- high and low -- benefits, and all goes well.

Top. [9] Finally, after the inferior elements have done their mischief, the time of misfortune ends, and the future holds greater promise. That which was intended from the beginning at last has a chance to manifest itself. With the inferior elements out of the way, the superior man is again able to move ahead and accomplish great things. His influence upon his subordinates is again established, and they readily follow his leadership with loyalty and enthusiasm. The evil man, however, is confronted with his evil, and it consumes him, because evil has nothing constructive to offer and attracts no positive rewards. In the end, the advances it attains through deceit and the honors it wins through dissimulation are all shown to be an empty shell, and the evildoer is humiliated. The inferior man, incapable of creatively pursuing what is right, true and just, contributes best to his own advancement by allying himself with the superior man, not opposing him.

24. A New Cycle Begins

The Decision

A time of new beginnings brings with it an occasion for hope. The old is put behind, and new situations and opportunities present themselves. It is like the emergence of the world into Spring: the cold, the darkness, the deathlike are all replaced with the bright, the fresh,

the lively and the new. New Beginnings are always encouraging because new situations are not tied down and burdened with the past involvements and tangled relationships that had grown fixed and irresolute. Now, with everything new, things may be more easily formed and shaped. One is free to decide on a new course for one's life, and then to see events develop in accordance with these new directions. Such opportunities for starting over are always auspicious, because new situations are much more easily controlled than old. The end of the old is not a loss, but a chance to experience the universe in its endless cycle of becoming.

Turn your back on the old! Cut off the dead branches, uproot the dead plants of last year, and nurture the ones emerging now! This is your chance to make a new beginning! It is not necessary to deal with the old and the dead by force; it no longer has power to affect your life, if you will only cut yourself loose. All that is new comes about naturally, without difficulty. All new developments come about through laws of their own existence and do not require devious or contrived methods. Things fall into place. People form new relationships and explore new avenues of cooperation.

Life springs forth anew. But all newly emerging life requires careful nurture at the beginning. By letting things happen naturally, one avoids over-expending the energies that are available. By proceeding with such care, the new beginning can develop into something wholesome and abundant.

The Maxim

Life is getting ready to spring forth anew after a period of rest. But all newly emerging life requires careful nurture at the beginning. By letting things rest and then expand naturally, one avoids over-expending the energies that are available. By proceeding with proper care, the new beginning can develop into something wholesome and abundant.

The Lines

1. [9] When a new cycle begins, there will be some mistakes. But these cause no harm if a man recognizes them and immediately turns away from them. The opportunities presented by a new beginning are not lost by minor diversions, provided these do not become fixed in one's behavior.
2. [6] A New Cycle does not begin without a man's full and active participation. Events will not force themselves upon him. Look to the example of others for the proper way to proceed.
3. [6] There are those who waver and try first one path and then another. This can be dangerous if it means abandoning what is right and falling into something evil. But if such experiments are done always with the purpose of finding a better and purer path, no harm will result.
4. [6] If a man is surrounded by inferior companions, following the right path means launching out on his own and leaving them behind. Such a loss may seem regrettable at the time, but a new beginning requires such a choice.

5. [6] When a man recognizes that it is time for a new beginning, he must honestly assess those faults of his that stand in the way and need correction. A new beginning is not possible without this kind of resolve, and he will never regret taking the necessary steps.

6. [6] If a man turns away when the time is ripe for a new beginning, he cannot avoid misfortune. He has failed to act when he fully understands that action is necessary. This demonstrates an unconcerned, wrongful attitude that cannot bode well. Opportunity has presented herself, and she shall not return until the next cycle comes around.

25. Natural Innocence

The Decision

A MAN is in a state of natural innocence when he acts without design or contrivance, for it is instinctive in his nature for man to act in accordance with the law of heaven and to do what is right. His inner nature will cause him to act rightly under all circumstances if his mind is not corrupted by calculated self-interest. His goodness, then, is intuitive and unintentional, because it is the open and automatic expression of his inner self, not of his conscious mind. The moment he begins to calculate his actions towards outcomes, personal advantages and rewards, innocence ceases to exist. When man's nature is overridden by his desires and his inner spirit is stifled by ambition, he destroys the natural purity of his humanity and becomes capable of all kinds of evil. And when he finally manages to completely quell this inner voice of innocence, he becomes totally corrupted, for his mind can devise all kinds of justifications for his own self-centered ways. But if he retains this innocence and keeps his spirit pure, it will guide him in all his actions and bring him supreme success. He will experience the certainty of one who knows what is right and what is wrong without having to make wrenching moral analyses. Whatever he does guided by such a spirit is in accordance with the will of Heaven, and attracts good fortune. Not every thoughtless whim comes from an unsullied nature, however. All too often, a man's nature becomes so darkened by self-interest and his baser motives, he is unable to hear the pure voice within; his mind becomes so corrupted that he cannot distinguish between good and evil. But that is good is that which produces good fruits: that serves as a blessing to all that a man touches, that does injury to no man, and that is not calculated solely to produce advantage to the actor, whether real or imagined. Those are the actions that are in accord with the will of Heaven and that bring progress and success. The other actions, however -- those calculated to produce gain to the disregard and injury of others -- may produce some immediate illusory rewards, but everything connected with the means for attaining them produces misfortune in the end. Such a path is not accompanied with the beneficial forces of nature.

The Maxim

Nature bestows upon all men those spiritual gifts that assist them to grow and to prosper in their lives, producing an abundance of abilities, talents and skills that benefit themselves and other men, together with a feeling of concern for their mutual benefit that enables them to promote the existence of one another. In a similar fashion, the leaders of men nurture those under their care, promoting their diverse gifts and their opportunities to contribute to

society, and thus to develop a broad range of various benefits made available to themselves and to one another.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] There is a certain charm in unstudied innocence that is found in children and even in older persons who are sincerely enthusiastic about a new undertaking. At the very beginning, their approach is unspoiled by duplicity, deceit and disingenuousness. They have not yet become victims of evil men and fallen into cynicism and mistrust. Such an attitude of refreshing honesty always bodes well for the beginner. He acts from the purity of a pristine nature and a good heart.

2. [6] The innocent mind embraces each moment for itself. It enjoys the task before it, without looking always to the attainment of some future goal or the accomplishment of some eagerly sought milestone. The man of pure nature does the best he can in the present moment, and leaves future outcomes in the hands of the universal powers that determine such things. For him, it is enough to be intensely engaged with this moment's task. By thus doing his part and trusting the universal powers to do theirs, the man finds success and fulfillment.

3. [6] Not even the innocent man remains free of adversity. Evil men may happen upon his path who gladly seize an opportunity to do harm to the innocent and unsuspecting. Nothing about the innocent man deserves this misfortune, but it chances upon him nonetheless. The evil person appears to gain at the expense of the good and innocent. Such gains do not carry with them the blessings of Heaven, though this is no comfort to the innocent. The innocent man must realize that evil people appear and gladly take advantage of what they perceive to be prey. He must take steps to safeguard himself and be sure that he avoids leaving himself open to the machinations of evildoers. He should protect himself, without abandoning his innocent approach to action.

4. [9] A man heeds his inner voice, rather than the voices of those around him. Only that inner voice truly understands the man, and can determine what is best for him. He seeks advice and information, of course, and never obstinately shuts himself off from the wise counsel of others. But it is he who must make the final decision, and he would be foolish indeed to act on advice or criticism from another that he did not agree with in his heart. Even in the most distressing of times, when all is chaos and confusion, and the right path seems entirely lost, yet that most reliable inner voice never really departs from us. And a man should never despair and abdicate the direction of himself and turn instead to the advice of another, no matter who it is, no matter how difficult and confusing the circumstances.

5. [9] An evil situation may arise, which is not of one's own making. But if one does not become a part of it, if one does not lend it support nor embrace it, one need not take active steps to eliminate it. Without support, it will shrivel and die on its own. The man only needs to see that it receives no sustenance from him. Evil exists always in the world, but no man can take upon himself the work of eradicating it all. He only needs to be certain that he does not support it in any way.

Top. [9] Even the innocent man must choose his times wisely. If the times are not conducive to forward movement, if nothing falls into place, if every tentative step forward comes up

against a stone wall, then not even the purest of disinterested actions are called for. The man holds back and waits for a more favorable time, without developing hidden schemes to win by force what the natural course of events refuses to allow. If one goes up against such natural opposition, how could success be achieved?

26. Exercising Great Power

The Decision

Creative energy is under contemplative control, and this enables a man to exercise great power. He occupies an important position, but he conducts himself circumspectly and with restraint. This enables him to act and to achieve great works. Because of his seriousness, others look to him for leadership and guidance, and he is able to nurture those who are his responsibility. They, in turn, honor him and rely on his wisdom. With so much energy at readiness, it is important that the man be active and accomplish as much as he can. This requires strength and the ability continuously to look deeply into one's inner self in order to remain at this high point of power. It requires that the man engage himself with others. Because he is in harmony with the forces of destiny, he is able to accomplish great things.

In order to develop his inner self, the man acquaints himself with the wisdom of the past. By studying the words and deeds of ancient sages, he is better able to understand his own times and the motives of other men. Thus, he is able to apply this wisdom in his own life and in the guidance he gives to others.

The Maxim

In order to develop his inner self, a man should acquaint himself with the wisdom of the past, which serves as a treasure from which he can draw upon for guidance today. By studying the words and deeds of ancient sages, he is better able to understand his own times and the motives of other men. Thus, he is able to apply this wisdom in his own life and in the guidance he gives to others, and in this way expand his understanding of wisdom from the past.

The Lines

1. [9] The man wishes to move ahead, but he faces great obstacles, and these prevent him from doing anything. The result would not be good if he tried to move ahead anyway, so he waits for a more auspicious time when his abilities will have a greater chance to succeed.
2. [9] Opposing forces are overwhelming, and there is no thought of making an advance. There is no other course to take but to wait, to conserve resources, and to move ahead when the possibility opens.
3. [9] A way finally opens for advancement and the man can move ahead with companions having the same desire for progress. But he must do so with caution, keeping his sights on his goal. Since the way is clear, it would be easy for him to lose control and permit things to get out of hand or to suffer reverses.

4. [6] The way is clear, and there is great energy in reserve for advancement. Great success is assured if the man keeps this energy under careful control.
5. [6] Great, uncontrolled force may be directed toward the accomplishment of great works, not by confrontation and direct opposition, but indirectly, through influence, persuasion and wise management.
6. [9] The height of successful accomplishment is achieved. All obstacles are removed and there is nothing to stand in the way. The energies that have been held in reserve are now set free, great works are carried to completion, and all come under the man's influence.

27. Nourishing Oneself and Others

The Decision

A MAN is in a position to enhance his own existence and that of others by carefully choosing whom he shall nurture and encourage, and by attending to his own development by doing all things in accordance with what is right. Every person can be judged by those with whom he chooses to associate and to encourage, and by those elements of his character and personality he chooses to develop. The lives of all men have essential and unessential elements; that is, certain aspects that are vital to their growth and development, and others that are trivial and inconsequential. A wise man does not neglect the essential in order to favor the trivial, neither would he do injury to the most important parts of his development in order to devote energy to that which is inconsequential. This is what distinguishes a superior man from an inferior one: the superior man focuses his attention on those aspects of his nature that are important, that improve his mind, and that foster the development of his character, whereas an inferior man focuses on silly, inconsequential diversions that do nothing for his mental or spiritual development and that do not assist in making him a better person. Nature provides the opportunity for growth and development to all creatures, but it is up to man to choose from all the possibilities available to him which ones he shall focus upon, and that choice determines whether he is an inferior or superior man. A great man pays particular attention to the development of superior men, because it is through them that he can have his greatest influence upon all mankind. He is glad to share with them his understanding, and to answer their questions, and this sharing becomes a model that works for the benefit of all. With inferior men, who ask questions only to display their own inadequate learning and discuss weighty subjects only to impress others, the great man wastes no time.

The Maxim

The superior man acts out of a spirit of determined tranquility. He is not indolent, nor uninvolved. He is actively involved in nurturing others and in fostering their own development along a rightful path. Yet he does this quietly, not forcefully, and bestows his effort on those who are receptive and can make use of what he has to offer. In a similar manner, the superior man attends to his own character by carefully monitoring his interaction with his environment, that is, by regulating the foods, entertainments, and cultural opportunities he takes in, and by allocating the aid and assistance he gives to others. In all these activities, he

endeavors to assure that everything is done carefully and with moderation. It is through such monitoring that he develops his character.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man who is in a situation to live simply and whose nature permits him to enjoy the freedom that comes from not being attached to material things and the worldly life, nevertheless abandons such a tranquil existence and turns with desire and envy to look upon those who are better off than he is in their material circumstances. Whereas those persons previously had some measure of respect for his simplicity and his choice of moderation, his lowering himself from his former state of tranquility only produces their disgust and derogation. What was previously respectable has been turned into the weak grasping after something undeserved. This turn toward inferior sentiments can produce nothing but failure.

2. [6] By nature, every man is an independent entity, attending to his personal needs, making decisions that affect himself personally, and making plans for his own continued existence. Under certain circumstances, when he is unable to look after those things for himself, his family or the community or those with a duty to take care of people who cannot care for themselves, step in and assist the man. If, on the other hand, the man is capable of taking care of himself, but refuses to do so out of indolence and instead relies on the kindness of others to perform that function, he puts himself in an awkward, dependent position and he dishonors his standing as a responsible human being. He loses his self-respect and also the respect of others. If he persists in this, he will enter upon a path of decline, leading to unhappiness and misfortune.

3. [6] The man who wastes himself on trivialities will find himself overcome with dissatisfaction, because he fails to fill his life with the things that nourish the spirit. He turns away from doing things that enrich the lives of others, or from working on things that enrich his own life, and instead devotes himself to amusements and diversions that have no substance. While such things pass the time and may bring momentary pleasure, they provide nothing that enables the man to connect to his fellow man in a significant way. He contributes nothing that is beneficial to others, and he does nothing that would make himself a more capable person. Instead he goes from one form of pleasure to another, foolishly thinking that his inner needs will be satisfied by such emptiness. Every man should enjoy a short respite from his labors now and then, and indulge in some form of relaxation that is pleasurable and entertaining. But to make diversion the whole focus of one's life will only lead the man downhill.

4. [6] A man in a responsible position has aims and goals that occupy his thoughts and energies. He enjoys what he is doing, and there are big things he wishes to accomplish. But the enterprise that so engages his attention is more than he can do alone, and he is always looking out for helpers who can contribute their knowledge, talents, or experiences to the effort. He is like a hungry animal, scouring the neighborhood, always on the lookout for someone who might know something or who can add something that would make the enterprise more successful. And when he finds someone, he goes straight for them, being his most convincing self in an effort to enlist their aid. There is nothing wrong with this. He is

not doing it for himself or his own glory, but for the work that he is promoting -- a work that will be of benefit to the whole community. He is a good, hard-working man.

5. [6] A man has the concept of a great work that he realizes should be done -- a work that would contribute mightily to the nourishment of mankind -- but he is not capable of pulling it off himself. He lacks the strength or the knowledge of the ability to do it. He only envies the goal, but recognizes that it is a worthy one. Although he would like to be the leader of the enterprise, and launch out on his own, he is compelled to consult with and seek the assistance of another who has the required strengths, even though this may not be fully recognized. If he works with and through this more capable man, the enterprise can be successful. But he must remain aware that he is not the one who has the necessary talent. A great work will not be accomplished, however, if instead he is led by arrogance or a desire for recognition and thrusts himself forward as the main force that is doing the job. To do that would cause the whole project to collapse and the great work to fail of accomplishment.

Top. [9] A truly great man has influence upon all those around him, to their great benefit. As a great man, he is not consumed with self-centered things such as pride or ambition, but is fully aware of the enormous responsibility that he labors under, for he sees how his leadership is an important part of the lives of these others, and he passionately hopes that their lives will continue to be enhanced by what guidance he is able to give them. If he remains conscious of this enormous responsibility, and is always focused on those he works with, not on himself, he will be able to undertake exceptionally great endeavors, and will be able to bring all along with him to remarkable successes.

28. Great Potential

The Decision

In a time of Great Potential, change is imminent and unavoidable. The outcome will be successful, but only if one takes the necessary steps to bring it about. At such a time, existing means are insufficient for accommodating that which is coming into being, and new means or methods must be devised for the drastic change needed. Therefore, action must be taken, and it must be taken immediately. Such actions require an in-depth understanding of the Great Potential if things are to be accomplished efficiently and successfully. This requires the best efforts that a person has to give, but the opportunity is auspicious.

Times of Great Potential require a man who is steadfast and willing, if necessary, to stand alone. Such a man will dedicate himself to the great task that is before him, even if it means turning his back on the world itself. His joy is in fulfilling the opportunity which these times present, and the trivial cares and concerns of the world are of far less importance to him now.

The Maxim

Times of Great Potential require a man who is steadfast and willing, if necessary, to stand alone. Such a man should dedicate himself to the great task that lies before him, and he should be undaunted even if it means turning his back on the world itself. His joy is in ful-

filling the opportunity which these times present, and the judgment of the world should be of far less importance to him at this time.

The Lines

1. [6] The very beginning of an enterprise in a time of Great Potential is when great caution must be exercised, because the beginning determines the foundation upon which further progress will be built. If the beginning is faulty, further efforts will be difficult or impossible.
2. [9] During extraordinary times, extraordinary events occur and unusual steps are in order. Making an alliance with those of humble position may be unusual, but it has the potential for unconventional gain.
3. [9] The arrogant and unheeding meet only failure in a time of Great Potential. Such a man cuts himself off from others who could assist him. Because he must rely solely on his own resources, he is unable to cope with the opportunities presented and meets with disaster.
4. [9] By enlisting the aid of those from a humble station in life, broad support for the opportunities that Great Potential brings is possible. But if a man diverts this confidence placed in himself to his personal ends, he is discredited and meets with failure.
5. [9] If the potential appears great but is in reality only superficial, the energy expended may appear to produce results, but they quickly dissipate. While nothing is lost, little is gained.
6. [6] The difficulties encountered in a time of Great Potential may be overwhelming, and success may be beyond reach. But it is never wrong to expend great effort in a worthy cause. Even if success is not one's lot, to make such a heroic effort in a great cause can never be justification for censure.

29. A Dangerous Situation

The Decision

A DANGEROUS situation exists that is unavoidable and not the result of the man's doing. By conducting himself carefully and properly, however, the man can extricate himself from the danger. When danger exists for an extended period of time, it is easy for a man to become accustomed to it and to adapt himself so that he avoids confronting the danger and remains in the difficult situation indefinitely. This is not good. By remaining in the danger, by compensating for it and adapting to it, a person reduces his own effectiveness and impairs his ability to succeed. He allows the danger to stop him from doing all that he should do. This will lead eventually to failure. The important thing is to recognize the danger, to understand it fully, to deal with it, and then to move on beyond it, not to linger in it. Only in this way can a man remain true to himself, fully employ his best abilities, and complete with thoroughness what he plans to do. By fully understanding the situation, the man can master it, perceive weak spots, detect ways of going around it, and devise ways of accomplishing his aims in spite of it. This will necessitate his modify his actions to some extent, but his purpose in doing so is not to coexist with the danger but to defeat it and to prevent it from destroying his mission. The ways of doing this become immediately apparent once

the danger is fully understood. Danger that is not simply adapted to can actually assist the man in his tasks, because it points out to him the precise things he needs to do and overcome in order to succeed. He does not inadvertently overlook something that could undermine his efforts. As a result, his work is of a higher quality than it would be if the danger did not exist. Establishing dangerous possibilities can also be used as a protective measure to prevent ill-meaning persons from destroying a work in progress. Ignoring danger, or allowing it to bring one's activity to a halt, is always detrimental; but danger that is recognized and dealt with is just another necessary element in accomplishing something significant.

The Maxim

The superior man influences others through his consistency and persistence. He never lets up, he never relaxes his standards. When he comes upon a problem, he stays with it until there is no doubt that the problem has been overcome. The inferior teacher is not like that. When his student stumbles and needs intensive work in order to overcome a particular area of misunderstanding or lack of skill, the inferior teacher simply moves on to something new without working with thoroughness in the problem area, and the student never acquires that solid foundation necessary in order to make real progress. Moving on gives the illusion of progress, but it is really a disservice to the student. Requiring the student to work through the difficult area and repeat the material correctly until it is thoroughly imbedded is the only way he can acquire expertise.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] If a man becomes accustomed to a dangerous situation and accepts it as "the way things are," it becomes a part of him, and is integrated into his personality and his way of thinking. When that happens, he has lost all sense of direction. He no longer can discriminate between right and wrong, and this necessarily leads to his downfall.

2. [9] When a dangerous situation first develops, it is not a wise move to attempt to escape from it at one fell swoop, nor should one try to accomplish anything important in spite of the danger. The first precaution is to avoid being overcome by the danger. The next step is to carefully assess the situation and study the danger. Then the man is in a position to gradually extricate himself from the danger, one small step at a time. Any sudden move would be too disruptive and would undermine his plans. But if he carefully and slowly worked his way through, he will find success.

3. [6] When there appears no way out of the danger, when the slightest movement forward or backward will only create increased danger, then the wise thing to do is absolutely nothing. This does not mean that the man gives up and accepts the dangerous situation as a given. Rather, it means he is conserving his strength and waiting patiently for the situation to change sufficiently that an escape route is revealed to him. But to force one's way out when there is no rational possibility for escape would likely mean disaster. Remain still, and wait for the proper moment to reveal itself.

4. [6] Times of danger require that everything be reduced down to basics. This is no time for elaborate rituals and detailed formalities. Such niceties only serve as distractions. What is important is the aims and goals that are threatened by the dangerous situation. The man

looks for help wherever it can be found, and when approaching others that might assist, gets right to the point. This causes no problem, because everyone realizes the urgency of the situation.

5. [9] The danger intensifies if one tries too hard. The best way to proceed is to select that path that is the natural one -- the one that faces the fewest number of obstructions. It makes no sense to increase the difficulties if an easier escape is available. There also is no point in trying to do more than escape from the danger. That in itself presents difficulties enough.

Top. [6] If a man loses sight of his goals in the face of danger and allows himself to become involved in the dangerous situation, becoming part of the obstructing forces and working together with them, then all is lost. He is trapped, and there is no way out. He cannot escape the misfortune that is his lot.

30. Dependence on the Powers of the Universe

The Decision

A SAGE who gives the light of understanding to other men must have within himself a self-renewing source of wisdom. This wisdom is not derived from the sage's own invention or creation, but from a harmonious relationship he has with the Universe. He contemplates the life of man in the Universe and the movement of Fate acting through the power of Truth and Right, and this gives him insight into the destinies of men. But these are not his own thoughts. At best, he is able to perceive The Way and to describe what he sees. Thus, by clinging to and being dependent on this relationship to the Universe, he is able to spread the light of Truth and reveal the Will of Heaven to others. No man on this earth is totally free. Every man is subject to universal laws of rightness which, if he goes against them, will cause him to suffer the consequences dictated by other universal laws. Real success -- not mere transitory fame or monetary wealth -- will come to the man when he recognizes his dependence upon these universal forces and determines to act in accordance with them. It is through this sort of compliant dependence that he acquires a deep insight into his own life and the lives of other men, and thus is able to find a proper and rewarding place in the world, all of which is based on an attitude of submission to the powers that work in him and through him, and not on his own arrogant sense of power emanating from himself. He makes no claims for himself, and this gives him great power coupled with quiet confidence and tranquility.

The Maxim

A great man is a function of Nature in the world. He acts not from personal force, but as a source of the universal forces acting through man. In this way, he is able to instruct and enlighten other men, and spread this brightness far and wide. But he does this as an instrument, not as provocateur in his own right. His greatness derives from the fact that he is able to respond to and express the power of universal truths, and that he is able to let these great powers work through him and shine through him. This enables him to affect other men deeply and profoundly.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] When a man first awakens to the proper ways of living, things are not clear, and there is some degree of confusion. He tries to discern the workings of fate and life, but his conclusions tend to contradict one another. With his day-to-day involvement in the world, everything descends upon him at once. Clarity is demanded of him, but it is difficult to come by. At such a stage, it is important that the man remain calm and not allow himself to be rushed. If he maintains his tranquility and contemplates each situation carefully and in order, the necessary clarity will come in time. It is the beginning where the greatest difficulty lies. Once he becomes accustomed to observing his environment with insight and wisdom, his mind will develop clarity and things will begin to fall into place. It is at the beginning that clear vision approached quietly and calmly is so important, because how can he develop the habits of mind that accompany wisdom if he does not begin carefully and thoroughly?

2. [6] The man is able to approach all things in his environment with moderation, and this bodes well. He calmly and quietly contemplates all his involvements and is able to follow the path of wisdom. Clarity is evident in all that he does. Calmness and moderation attract good fortune.

3. [9] The man contemplates his mortality and realizes that his life might soon be over. If he clings to this life, these realizations have a disturbing effect upon him. Instead of the sense of freedom that allows him to accept life if it comes, or to accept death if it comes, he feels profound regret at the thought of the passing of his life and the end of his existence on this earth. In his desperation, he may try to banish such thoughts by frantically seeking out all the pleasures that life affords, or he may withdraw into himself with self-pity and sadness. Either of those choices undermines the real meaning of growing older. The superior man is not concerned whether death comes sooner or later. He realizes that the important thing is what his life consists of as he lives it, and feels certain that whether the rightful path brings death sooner or later, he is determined upon that path and will accept whatever is the natural consequence thereof. His focus is on the acquisition of wisdom, and he welcomes wherever that search leads him.

4. [9] If a man in his anxiety to experience as much of life as he can, or to accomplish as many great works as he can, burns himself out too quickly, the lasting effect of his effort will be less than if he had approached things more slowly, carefully, and thoroughly. By consuming himself so quickly, he does not give his work time to settle in, to become well established, and to form a broad and solid foundation. On the other hand, a series of great works, developed over a long period of time, become well-established, like a monument. People accept it, become accustomed to it, and over time find it inconceivable that it should not exist or that something should replace it. But any kind of work, erected in a hurry does not have time to become established in the memory of man. As soon as the promoter is gone, the effect of his work is gone with him. Establishing a great work is not just a matter of getting it done, but also a matter of establishing it in such a way that it stays done.

5. [6] Big changes after great accomplishments can have a shattering effect, but the man who retains his clarity of mind and accepts the changes as a renewal of life meets good fortune. Others might feel that it is all over, that there is nothing left but disappointment and decline, especially when there are no present prospects for something more. But the

superior man is open to the turn of events. He adapts himself to the new circumstances and looks forward to whatever adventure lies ahead. His attitude of mind attracts interesting possibilities, and his sorrow over the wrenching changes is seen as a transitory matter.

Top. [9] The man who is called upon to remedy situations, to correct errors, to eliminate evildoers, keeps ever in mind his goal, which is not to destroy, but to make better. It may be necessary to completely eliminate those who are culpable and ultimately responsible. Leaders who should know better cannot be let off lightly. But it is enough if those who were merely drawn in to the debacle correct their behavior, change their ways, and reverse the path they were on. The idea is not just to punish in order to satisfy some self-righteous judgment or desire for revenge, but to change behavior and make the situation better, to enable things to work smoother and more efficiently. Similarly, in correcting one's own behavior, the purpose is to follow a more rightful path, and matters of little significance should be overlooked. If punishments are too severe, they defeat the purposes of correction.

31. The Influence of the Strong Over the Weak

The Decision

ALL SUCCESS in human relationships depends upon the proper attraction between persons. The leader is attracted to his followers, and the followers are attracted to the leader. The strong are attracted to the weak, and the weak are attracted to the strong. The husband to the wife, and the wife to the husband. This mutual reliance causes them to come together, to work together, and to find success together. Their natures complement one another and produce a combination that is mutually reinforcing and that supplies what the other lacks. This balancing of opposites can function within the same individual. An inner restraint coupled with an outward expression of joy produces an evenness of temperament that allows the individual to remain within the bounds of propriety. The influential relationship of the strong and the weak should not be taken as a predatory relationship in which one person takes advantage of the other and uses his strength to exploit the weaker member. On the contrary, the strong takes the initiative and honors, respects, and protects the weak, shows deference to the weak, and thus enables the strong and the weak to join together in a mutually beneficial relationship. It is this beneficial attention to the weaker member that attracts that member and produces a cheerful, joyous response in the weaker one. It is the spiritual strength of the wise sage that attracts his followers to him and that enables him to exert influence over them. And it is their need and receptivity that attracts him to them. By examining the affinity that beings have for one another, it is possible to understand the dynamics of every being and of every relationship in existence.

The Maxim

When seeking advice, a man must remain open-minded and receptive. If a man asks advice only in the hope that he shall hear agreement with the course he has already chosen, he cuts himself off from a source of influence that could be very beneficial to his efforts. If he asks only as a matter of form or because his superiors require that he seek a consensus, but then resents any suggestions for change that he receives, he will cut himself off from a valuable source of intelligence. If he arrogantly resents suggestions from colleagues or customers

and considers any counsel as an invasion of his private business, he has isolated himself from the kind of feedback that his business needs to survive. The interplay of influence is the essence of community relations, and an individual cannot ignore this flow of influence and expect good fortune to come his way.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] At the very beginning of relationships, the interplay of influence is hardly noticed. The parties are acquainted with one another, the possibilities of a deeper relationship are present, but whether the relationship will develop or not remains to be seen -- it may, or it may not. But as long as everything is in an incipient stage, no judgment can be made upon it. At this point, neither party is harmed or helped, whether the relationship goes forward or does not.

2. [6] At a later stage of an acquaintance, there is the bare beginning of a flow of influence, but it is not subject to the man's control. Whether the relationship proceeds or not requires the actions of others, and this is not a good way to begin. If this is allowed to proceed, the man will be subject to the whim of others, and the outcome will not go well. It is better for the man to wait until circumstances place him in a position where his actions will initiate and control the relationship. Then he will be in a position to properly exert his influence himself, and his ability to control the way it proceeds will mean that it will go well for him.

3. [9] The formation of a relationship has an emotional component, and this easily becomes the directing force. But if this is allowed to happen -- if whim or infatuation is allowed to lead the man into an involvement with another -- it will result in humiliation. Just because a possibility of a relationship of mutual influence exists doesn't mean that it is advisable; the man must restrain himself and act in accordance with his own reason. Just because another person with whom the man has a relationship wishes the man to do something is not sufficient reason alone; the man must exercise wise choices and not grant every request automatically. Just because the man is involved in a relationship with another does not mean that he should ignore his own intuition when it is contrary to the influence of that other; his independent judgment is the foundation of his individual freedom.

4. [9] When a man speaks from his heart, he has great influence on his followers, for they recognize the genuineness of his expression, it has a deep impression upon them, and it reaches into their deepest sensibilities. It is incumbent upon the man, therefore, that he keep his heart pure, and if he does so, he will have no regrets. His influence will be great, and the beneficial effects upon his followers will be extensive. When the man acts from the depths of his own being, when his motives are for the benefit of others and not self-centered, when he is conscious of those others and does not attempt to use them for his own ends, he will make no mistakes, and his followers will know intuitively that he can be trusted. When people are involved with one another on such a deep level, the emotional strain is intense and physically wrenching. But for intense emotional experiences of this caliber, it is only the man's followers -- those to whom he speaks directly -- who are influenced by him. Highly emotional involvements are limited to those directly affected.

5. [9] When a man's influence is under strict intellectual control, there is no confusion or misunderstanding. As a result, no one will be led into some unfortunate path, and there will be no cause for regret. If a man attempts to influence the unconscious mind of his fol-

lowers, the results cannot always be controlled, and it is not always certain where such influence might lead. A man who avoids those emotional depths and maintains rigid intellectual control over himself and over the emotional level of his involvement with his followers, also avoids all those uncertainties. Nevertheless, those who are not subject to such unconscious influences themselves cannot exercise that kind of influence on others, and the degree of the man's influence will be limited.

Top. [6] The least significant influence of all is mere talk and admonition. Talk is cheap, and anyone can tell someone else what to do and how to do it. But if such talk is not an expression of a deeper conviction, if the speaker does not put his whole heart into what he says and put his finger on things that matter to his listeners, his message can have little effect. This kind of "do as I say, not as I do" admonition is worthless and is generally ignored by the man's audience. If the man cannot speak from his heart, he might as well not speak at all.

32. Endurance in the Midst of Change

The Decision

A MAN endures, not by remaining static, but by encompassing movement and progressive activity. Because the universe itself is in a constant state of change, a man must also change just to keep up. Were he to attempt to endure by standing fast and unmovable, he would in fact fall behind as everything else moves beyond him. Therefore, he does not try to restrain himself to one particular position in order to endure. Instead, he adapts to the times and remains in a state of constant but consistent renewal. Moreover, this renewal does not indicate change dictated by outer circumstances, but change that is directed from within in response to the outer circumstances. Change dictated by outer circumstances has no intelligence behind it. It can as easily lead to bad as to good results. But inner directed change is fully aware of the necessity for change and responds to a changing environment in the right way. Such change is also aware of the mission that the man is engaged upon so that the aims and purposes -- the meaning behind his efforts -- endure even though circumstances and the means to deal with those circumstances are in a constant state of change. It is important that the man not be guided by fixed ideas, but that he be flexible and open to new possibilities. This permits the meaning of his efforts to endure even in the process of adaptation, and it is through this kind of consistent endurance that we can understand the nature of all things that endure in time.

The Maxim

Man is surrounded by change, yet through it all he remains man. His nature endures steadily in the face of every kind of turmoil. This endurance rests upon a consistent but flexible way of dealing with the turmoil, and this in turn requires great sensitivity to the nature of the turmoil that engulfs him. It is not through isolation or adherence to some fixed ritual, but with eyes fully open to what is happening around him that the man determines his responses and thus enables his essence to endure.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The works of man that endure do not come about quickly. Rather, they require much planning, a foundation that is constructed carefully, and a structure that is built laboriously over a long period of time. If a man wishes to build something overnight with the expectation that it will endure through the ages, he asks for a result that is contrary to the nature of things. Things that endure have longevity and solidity as characteristics of their every element, and those characteristics are not created instantaneously. They take time to become established and to grow.

2. [9] When a man's ability exceeds the material resources available to him, he naturally hesitates to begin something for fear that he cannot carry through on it because the supply of necessary materials will not endure. But if he can control his efforts and limit himself to the employment of what is readily at hand, there will be no problem. Just because he is capable of more does not mean he must do more.

3. [9] When a man's character is affected by forces in the outer world, when his attitude varies depending on the responses he receives from outside, he loses his ability to endure and to conduct himself with stability. This, in turn, creates constant distress, and he can never be sure from what quarter the distress will arise. This is the consequence of his lacking a reliable view of what he is about, a solid center that will allow him to act according to his goals and objectives. This lack of consistency will result in an endless stream of humiliating blunders.

4. [9] Persistent effort alone is not enough. To be successful, any effort must be directed intelligently in ways that are likely to accomplish the goal. Misdirected effort, no matter how much energy is expended, will accomplish little or nothing. An important part of any endeavor is an efficient and well-focused employment of energy. Men too often prefer to expend physical effort without applying their minds to the best way to arrive at the end. Thought should precede action, and certainty about means should precede the employment of any means.

5. [6] A subordinate should always follow the instructions of his leader or supervisor, but a leader must examine carefully the aims and purposes that are relative to any endeavor and let that be a guide to the direction in which he leads others. A leader cannot follow the directions of someone else, much less can he look to his followers for the path they want or expect him to take. It is no error for the subordinate to follow directions. But for a leader to be unable to discern what is the proper direction he should take and to look to others in order to know the steps that must be taken, is a disgrace. If he does that consistently, he is no leader. The subordinate expects to be told what to do and how to do it. It is not his job to do original thinking and discover new ways of doing things. But original thinking and discovering new ways of doing things is definitely the responsibility of a leader. To do that he must remain open-minded and willing to experiment with new and original ideas for accomplishing the work that he has set out to do.

Top. [6] A man who is in a constant state of turmoil, who is never certain about what he is doing, and always jumping from one project to another, or leaving one task undone to work on something different, will bring misfortune to whatever he attempts. Putting out fires is not good management of affairs. Stepping aside, quietly reflecting on overall objectives and carefully examining the way things are handled is a far superior way of accomplishing

great tasks. But running around and fixing first this problem and then that one as they arise is a method that never settles into an enduring method of managing things. Such constant activity actually prevents a studied way of management. It takes the place of an enduring procedure for accomplishing tasks, keeps everyone and everything in a constant state of uncertainty, and inevitably brings misfortune.

33. Strategic Withdrawal

The Decision

There is an ebb and flow in the affairs of men. At some times progressive forces are favored, but now the regressive forces are in ascendancy. In these times, it is useless for the superior man to waste his resources in a struggle with the regressive, inferior forces, therefore he withdraws from the conflict and awaits a more favorable time. In no way is this a cowardly retreat; he gives no quarter; he surrenders nothing. Rather, he consolidates his position in preparation for a more advantageous advance later on. By withdrawing, he removes himself from the possibility of attack at a time when he has little chance of accomplishing anything constructive.

By withdrawing now, the superior man is able to complete the work needed for further advance. Until that work is complete, he is potentially vulnerable. Incomplete preparation means the entire endeavor may be dismissed or disregarded, and such an initial rejection may make it difficult to be given a fair consideration later on. Let the inferior forces have their day; they cannot progress very far. In fact, their apparent advance only allows them to overextend themselves and to reveal how truly inadequate they are. Once their inadequacy becomes obvious, it will be that much easier to combat them successfully.

When he withdraws, the superior man does not give any acknowledgment of success by the inferior; he just removes himself from the fray. Therefore it is important that his withdrawal be his own intentional act while still in command of himself, and not a response to action from the opposing forces. He does not, in other words, withdraw because of being beaten back. This decision is a result of a careful assessment of the situation and of his own resources. The opposition, as a result, will hardly notice. Even in withdrawal, he gives resistance to random encounters from the opposition; but he does not aggressively seek those encounters. Not until preparation is complete does he launch a genuine assault. Till then, he remains quietly out of the range of fire. In this way, the inferior forces cannot use a conflict to deflect the scrutiny of themselves and their own inadequacies.

The Maxim

When he withdraws, the superior man does not acknowledge success by the inferior man; he just removes himself from the fray and places himself out of reach by the inferior forces. He does not actively combat the inferior forces; he just frustrates them and allows them to "stew in their own juices," and he does this simply by not allowing himself to become involved with them.

The Lines

1. [6] At first, the man is still near the enemy. This closeness makes him somewhat vulnerable. But if he remains quiet, he will in all likelihood be ignored.
2. [6] Some of the inferior forces will not be put off; they persist and demand attention. But such inferior individuals really seek a more constructive engagement, and the superior man accommodates them. Such minor actions do not disrupt the superior man's withdrawal.
3. [9] Being prevented from withdrawal by the insistence of certain opposing individuals is a hindrance and an annoyance. But by making use of these otherwise opposing individuals, the man can continue with his withdrawal, even if they are of little real assistance to him.
4. [9] In taking his leave from the fray, the superior man acts on his own volition, without antagonism or animosity. This is no problem for him, because his position is not diminished one bit. But the inferior opponent is not so well situated: without the structure and significance provided to the conflict by the superior man, the inferior man is left with nothing but his own inferiority to contemplate.
5. [9] When the time for withdrawal arrives, the superior man acts forthwith. Nevertheless, because his actions arise from his own initiative, and not as a direct response to the actions of his opponents, he can be kind and generous about it. Still, having determined the proper time for withdrawal, he is compelled to stick to it and not be deterred by trivialities.
6. [9] The time for withdrawal is chosen with absolute certainty. It is obvious that the time has come, and the naturalness of it and the lack of doubt connected with the decision create a sense of joy. With all elements in accord, the future cannot be other than auspicious.

34. A Position of Great Power

The Decision

A MAN finds himself in a position to exercise great power. He has the ability to lead and to wield his influence over others. The power of great men derives from their personal strength and their ability to take action. The danger in such power, however, is that a man may rely entirely upon his strength and his ability to take the initiative, and forget to temper his actions with a sense of what is right and an estimate of whether his timing is correct. Just because a man is capable, just because something is possible, does not make it a right thing to do and does not mean that now is the right time to do it. The exercise of power can only be justified when it is used correctly and justly. Evil arises when great power functions apart from justice, and a man can easily do something what is wrong just because the door seems to be open to do it and a forceful effort seems all that is needed. Every act of oppression, every violation of human rights, occurs when men possess power and are capable of taking charge, but care not at all whether what they do is just and considerate of the rights of others. Therefore, a man should look not only at his abilities, but he should carefully consider whether what he intends to do is right and whether it may be too early to act. When his abilities are combined with justice and a well-timed effort, truly great things may be accomplished.

The Maxim

The superior man may have the power to do anything he wishes, but he does not exercise that power in ways that might violate the norms of the community in which he lives. He voluntarily and deliberately limits his own actions to those that are in harmony with the established way of doing things because his greatness and his influence arise, not just from his own inner capabilities, but from the relationship he maintains with the rest of the community in which he lives. Were he to violate the established norms of that community, those actions would tend to diminish the respect that he receives and would cause those who have confidence in him to wonder if perhaps their confidence is misplaced. Violations of community norms are generally trivial things, and not worth jeopardizing one's standing amongst his fellow men. Therefore, the superior man makes this small sacrifice in order to maintain the position of honor that has been afforded him.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A man in a lowly position may have great personal power and ability, but if he tries to exercise it, he meets with misfortune. Ability is not the only factor to consider. In order to be effective, a man must be in a position to use his abilities in a proper and suitable manner. If he tries to act with force and authority that is not natural to his station in life, he will be seen as a self-promoter and a pretender, and he will be rejected with scorn.

2. [6] When a man begins to rise in the estimation of his fellow men, when he begins to move into a position of respect, when his abilities are recognized and a position of power is opening to him, he becomes capable of moving ahead into positions of trust and responsibility. But it is at just such a time that he must be especially careful. If he does not rise to the occasion, he is thought lacking in ability. If he forces himself forward too vigorously, he is considered pushy and over-confident. He is destined for good fortune, but only if he moderates his behavior and carefully -- and quietly! -- takes command, while avoiding being too aggressive in his dealings with others.

3. [9] When he is elevated to a position of power, the inferior man brandishes his power and revels in making a display before everyone of his authority. But this causes him to become entangled in all kinds of reactions and resentments with his associates. He is not respected for this, but is looked upon as a faker who is trying to impress those around him with his new position and authority. The superior man, on the other hand, retains his equanimity and avoids phony displays of power. He realizes that he will be respected for the way he exercises his powers when necessity calls them forth, or when some crisis demands his action, not when he arbitrarily makes a display of his authority. He avoids the empty appearance of power and authority and thus gains the respect of his peers.

4. [9] When a man first ascends to a position of power, he meets with some small amounts of resistance and perhaps even resentment. He comes in as an unknown quantity, and his subordinates are not sure that he can be relied upon to fully exercise the authority of his new position. But if he moves ahead as necessity demands, dealing directly with problems and with whatever challenges to his authority as they arise without shrinking from them for a moment, in time he will be successful. Obstructions will fade away, and any thought that he may have been too forceful in dealing with them will evaporate. He need not rant and rave or explode into rages. Such open displays create problems of their own as associ-

ates feel insulted, humiliated, or dealt with unfairly. All that is required is a quiet and persistent attention to each problem as it arises. Eventually, his persistence will pay off, and his quiet but determined style will be respected.

5. [9] If a man once felt that emotional displays were necessary in order for his authority to be respected, he should realize that such excesses actually do no good. It may appear that this behavior got results, but the truth is, the man can drop such demonstrations and everyone, including himself, will be the happier for it. Outward emotional displays actually indicate a weakness within because the man fears being taken advantage of if he does not continually come on with a belligerent, aggressive attitude. This is just not so. The man should relax. If he will approach problems on a one-on-one basis and never fear coming to grips with exactly what is wrong, never backing off for fear of putting someone on the spot, life will be easier for him and all associated with him, and everything will be done more efficiently than before.

Top. [9] If a man forges ahead relentlessly, he eventually arrives at a point where he encounters nothing but difficulties. He cannot go forward, and it is not feasible to go backward. He has pushed so hard, and the situation has become so complex as a result of it, there is nothing that he or anyone else can do. No matter what he tries, things only get worse, and the man is at his wit's end. The solution? Stop! Step aside, look at the situation, and take a moratorium. Let the matter rest, and in time it will sort itself out. It is not so that every problem must be met with some form of active move. Sometimes the wisest thing to do is to do nothing.

35. Rapid Progress

The Decision

It is a time of expansion, of ever-widening influence. Persons in powerful positions look to those who can influence others and can muster their loyalty. Such a man acts as an intermediary, connecting the powerful to the masses, and the masses to their rightful leaders. He is honored and well-rewarded for this invaluable service. He is able to influence the masses because he is a man of the people, and their most fundamental interests are his interests. He is well-received by the powerful because he is a modest man and does not seek power for himself or to promote his own private interests. He is able to be such a trusted intermediary because he has wisdom and insight. All of these factors work together to produce unhindered, significant progress.

A man of influence in a time of progress must be a man of clarity and insight. The more he purifies himself, the greater is his influence. Man's nature is naturally pure and uncontaminated, but it becomes obscured by a pursuit of power over people and a lust for material things. A superior man is not consumed by such desires, and is able to act with disinterest. Those with whom he comes in contact realize instinctively that he can be trusted.

The Lines

1. [6] Even though everything is set for Rapid Progress, there is an air of uncertainty. The disinterested man is not sure that he will be accepted and trusted; others may turn him

away. But he is not disturbed by this possibility. He continues on a rightful path, without trying to force his way. Eventually, his integrity will be recognized, and all will turn out well.

2. [6] Rapid Progress is prevented by someone in a powerful position. This is a great disappointment, but the man is not deterred. He keeps on his rightful path, and eventually the powerful man recognizes his great assets and rewards him.

3. [6] A man is unable to proceed on his own, but luckily he has many supporters who urge him on. With their support, he is able to make progress in spite of all adversity.

4. [9] A time of Rapid Progress often provides opportunities for wrongful gain. If a man succumbs to such temptations, he runs great risk in eventually having his actions brought to light. A superior man avoids making progress through improper means.

5. [6] If a person in an influential position does not take advantage of opportunities to promote his private interests, he should not entertain regrets. It is far more important to maintain the confidence others place in him and not throw his influence away by pursuing self-enrichment. Such opportunities are trivial compared to his main mission.

6. [9] There is a time when progress demands that a man stand firm and forcefully oppose resistance based on erroneous ideas. This is risky--but proper--when dealing with ones close associates; but it can only lead to reversals if strangers are handled in this way.

36. A Time of Diminished Influence

The Decision

A MAN of inferior nature gains a position of authority and is able to do injury to the superior man. But this does not mean that the superior man should relinquish his principles and give in to this adverse situation. If his ability to act is curtailed and his influence has no effect, he nevertheless remains inwardly firm. He does not allow his basic principles to be altered by adverse external circumstances. If he finds it necessary to work with others, he does so, although he does not share their convictions. Outwardly, he does not make trouble, because there is no chance that he might be successful. He avoids contention and does not threaten the opposition. It is not within his power to effectively oppose the inferior man, so he does not mount a resistance in an effort to overthrow him, and does not even actively oppose him. But he does not lend his weight in support of the inferior man's principles, while he keeps his opposition hidden. He remains steady by refraining from actively giving his support to the inferior man. Since the superior man is not in a position to impose his will upon the conduct of affairs, he remains steadfast but quiet, keeping his aims and purposes within and patiently waiting for the times to change and for his influence to be effective once again. Those who hold to the same principles as the superior man will naturally gravitate towards him without his having to make a display of his non-support or actively seeking to convince them. All should understand, however, that these circumstances indicate the time is not ripe to take affirmative steps.

The Maxim

In times that are not favorable to the progress of superior men, those men withdraw and do not try to force their views on those around them. They realize that to do so would only intensify the opposition and make the situation more difficult. They remain apart from the opposing forces, but they do not openly castigate them or try to arouse additional opposition against them. They realize that this is not a time to correct the behavior of others and generally try to keep relationships smooth and free from contention. But at the same time, they keep themselves from being infected by the unfavorable times.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man may attempt to overcome the adverse times in spite of the fact that his influence has diminished, but he cannot. The forces opposed to him are stronger than he is. He is forced to back down and avoid the conflict. There is no one who will receive him and give him encouragement. Since he holds to his principles and stays focused on his goals in a time when all are opposed to him, he is forced to remain isolated, to rely solely on his own resources, and to endure being an outcast.

2. [6] The superior man is in a subordinate position, and he is held back by those above him. Nevertheless, he is able to do some good to the few that are still his supporters, in spite of the difficulties. He helps as many as he can and is unconcerned about his own problems. Such selfless generosity brings good fortune, and he finds success in spite of the difficult times.

3. [9] The superior man persists in his struggle to accomplish something, and, apparently by chance, he gains the advantage over the inferior leader. The darker forces, long entrenched, are finally overcome. But the superior man must move carefully and make changes slowly. Old ways, well established, are difficult to replace, and at first, the new is very fragile. Drastic changes would likely end in chaos and disaster if introduced all at once.

4. [6] The superior man gains insight into the very heart of the inferior man's operation. He sees the inner dynamics, the way things have been managed, the way business has been conducted, and realizes that there is no chance of correcting the situation. This is truly a bad situation, and there is no possibility that it can survive. The best that he can do is protect himself and his associates by withdrawing completely from the whole operation before the full extent of the disaster becomes generally known.

5. [6] The superior man recognizes fully how bad the situation is, but he is not free to abandon it. He is compelled to stay on, even though he does not believe in it, even though he knows that no good will come of it all. All that he can do is maintain his own integrity and allow himself to be present, but not a participant. If he remains true to himself and acts with great caution, he will prevent himself from being caught up in the developing danger.

Top. [6] The inferior elements seem invincible. It is so powerful, superior men seem helpless before it. It has succeeded in winning against decency and seemingly has completely vanquished the superior man. But it is at just such a time that reversals occur. Evil has exhausted itself, and its reign is at an end. When evil finally achieves what it set out to achieve, it no longer has anywhere to go. There is no more momentum, nothing more to keep it going, and it collapses on its own emptiness.

37. The Relationships Within the Family

The Decision

THE PROPER relationships within a family are examples of the kind of order that should exist in the community, the state, and society as a whole. The family is the basic organizational unit that combines to form other social organizations, and when the family functions properly, the other social units shall function properly also. Each family exists as a unit, and the members of the family relate to one another in a manner that promotes their mutual stability and endurance. The well-being of the entire family is a matter of concern to each member, and the pursuits of each member are a concern of the whole family. The role of each member is based on affection, yet this affection manifests itself in different ways depending upon the given role. The family is organized around the authority of the parents, of which the father as head of the family provides strong leadership and moral correctness, and the mother as devoted and loyal subordinate holds the family together while ministering to their collective and individual needs. Without the strong moral leadership of the father, the different roles of the members are not sharply drawn and their duties to one another are not made clear. Without the mother nurturing to the needs of each member, each one would drift apart and develop independently. Thus, the relationship between the husband and the wife is the central organizational principle of the entire family. The son as junior member relates to the father with love and respect. The younger and the older brothers relate to one another with affectionate concern and loyalty. These relationships have their counterpart in larger social units, with the principle of strong leadership at the head, devoted subordinates as ministers, and members who give respect and deference to those of superior rank in the community, and who give support to one another with affection and loyalty. It is through these interrelationships that the moral duties that human beings owe one another are facilitated and order is maintained. The relationships of the family, therefore, are the fundamental relationships of all mankind and are necessary to keep the world in order.

The Maxim

A man's words have influence on others when they proceed directly from his inner being. Words gain their power from their relationship to what is specific and real. Generalities and theories have little influence because they lack the means to apply the pronouncements to real life situations. A man's words must be reinforced by his actions, otherwise they can only be seen as experimental thoughts that may or may not be valid. Pronouncements require the force of the speaker's action, in order to make a real impression on others. Only when a listener is fully aware of the correspondence between a man's words and his deeds will his words have real meaning to him.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] From the beginning, orderly behavior and conformance to the necessities of communal living must be established. If children are indulged when young, it will be almost impossible to break their will when they grow older. If, instead, from the beginning children are required to obey family rules, they may later misbehave on occasion, but they are more easily corrected and returned to the right path. Similarly, in society, young people

should be trained in social responsibility from the very beginning in order to avoid unlawful behavior when they become adults.

2. [6] Subordinate ministers should be guided by the leader, just as the wife should be guided by the head of the household. Subordinate persons always have duties for which they are responsible, and the welfare of all depends upon these duties being carefully and successfully carried out. Acting responsibly, therefore, and attending to the essentials, is the first duty of a subordinate, who is the person who has everyday contact with the rest of the members. Since life is an everyday matter, the correct performance of these duties brings good fortune to all.

3. [9] The governing style in the family should be in the middle between strictness and indulgence, with a preference for the former rather than the latter. Too much strictness creates resentment, and too little brings with it family disintegration. A little bit too much strictness does no harm, because discipline is a good lesson for all to learn. But a little bit too much indulgence introduces weakness and laxity, which can lead to misbehavior and humiliation.

4. [6] The wife, or the subordinate minister, being the person responsible for the everyday life of the family or group members, is the person who determines how smoothly the members relate and interact. This is the person who is in charge of fiscal responsibility and efficiency, and must see that expenditures and income are in balance. Keeping operating expenses within earnings is the key to happiness in any household, as well as in any larger organization.

5. [9] The leader of the family, or the community or state, is respected for his wisdom and abilities. He need not force his will upon them, because all love him and honor him for who he is. He governs, not arbitrarily or capriciously, but through the influence of his character and the intelligence of his decisions.

Top. [9] Although the wife, or subordinate minister, is responsible for the everyday relationships within the family, or community, it is the head of household, or leader, who sets the tone within which all live. It is through the force of his personality, the acuteness of his perception, and the virtue and wisdom of his decisions at every crucial moment, that the character of the whole family, or community, is formed and their good fortunes are assured. The strength of his personal leadership provides the authority within which the subordinate minister operates, the sense of obligation that members feel towards their duties, and the strong ties that members feel toward one another and the family as a whole. Ultimately, the collective character of the family is determined by him. He and he alone can assume this responsibility and make it effective, and it is upon him that the success of the family, or community, rests.

38. Working with Opposition

The Decision

The active forces are in direct opposition to one another. All opposites have a common relationship, otherwise they would be merely disparate, but not opposite. Opposition implies contrasting views of the same thing. Because of this opposition of viewpoints, it is not pos-

sible to pursue activities that require cooperation and coordination. Different viewpoints mean people are not able to work together, hence difficult and complex projects may not be undertaken. Nevertheless, the very fact that commonality does exist means that some minor understandings can be reached, and some small improvements may be made. But if one attempts to forge ahead with the accomplishment of something big, it will surely end in failure.

In some situations, opposition is a necessary part of the endeavor. As often happens, opposing forces can result in the creation of something new that results from their combination. Thus, management and labor produce manufactured goods. Opposing political forces produce compromises under which huge numbers of people can live. Criticism and debate often produce a better understanding of truth. Not all opposition represents unproductive conflict. Differences that represent opposition provide a basis for understanding the internal organization of complex phenomena. Thus, the effects of light and dark help in understanding plant growth. Upholding differences is important if the integrity of distinct phenomena is to be maintained. In this way, a superior man may associate with inferior men if he retains his own character and does not adopt their inferior ways.

The Lines

1. [9] Opposition cannot be eliminated by force, because that only causes the opposition to become indignant and entrenched. Given time, a person of good intent will gradually come around and accept areas of small agreement. Similarly, persons of evil intent, if endured, will gradually lose interest and go away. However, neither will respond to force, except to become more difficult.
2. [9] When opposition causes persons to divide irreconcilably on an issue of mutual concern, no direct action can help. But a casual meeting, devoid of intent, may lead to the beginning of an agreement if, indeed, both parties have a need for one another.
3. [6] If first attempts at reconciling the opposition result in humiliating rejection, one should not despair. Dedication and loyalty in the face of it all will be rewarded, and the problems will eventually be resolved.
4. [9] When a person is absolutely alone in the stand he has taken, he will not be able to make any progress. But if he meets a kindred spirit who will side with and support him, he should by all means join forces with him. With such a helper on whom to test his ideas, he can make progress and avoid making mistakes.
5. [6] Isolated by opposition, a man builds an impenetrable wall around himself for protection. But anyone who will take the trouble to break through that wall in order to pledge support is surely someone who can be trusted. The man makes no mistakes when he agrees to join forces with such a helper.
6. [9] A man becomes paranoid when he is beset by widespread opposition. He misjudges even the good intentions of potential supporters and is suspicious of all friendly acts. But this is error, and when he realizes it, he can welcome the help and rejoice in the support his stand has attracted.

39. Obstructions to Progress

The Decision

AT A TIME when a man is surrounded by insurmountable obstacles, the only proper course is to retreat. Retreat is a strategic move, however, and does not mean that the man gives up or abandons his goals. Quite the contrary, he merely makes a rational judgment about his chances for moving ahead -- which are not good -- and then backs off long enough to reassess the situation, acquire additional forces, and formulate a new plan for overcoming the obstacles. He finds people of like mind who can aid him in his quest, and he solicits the help of someone who is capable of mastering the situation and solving the problems he faces. With this combined strength and expert guidance, he will be able to clear the path and move forward with little difficulty. It would be a foolish move, however, if he were to try to advance in spite of the obstacles and without additional help. Developing a new plan is the only sensible move to make. Inferior men dislike the thought of retreat or the idea of seeking help because they think it makes them look weak. Such men feel compelled always to present an image of strength and unconquerability in the face of any amount of difficulty. But such hubris easily leads to disaster. It shows that the man's emotions, not his intelligence, is directing his actions. An intelligent man looks upon a difficult situation with a strictly rational eye. His purpose is to accomplish the goals he has set for himself, not to project some glorious self-image, and his focus on moving ahead with the best chances of success means that he will be more likely to achieve good fortune than the inferior man filled with bravado. Obstructions that force a person to make intelligent decisions develop a man's character. They force him to swallow his pride, hold his emotions in check, and let his rational mind direct his activities.

The Maxim

Problems that arise in the course of living are always occasions for developing character. In one way or another, they force a person to find mature, healthy, and correct ways of dealing with the situation. An inferior man angrily curses his bad luck or the evil intentions of others, and seizes upon any evil means for getting even. The superior man, on the other hand, looks within himself for the proper way to deal with a situation. He faces problems squarely and unemotionally, while the inferior man lashes out at any and all that he thinks may be responsible for his difficulties, and often tries to punish someone else for his inability to find a proper solution. For the superior man, however, adversity is a crucible in which he learns about life and how to develop his character.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] When a man first encounters an obstruction, it is foolish to move ahead without regarding it carefully. He should back off, carefully assess the problem, compare his resources, and wait until the time is favorable for moving ahead. Thoughtlessly moving ahead can only make matters worse. This is not a time for brazen action, but for thoughtful planning.

2. [6] There is one situation when it is entirely proper for a man to force his way ahead in spite of obstacles, and that is when he is doing it in service to, or at the command of, some-

one in a position of authority. In such a case, he does not have the option to do what is best for himself, but is obliged to go forward regardless of the outcome. Since he is not acting on his own behalf, he cannot be accused of acting foolishly.

3. [9] A man in a leadership position must think of others before putting himself in the way of danger. His responsibility to his own people requires him to think about the effect his actions will have on those who are dependent upon him. And if he backs away from danger, he will be showing consideration to those who need him, and their happiness will be his reward.

4. [6] A man thinks he has sufficient resources to move ahead through the obstructions, but he is mistaken. Were he to do so anyway, he would get into a bad situation, realize too late that he has miscalculated, and then not be able to extricate himself. But if he instead withdraws and waits until he is able to unite with others who can give him some assistance, if he accumulates more resources, and if he makes better plans, he will be able to overcome the difficulties and move on to success.

5. [9] In a desperate struggle, when the obstructions cannot be avoided and the man must move ahead regardless, he realizes that he cannot let any amount of danger stop him. The mission is too important. His determination and sense of mission will encourage others who will join with him, and together, under his leadership and with careful planning, the problems will be overcome and success will follow.

Top. [6] When a sage has abandoned the world and all its cares, he is disinclined to become involved with a difficult situation that he is presented with. The easy path for him is to remain apart and perfect his own character -- to let the world go on in its endless encounter with difficulties, and for him to seek higher things. But he cannot. A sense of obligation calls him back, because only he can do what needs to be done. Only he has the skills, the knowledge, the experience, and the wisdom to do the job correctly. If he returns to the struggle, he will be able to produce something lasting and substantial -- something really great -- that will benefit many people. Therefore, it is a wise move for the people to approach this great man and seek his help in overcoming the obstructions

40. A Time of Deliverance

The Decision

AFTER passing through a time of great difficulties and obstructions, the situation begins to change and the tense relationships that had previously prevailed begin to disappear. The man is no longer faced with great dangers. The struggle is over, and deliverance is at hand. At such a time, it is important that all operations, previously geared up for defensive actions, immediately be returned to normal. Reverting to ordinary conditions brings good fortune, because freedom from the pressures of obstructions and opposition has a liberating effect, and this acts as a stimulus to all. Everyone feels the removal of the stress, and all feel invigorated with a desire to put the difficult past behind them and begin again with their normal lives. That is why it is so important to cut back the measures that had been taken to meet the stressful situation and allow ordinary life to resume. If that is done, all this invigorating energy created by the deliverance can immediately be applied to everyday affairs,

and good and needed things can be accomplished. There are some things to be kept in mind, however. If there are any final details connected with the previous difficult situation that need to be taken care of, those should be completed as soon as possible so that everyone begins with a clean slate. Then, the regular order of things can be commenced without any distracting issues. It is also important that the victory over the opposing forces not be overplayed. That in itself would create additional difficulties, because it is just another form of continuing the previous conflict. Trying to capitalize on a victory incites bitterness and resentment in the defeated, whereas if ordinary conditions are resumed as soon as possible, those who suffered defeat are much more accepting of their fate and are happy to join in the effort to get things back to normal.

The Maxim

The superior man stands ready to forgive the misdeeds and overlook the errors of the past. If mistakes were made, but have since been recognized and overcome, he gladly puts them behind him. To dwell on them only irritates and produces no beneficial effect; indeed, harping on things that everyone has already recognized as errors could only stir up resentment and keep past difficulties alive. Inferior men do that because they get satisfaction from making others uncomfortable and from making them look bad. If malicious things were done in the past, the superior man forgives the offender and stands ready to move ahead. Inferior men cling to the offenses of the past, forever demanding satisfaction, and thus allow past transgressions to obstruct a forward movement. Overlooking errors and forgiving past offenses is a part of putting past difficulties behind and moving ahead into a brighter, more positive future.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The struggle with obstructions and difficulties is over. Normalcy returns, and new opportunities present themselves. The man now has time to relax and recover his equilibrium. He can make plans for progress and good fortune.

2. [9] Inferior men are still around, but their time is past. They can easily be removed from the scene, and then the struggle is completely over. It is not necessary to take vigorous action, which might instead spoil the time of recovery. Taking the high ground and adhering totally to what is right will provide the personal strength necessary to complete the final phases of deliverance.

3. [6] When a man of modest means escapes from difficulties into an easier lifestyle, he may feel tempted to make a display of his newly acquired freedom. He may even want to boast of his good fortune to perfect strangers, and brag about the advantages he now enjoys. But this would be a big mistake, because it attracts those who are naturally envious of anyone who thinks they are well off -- those who would wish him ill and would like to deprive him of whatever they can, if only out of meanness. If he continues with such a pretentious attitude, he is sure to meet with misfortune. A man more accustomed to an easier lifestyle is more circumspect. He enjoys himself quietly without expecting strangers to appreciate his favorable situation, and he attracts little attention or envy.

4. [9] When a man's progress is halted in the face of difficulties and obstructions, he may find that inferior men associate with him because they are in similar circumstances, even if

permanently. It is easy for the man to think that these are reliable companions just because they are similarly situated and their fate seems to be the same. But when the time of deliverance comes, and the man is able to move ahead out of these unhappy circumstances, it is important that he abandon these characters he had begun to identify with. They are not suitable companions for the higher, more accomplished circles he is destined to move in. If he tries to bring them with him, other people who would be of real assistance to him, and who could help him accomplish his goals, will become wary and inclined to stay away. Superior people do not want to associate themselves with someone who surrounds himself with disreputable characters.

5. [6] When a superior man who has been through a period when his progress has been stymied finally is able to free himself and experience deliverance from his former circumstances, he will find that the inferior people who have attached themselves to him during his period of decline are not so easy to get rid of. He feels some obligation towards them and tries to be accommodating to them, but they interpret that as a desire to continue the association, and they seem to take advantage of his lack of resolve. It is necessary, therefore, that he become clear in his own mind that he definitely no longer wants to continue associating with the lesser characters. Once he acquires that inner certainty, it will be obvious in his general attitude. The lesser people will soon get the point, and will leave him alone.

Top. [6] The possibility exists for the man to move out of a difficult situation that has been holding him back, but an evil person in a powerful position is preventing the man from moving on. This is all that is holding him back, but being evil, this person will not relent and must be dealt with. It is necessary, therefore, for the man to take whatever steps are necessary to overcome this evil obstruction. Once this obstacle is out of the way, everything proceeds smoothly.

41. (version 1) A Time of Decreased Resources

The Decision

A TIME of diminished resources is not favorable for advancing, therefore a man should hold back. Nature itself has an ebb and flow in its supportive forces, and a man should recognize these movements and not try to go beyond the bounds of what is possible at any given time. To push ahead when resources are not sufficient only exhausts the small reserves of energy that now exist and creates instability and indirection. This leads to a lack of accomplishment. Such a time as this calls for economy and simplicity, both of which establish a base from which solid advancement may occur later on. It would be a mistake, however, to try to pretend that resources are not diminished and to put on an outward show as though nothing has changed. That would introduce an element of falseness and deception that would undermine the meaning of everything a man attempts to do. Holding back may be viewed as an embarrassing lack of courage, but to think so would be a mistake. Instead, pretending there is no reason for holding back indicates a shameful lack of integrity. A man should turn his attention to the development of inner substance, not to flashy exhibition, and holding back gives him enough pause to concentrate on the development of that substance and enough strength to attend to present necessities. Simplicity accompanied by substance is of much greater value than false appearances and a lack of sincerity. Especially

in religious exercises, a man should remember that the Creator looks upon the man's heart, not upon elaborate ceremonies. Simplicity is of far greater importance than elaborate showiness.

The Maxim

A man is often led by strong emotional feelings, whether of anger or indignation, or by frivolous passions that divert the man's energies. Following such inclinations produces no positive gains. Instead, it results in a wasting of effort and resources, and a deviation from a serious attitude that might produce more positive results. Therefore, the superior man holds back his emotions, and this allows him to curb his baser instincts and give emphasis to the higher aspirations of his inner man.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] It is a real act of kindness when a man who has completed his own necessary tasks goes to the aid of someone else who is in need of help without making a fuss over it. But people receiving such aid should be careful not to let the helper overdo it. It ceases to be an act of giving if the person helping injures himself thereby. This requires careful consideration to strike the right balance.

2. [9] To give to another beyond your capacity is no virtue. To destroy yourself to benefit someone else is to do injury to a highly deserving person--yourself! Such over-giving demeans the giver and does more harm than good, even to the recipient. He who serves should be careful to maintain his own self-respect. Serving others is an onerous duty if it means doing injury to oneself, and he who requires that kind of service is an oppressive tyrant.

3. [6] Three people do not make a companionable group, since there is a tendency for one to feel the other two are excluding him, or even plotting against him. A beneficial relationship occurs between two people who can then have a friendly exchange. To bring in a third person will almost always introduce a certain awkwardness as two of the three will tend to enter into a dialog and exclude the third. A person who is alone and seeking companionship tends to make contact with one other person, and avoids interrupting the conversation between two.

4. [6] Potential friends and companions are often turned away by a man's aloofness and unfriendly attitude. If he makes a conscious effort to overcome such faults, it will make it easier for others to associate with him, and he and they will be able to find joy in one another's company. Pleasant manners attract pleasant people.

5. [6] There are times when the forces of nature move unmistakably in a favorable direction. Such times are beyond the control of man. When Fate decrees good fortune for a man, he need not fear that it will fail to come to pass, for no opposition to the hand of Fate can ever be sustained.

Top. [9] A man cannot be faulted if he enjoys prosperity without exploiting or injuring others. Everything he does benefits not only himself, but everyone who is associated with him. Such a man will find good fortune in undertaking great projects that involve many people.

He attracts other men to him who are glad to be able to work with him, because everything he does is a blessing to all.

41. (version 2) Holding Back

The Decision

When the time is not favorable for advancing, a man should hold back. Nature itself has an ebb and flow in its supportive forces, and a man should recognize these movements and not try to go beyond the bounds of what is possible at any given time. To push ahead when resources are not sufficient only exhausts the small reserves of energy that now exist and creates instability and indirection. This leads to a lack of accomplishment. Such a time as this calls for economy and simplicity, both of which establish a base from which solid advancement may occur later on. Holding Back may be viewed as an embarrassing lack of courage, but to think so would be a mistake. A man should turn his attention to the development of inner substance, not to flashy exhibition, and Holding Back gives him enough pause to concentrate on the development of that substance and enough strength to attend to present necessities.

A man is often led by strong emotional feelings, whether of anger or indignation, to make a point or to clarify an issue. But following such inclinations at an unfavorable time promises little positive gain. Instead, it results in a wasting of effort and resources in the hope of the most fleeting of chances for successful accomplishment. This is an unnecessary waste, especially at a time when resources are thin. Therefore, Holding Back is suitable for the time and permits an emphasis on things that really matter, such as the development of one's character.

The Lines

1. [9] It is noble and good to help those in need, but it ceases to be so if you injure yourself by giving too much or you injure the other person by depleting their self-reliance. This requires careful consideration to strike the right balance.
2. [9] To give beyond your capacity is no virtue. To destroy yourself to benefit someone else is to do injury to a highly deserving person--yourself! Such over-giving does more harm than good, even to the recipient.
3. [6] A beneficial relationship is on a one-to-one basis and does not involve a third person. To bring in another person (or a group of persons) is to destroy the intimate bonds of confidentiality. Communication on personal matters should be conducted privately, when a person is alone.
4. [6] Potential friends and companions are often turned away by a man's faults. If he makes a conscious effort to overcome these, it will make it easier for others to associate with him. Pleasant manners attract pleasant people.
5. [6] There are times when the forces of nature move in a favorable direction. Such times are beyond the control of man. When fate decrees good fortune, no opposition to it can be sustained.

6. [9] A man who works for the benefit of all mankind attracts the blessings of Heaven. His efforts draw to him favorable circumstances and helpful people. Every gain he receives is a gain for everyone else.

42. A Time of Increased Dedication

The Decision

THOSE above make sacrifices for the benefit of those below, and this fills all the people with an enormous sense of appreciation. The greatest, most effective ruler is he who would be willing to sacrifice himself and his own interests in favor of those he rules. It often happens that inferior men who gain high positions sacrifice the needs and interests of those below for their own enrichment and that of their friends. When the opposite happens, the people recognize this, are filled with gratitude, and this contributes enormously towards the progress and good fortune of the entire community. It is this spirit of self-sacrifice instead of exploitation that enables those above to do great things for mankind, because they win over the hearts of those below and arouse their loyalty and dedication. If the leaders make great sacrifices, the people feel compelled to do as much or more. This, in turn, engenders a spirit of enthusiasm and devotion towards the community that enables them to complete great and even dangerous enterprises. It is necessary, however, that the momentum provided by this time of increased dedication to the community be carried through in a timely fashion, and that whatever work there is that needs to be undertaken be begun immediately. Such sentiments tend to dissipate if they do not in due course bear fruit, therefore the energy that has been aroused should be expended immediately on whatever needs to be done.

The Maxim

A man develops his character by observing the acts of others and of himself. If he sees something superior in another man's character, he adopts it for his own. If he sees something inferior in his own character, he eradicates it, and if he sees something undesirable in the character of another, he makes sure he does not imitate it. Through this constant process of imitating what is good and eliminating what is bad, a man refines his character over time and thus increases his influence and his standing before men.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] When unseen forces come together to provide a man with the strength and capacity to achieve something great, it is essential that he use the favorable time responsibly and timely. Such opportunities are rare, and the man will have great success if he uses the occasion to benefit others, and not take advantage of the favorable times merely to enrich himself. If he acts in this way for the benefit of others, his activities will be free of criticism.

2. [6] A man who has dedicated himself to accomplishing worthy deeds will find himself favored by unseen forces, and what he seeks will come about almost of itself. When the forces of the universe are in harmony, there is nothing that can oppose them. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon the man to keep himself in harmony with those forces, and this he may do by not taking his good fortune for granted, by paying close attention to his pur-

poses, and by being careful to keep himself on a rightful path. With all things working together in this manner, he will be able to accomplish great works for mankind and bring honor upon himself.

3. [6] When everything favors the dedicated man, even events that might ordinarily seem unfortunate turn out to be an advantage for him. This is not a problem for him, however. He is not looked upon as one who profits from the misfortune of others, but rather as one who takes misfortune and turns it into something less of a calamity. By adhering to what is honest and true, the man makes no mistakes and is honored as one who speaks with the authority of Heaven.

4. [6] In a time of progress and abundance, a man who acts as a mediator serves an important function if he is careful to see to it that the higher authorities are kept informed and the people are dealt with justly and generously. In a time when difficult enterprises are underway, it is important that everyone feels they are being treated fairly and have no reason for not working together.

5. [9] A truly kind man bestows his kindness upon those in distress on the basis of need, not merit. He thinks not about those who will show gratitude, but about those who will suffer great injury if someone does not help them. He does not expect to be rewarded, but he nevertheless does receive recognition for his generosity, and his kindness serves as an example to others.

Top. [9] A man in a high place who ignores his duty to work for the benefit of those who are his responsibility soon finds that they have turned away from him. He does not receive their support, and this in turn denies him the cooperation and good fortune that might otherwise come his way. If a man places himself outside the beneficial forces that surround him and in opposition to those who depend upon him, he cannot expect those forces to reward him or those dependents to come to his rescue. A selfish heart should not expect unselfish gifts in return. A man who refuses to provide protection for others cannot expect them to come to his aid when he is attacked.

43. The Elimination of Opposing Elements

The Decision

AFTER a long period of difficulty and opposition, tensions finally begin to ease. The influence of inferior people is lessening, and the stage is set for the superior man to take vigorous action, to move ahead and finally get something done. An inferior man in a position of authority has the power to prevent superior men from furthering their goals, just as the mind when focused on a negative thought can prevent a man from acting reasonably. It is necessary, therefore, for the superior elements to assert themselves and to become the dominating factor, whether in one's own mind or in one's community. In the struggle of right against wrong, however, what is right must conduct itself in right ways if it is to be successful. Wrong means cannot be used to promote what is right, because wrong means corrupt everything they touch and turn their object into an offense. The struggle for what is right, therefore, always requires the exertion of strength, but it requires that it be exerted with kindness and good will. An inconsiderate use of force produces oppression. Moreover,

the pursuit of what is good cannot be compromised with what is evil, for if it is, it weakens and dilutes the good, and introduces elements that will over time eat away from within at the integrity of the good. Therefore it is important that a clear distinction be made between good and evil, and that any vestiges of evil lurking in the background not be overlooked and allowed to confuse the superior man's perspective. At the same time, it is important that that which is evil should be replaced with the good without battling it point for point. To enter into contention with evil only incites it to rise to its defense and drags the superior man down into an exchange of animosities. Evil can be eliminated simply by replacing it with good so that it is almost insensible that it is being replaced. Contending with evil, whether within ourselves or in others, only reinforces its existence, whereas replacing evil with good allows the evil to fall into disuse and fade away.

The Maxim

The superior man does not focus on accumulating things and making himself "full," but rather on a beneficial distribution of whatever he acquires -- wealth, knowledge, wisdom -- for the benefit of others. The real purpose of accumulation of things is their use, and that which is accumulated solely for its own sake has a tendency to be distributed or lost in one way or another. Accumulating excessive wealth just for oneself invites mismanagement, embezzlement, thieves, and all kinds of unhappy consequences. Accumulating knowledge without sharing it serves no purpose for mankind, and leads to inactivity and loss. Accumulating excessive material goods invites their spoilage and deterioration. The superior man lives with a constant flow of things coming in and going out. His character develops, not by focusing on his fullness -- what he is and what he has -- but by opening himself to new ideas, examining himself to eliminate what is undesirable, and adding to his character what is good.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] At the very beginning, when the time is auspicious for the superior man finally to overcome past difficulties, it is essential that he carefully gauge his ability to advance. A set-back at this time could be devastating, and would probably abort his entire mission. Because it is a time of transition, the opposing forces are still alive and strong. Therefore, the superior man only attempts as much as he is certain that he can accomplish. To force himself forward regardless of his ability to sustain the advance would produce unfortunate results.

2. [9] The superior man is prepared for any untoward event as he endeavors to secure advancement. If he is mentally prepared for any eventuality whatsoever, then he is not shaken by anything that crops up. He hopes for a smooth transition, of course; but he also carefully considers the many ways that things could go wrong so that he will not only be ready for them, but he will know what to do if something untoward happens. With such thorough preparation, he can walk in the midst of dangers as if they were not there, and people will accept his leadership without question. Meticulous attention to every possible problem that might arise extinguishes fear and anxiety. Preparation creates ease of mind.

3. [9] In a time of transition, inferior people remain active and must be dealt with. One cannot shun them entirely, because they still have the power to undermine the superior man's

advancement and defeat his goals. At the same time, to seem to be accommodating to the inferior elements raises questions in the minds of many of the superior man's followers, who actively oppose the inferior elements, as to whether he is really committed to the goals he says he supports. The superior man regrets these uncertain appearances, but he is sure of two things: he cannot outright reject and turn his back on the inferior elements, otherwise that would undermine his own intentions; and his integrity is absolutely unimpeachable, regardless of appearances, because he has no intention whatsoever to actually support the inferior elements. He is in a position where he cannot fully explain himself, for that would be taken by the inferior elements as a kind of repudiation that is precisely what he does not intend to convey to them. Therefore, the superior man does what he must, ignores the discontent of his followers with himself, weathers the minor distrust and uncertainty, and eventually, all works out for the best.

4. [9] A man wishes desperately to advance his own goals, but push as hard as he might, he finds it is impossible and he cannot. The difficulties are greater than his powers enable him to overcome, and his every effort is met with superior opposition. His problem, however, is his own anxious and insistent desire. If he would just let go and let others carry through, things would work out, and he would find success, even if it would not come in exactly the form he desires it. But he cannot let go, and will not. It has to be his way, or not at all. He insists that his exertions be met with acceptance, and so his failure is unavoidable.

5. [9] Offhand, an inferior man in a high position seems impossible to overcome. He is in a position of authority, and can defeat any measure the superior man comes up with. But the superior man cannot surrender his integrity, even in the face of seemingly impossible odds. He maintains a steady course, sticking always to his inner convictions, regardless of the apparent chance of success. And he must do this. This is the only course open to him if he is to remain a superior man.

Top. [6] At the very end of a transition, when almost all of the inferior element is eliminated and only the most insignificant remnants remain, it might seem that the little that remains is hardly worthy of attention. Since the bulk of the work has been done, a man might assume that the tiny little bit of evil left will soon cease to exist due to the overall momentum that has been achieved. But this is a mistake. Deliberate, conscious effort must be exerted, otherwise these insignificant remnants will stay in place and begin to take root again, just like a cancer that was not entirely cut out. Therefore, the man cannot rely on momentum to complete the job. He must keep working at it until the inferior elements are completely eradicated and not a hint of the past condition remains. Otherwise what looked like a successful conclusion will deteriorate and end in misfortune.

44. A Dark Element Re-enters Surreptitiously

The Decision

AFTER inferior elements have been successfully eliminated, they surreptitiously make a surprising reappearance from within. This is especially dangerous because it has the beguiling appearance of innocence, and it comes forward seductively on its own. This has all the marks of a trap, and it is important that the man take firm steps as soon as possible to put a stop to it and eliminate the danger. This inferior elements has the appearance of

weakness and harmlessness, and the man is easily deceived into thinking that nothing ill will come of a casual association with it. This causes him to be accepting of the initial advances, and to extend his own hand towards it to embrace it. Thus, by increments, the inferior element works its way into the man's confidence and into a position of power, where it will certainly do nothing but harm. This could not happen if the superior man recognized the inferior element as dangerous at the very first advances. What entraps the man is the fact that weak elements are always coming to him for assistance and guidance, otherwise they remain completely in the background and have no concerns to bring before him. Thus, his natural sense of generosity tends to permit him to reach out to the weaker elements that do approach him. This is the way strong persons help those who are having difficulties or need guidance, and a man of generous temperament naturally meets them halfway so that they will not feel like intruders. If the intentions of the weak, inferior element approaching the strong are honest, this ordinarily creates no problem. But if instead, the inferior element uses the occasion as a pretense, and only appears to need help in order to insinuate itself into the man's confidence, then there is the possibility of a dangerous situation developing.

The Maxim

A man in a leadership position is always in a sense separated from his people. They are all concerned with the everyday matters of their own lives and of those who are close to them, whereas the leader must have a broader vision. He is concerned with the lives of all his people, and the guidance that he gives to them, his decrees and judgments that affect them individually, are formulated to promote the progress and development of the entire community. He takes into consideration, not only today's problems and needs, but the needs of future generations as far as the mind can see. His influence extends even beyond those living today. It is from such a perspective that he develops policies and issues decrees that individuals may fail to understand, and they may question his wisdom. Nevertheless, he must obey the dictates of his broader vision and act in accordance with that view, not necessarily in accordance with what his people who do not see what he sees might wish.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] At the very beginning is the time to put an end to an inferior element that has somehow sneaked in. If, because it is small and weak, it is allowed to take root and grow, it will become enormous trouble. Small causes often give rise to big troubles. This small matter may be insignificant at first, but if not gotten rid of immediately, it will soon reveal how significant it can be.

2. [9] An inferior element that is not forcefully eradicated may remain and not cause trouble if kept under constant control. But it must be confined to a very small area, otherwise it will spread and infect everything it comes in contact with, and get completely out of control.

3. [9] The evil element is inviting, and offers some attractive possibilities to the man. However, the position the man has taken makes it impossible really to associate with that element, although he would like to. He cannot turn his back on his principles, and that makes such an association incompatible. But the attraction of some aspects of that evil element weakens the man's resolve and introduces a certain element of indecision and uncertainty.

Nevertheless, he sees too clearly the incompatibility of his association with evil, and he avoids further involvement.

4. [9] Inferior people are present, and unfortunately, the man cannot get by without them. It is possible that they can be of some help in the future, but the man is disinclined to bother with them, and would as soon throw them out. If he does that, however, or if he treats them with such contempt that it makes them angry and causes them to leave, they will not be available when he needs them. The result will be a real set-back, but the man has no one to blame but himself.

5. [9] Inferior people are present, but the man is patient and more disposed to work with them. He has such great strength of character, such fine leadership abilities, and such a modest good nature, that he is able to exert his influence upon the inferior people and get something out of them where some lesser man would not. He does not badger them, or treat them with contempt, neither does he attempt to impress them with his superiority. Instead, he treats them as the kind of people that he might wish they were, and they respond to his positive expectations to a surprising degree. The superior man's positive image is infectious and inspiring, and the inferior people do their very best and make a commendable contribution to the general effort beyond everyone's expectations.

Top. [9] The superior man has separated himself from the world and does not suffer fools gladly. He detests the insincerity, the mediocrity, and the stupidity he sees all about, and he openly reveals his contempt when it comes before him. This, of course, does not go over well with the objects of his disdain. They think he is unfriendly, uncongenial and unaccommodating. But he doesn't need them, and couldn't care less what they think of him. He knows that at the level at which he chooses to function, there are few men indeed who want to deal with him. Indeed, his world view makes himself uncomfortable at times. So he loses no sleep over it.

45. People Coming Together

The Decision

PEOPLE come together to form a family or a community and they unite behind a leader. Such an assemblage is sustained by ceremonies that unite all members to one another, to those who went before them, and to the community as a whole. By remembering and honoring those present as well as those past, people acquire a spiritual affinity for one another, for their family, and for their community that produces a life-long, deeply-felt allegiance in each individual member. To be effective, these observances must be conducted by a leader of the family or community who is well-founded in the traditions of the past, and who can instill in others an appreciation of the fullness of life that their predecessors have made possible for those living in the present. It is only through a recognition of this kind of unifying spiritual force that a whole people can be brought together to produce a great civilization and to make great contributions towards the advancement of mankind.

The Maxim

Whenever people or possessions are gathered together, problems can arise. People may tend to fall into disagreements when they gather together, possessions may be lost or pilfered when they are collected together, and any other kinds of collisions of interests may occur due to the close quartering. It is essential, therefore, that individuals be prepared for all possibilities, and that they take steps to guard against those disasters that are likely to occur. While hoping that everything goes smoothly, it is always a good idea to be prepared in case they don't.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A group of people are searching for someone to lead them, but they are confused because every member has a different idea about what kind of person it should be. Nevertheless, if they will express their needs and wants to prospective candidates, the right man will reach out to them, and they will know immediately that he is the correct leader for them. By choosing someone who responds to their needs -- someone who their hearts tell them is the right person to lead them -- they will make no mistakes and will avoid choosing the wrong person.

2. [6] The forces that draw people together are generally below the level of consciousness, and it is best not to try to analyze the attraction too minutely. People come together because it feels right, and because they gain a sense of positive reinforcement from associating with a certain group of other people. This is reason enough, and a person will make no mistakes follow his intuition in the matter. When people are attracted to one another at this deeper level, there is no need to devise any complicated intellectual explanation. The simplicity and open frankness of minds communicating with one another at an honest, informal level is reason enough to join in.

3. [6] A man may feel inclined to join a certain group, but upon trying, he feels like an outsider and is unable to penetrate to the inner circles. He feels rejected and discouraged. The solution is to seek out one particular individual who is a true insider in the group and part of the leadership. By introducing oneself to him, getting to know him, and explaining one's desire to be a member of the group to him, this person can introduce the man to other members and help him become accepted. This is an entirely proper way to become a part of a close-knit group, and is perfectly proper when a man is unable to find acceptance on his own.

4. [9] When a man seeks to organize a group on behalf of a worthy person, he makes no mistakes. He is doing this, not for himself, but for the support and benefit of someone else. His selfless attitude attracts people to him and to his cause, and that brings great success.

5. [9] A superior man in a position of power and influence naturally attracts many people to himself. There is nothing wrong with this, because this is the way a person of influence functions -- working together with other people who know, recognize and respect him. Inevitably, many will gather about him, not out of respect, but because they realize the man may be of use to them by virtue of his power and position. Their sole interest is what they can get from the relationship. Nevertheless, if the man impresses them with his integrity and dedication to duty, even those people who only want to use him will be moved, and will give him their whole-hearted support.

Top. [6] A man who wishes to join together with another may find that his intentions are misunderstood, and the other rejects him with disdain. There are many ways a man may respond to such treatment. Some men, misunderstood and rejected, might become angry and scornful, returning angry words for such rejection. That is a sure way to make the rejection permanent. But a superior man who was misunderstood and rejected would feel hurt such treatment. If he openly and freely allows himself to act hurt, explains the misunderstanding, and withdraws, he will find that the other man, if he himself is a decent man, will likely recognize the misunderstanding, apologize for the rejection, and make amends by taking the man into his fellowship.

46. Unobstructed Upward Movement

The Decision

AN UPWARD movement from humble and obscure beginnings to a position of power and influence is possible, but it requires hard work if success is to be obtained. Even if there is nothing blocking the man's path, he must nevertheless expend a great amount of energy, and he must do it in the right way, if he is to find the good fortune that is possible. When nothing is blocking the way, harsh, overly aggressive measures are not necessary, and their use could be counterproductive. When everything is favorable, it behooves the man to act modestly, to be friendly, and to adapt himself to the times. The absence of obstructions means he has clear sailing, and he can expect that whatever energy he expends will not be wasted on ancillary problems, but will be rewarded with great success. He should exploit every possible advantage available to him, such as talking to influential people who can help him as he moves ahead. He should get to know people in authoritative positions and do what he can to win their support. Since he is not up against any kind of obstacles or opposition, he can forge ahead without having to overcome competitors or enemies. The only care he needs to take is that he not undermine his own purposes by being brash, boastful, or pushy, and that he not fail to take advantage of the favorable situation out of carelessness or laziness. Being active and assertive without being arrogant or obnoxious will open all doors.

The Maxim

The superior man sets goals and adheres to them assiduously. He attends to details in order to accomplish great works and does not neglect anything that is part of his scheme. He formulates plans and devises strategies, and he always knows what he is about. If one plan is found to be unproductive, he has two or three other possibilities that he can try. He remains steady in pursuit of his goals, and never ignores things that need to be done. He is not anxious about his work, but he does love it and his mind remains open night and day to the infusion of better ways of getting things done.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] The man's ascent starts from humble beginnings, but he draws his strength from the simplicity of his lifestyle and his ability to work hard learned in those difficult times. This is a man whom Fate intends for higher things. He is able to move amongst men

of consequence and associate with them as an equal. He has a vision that marks him as someone destined to be a leader, and his confidence enables him to accomplish great things.

2. [9] A man of strength who lacks pleasant manners but who is a hard worker with a vision of great accomplishments is nevertheless accepted and experiences no problems from his brashness. He is a man of sincerity and good character, and people are willing to overlook his rough edges.

3. [9] The man meets with no competition or obstructions, but he is not certain how long this will last. He obtains his goals with ease, but will he be able to retain the position he has won so readily? The question remains unanswered, but he does not let that stop him. He does what he can, when he can, exploiting all the possibilities available to him in the present time, and does not allow the possibility that it might not last deter him in any way.

4. [6] The man achieves his goals and is able to produce great works for the benefit of his fellow man. He is received into the highest councils and honored for all his accomplishments. What he has done is indeed significant, and he will be remembered for his beneficial deeds long beyond his own lifetime.

5. [6] The man is making remarkable advancements, but he is in danger of it all going to his head. Everything is coming along too easily, and this could cause him to become careless and not attend to every detail. If he falls into this trap, it could prevent him from attaining his goals. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that he proceed carefully and steadily, step-by-step, even when everything is moving ahead as though nothing could stop him. Only if he proceeds as though he might stumble at the next step, will he succeed in reaching his goal.

Top. [6] If a man pushes ahead blindly, he runs the risk that he may stumble and fall. His advancement has been so easy, he fools himself into thinking that he is invincible, that nothing can stop him, and that he need not bother with details. He is tempted to take unnecessary risks and to run ahead of himself until he exhausts his resources. Such impulsive behavior always leads one into mistakes. It is essential, therefore, that he realize that he must always, without once letting up, adhere carefully to his plans, constantly evaluate his gains, and remain faithful to his goals. Only then will he avoid the foolish mistakes that result when a man advances without carefully considering where he is going.

47. A Time of Adversity

The Decision

A TIME of adversity means that a man is being held back by inferior men and circumstances and prevented from achieving his goals. Ordinarily, this means failure and misfortune for a man. Nevertheless, a superior man can cause such an occasion to have a successful outcome if he responds to the oppression in the right way. When reversals and oppression come to a man of character, he does not lose hope. He keeps a positive attitude, and this is the source of his later success. Such an attitude enables him to align himself with any movement that comes his way that might be advantageous. If his attitude is one of doom and gloom, positive opportunities are almost certainly ignored. Everything appears to such a man as just another door to disaster. But if, in spite of the adverse circumstances, a man

remains alert to the slightest glimmer of something constructive -- any little thing that might enable him to advance his goals -- then he is able to discriminate between the little diamonds of hope in a dunghill of negativity and opposition. In this way, a positive mental attitude will become stronger than any circumstances he may be mired in. Change is the essence of existence, and a positive attitude will enable him to "hitch his wagon" to those beneficial elements that will help pull him out of the "slough of despond." Of course, there is little to help the man who allows adverse circumstances to rob him of the vision that he seeks to achieve. But if reversals only cause a man to be put to a test, they actually strengthen him, sharpen his reflexes, and intensify his determination to achieve his goals. If anything, this causes him to work harder, to focus his attention, and to sharpen his skills. All of this, as a consequence, turns him into a formidable player. Unfortunately, not every man has this strength of character. Times of adversity separate the great men from the inferior ones. The great men go on to prevail, to achieve success and good fortune, and they do this through honorable and honest means. The inferior man is not equal to the task; he accepts his failure, withdraws, and seeks a path that is less demanding. During the time of adversity, there is little to differentiate the great man and the inferior man. Both seem to be getting nowhere, both have little or no influence on those about them, and neither are able to make much of an impression. Therefore it behooves both to keep quiet. But the great man has within him the inner determination and the hope that will enable him to overcome this difficult time. He will see it through, and he will rise above it.

The Maxim

In a time of adversity, the superior man accepts the adverse time for what it is, but remains true to himself and inwardly not discouraged by it. He knows what he wants to achieve. He has a purpose, even though his intentions are denied him temporarily. This is the run of fate. But this is also an external thing, and he does not allow it to affect his inner man. What he is not determined by external circumstances, and what he is remains unmoved by the vicissitudes of fate.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] From the very beginning, it is important that a man see that adversity is an inner struggle, not an outer condition about which he can do nothing. What is essential is how the man handles it. If his character is strong, he faces the situation but remains true to himself. He does not let the problem affect who he is, where he stands, what he aspires to. If his character is weak, he is crushed by adversity. He withdraws from life and is overcome with sadness and depression, which only makes his situation worse. This comes from a mistaken mind set that allows his inner person to be shaped by outward circumstances. A weak man becomes a looter when civil order breaks down, whereas a strong man retains the same moral stand no matter what occurs around him. Similarly, a man must develop a firm inner constitution based on the principles of rightness, not on an unthinking response to whatever happens to him. That is what enables him to stand firm in the face of adversity.

2. [9] A man has a sense of ennui. His material existence is satisfactory, but he is overcome with the drabness and meaninglessness of his existence. He feels trapped by dull routine, with no way out. But when an opportunity arises to work with a powerful and influential man, he asks himself if he is equal to the task? He has lived so long in a dull, boring routine,

he is not sure he is capable of the vigorous demands that would be placed upon him. He can take on these new responsibilities, but it is essential that he prepare himself mentally and spiritually for the task. He is rusty, and needs to bring himself up to speed. He can do this by reading materials related to this new opportunity, brushing up on some of the recent ideas on working with others, participating in religious and social activities, etc. It would be a big mistake if he were to accept this move without some preparation beforehand. His awkwardness and sluggishness would cause him to fumble around and make many mistakes. But by brushing up on his interpersonal skills, he will do alright.

3. [6] The man is adrift in a sea of difficulties. Nothing seems to work for him, and he remains frustrated and unhappy. Every attempt he makes to better his situation only runs into more difficulties, although these problems could be resolved if he were able to deal with them carefully and sensibly. But that is not his nature. He attempts things that he should be able to see are impossible to achieve. He turns to foolish endeavors that could help no one to succeed and only serve to waste his time and resources. His pointless, poorly organized efforts mean that he has neglected home and family, and they are no longer available to comfort him. The result is, his thoughtlessness and carelessness has brought him to misfortunes that cannot be avoided. His whole life is a disaster.

4. [9] A man is well-off and wants to be a benefactor of mankind, but instead of acting forcefully and with careful planning, he dabbles around and proceeds clumsily, making a mess of things. Naturally, he runs into all kinds of problems and difficulties. Others who are more adept at such things than he try to help, and he feels compelled to follow their advice, even if that leads him in to a new series of problems. In spite of it all, however, things finally work themselves out. His good intentions and his honest wish to help other people keep him on track and serve as a guidepost, and surprise of surprises, he is able to accomplish what he set out to do.

5. [9] A man who is really well-intentioned and wishes to do something to help his fellow man runs into nothing but difficulties. Everyone, whether above him or below him, turns on him and makes life difficult for him. Those in authority who would normally be expected to give him some guidance and assistance do not want to be bothered with him. Nevertheless, the man looks within for his strength and does not give up. He dedicates himself to what he sees as his calling, and remains faithful to his principles. Ever so slowly he is able to make some headway and to accomplish his goals.

Top. [6] The man has been beset by difficulties for a long time, but those problems are gradually beginning to lessen, and he could easily break out of his state of despair, if only he would do so. Nevertheless, he is fearful. He has been spooked by the past. He looks at all the difficult times he has been through and believes that any attempt to move forward now will only bring him more of the same. But on this he is wrong. As soon as he realizes that the situation truly has changed, that the time of difficulties is now past, and that he is free to move ahead, then he will be able to take vigorous steps to accomplish his long-sought goals and to overcome all the difficulties that have for so long weighed him down.

48. The Wellspring

The Decision

The Wellspring of man's life never changes. It is the same now as it has been for thousands of years. When a man is in touch with his true nature, he can draw wisdom from that Well-spring to guide him in all the decisions he must make. The conditions of life changes. Political and social organizations change, but the essentials of life remain the same. Governments come and go, but the ordinary life of the people and their need to work together for their mutual benefit never change. Generations pass away, and new ones are born to take their places, but the rich variety of life built on this unchanging foundation remains ever before every man.

But in order to fulfill these human needs, individuals and the socio-political organizations of man must endeavor to comprehend the depths of these unchanging foundations of life. A careless or casual approach is of no use and is more likely to mislead. If a man fails to penetrate to the deepest understanding of his place in the universe, if he attaches himself to conventional ideas and ways, his development as a person will suffer.

The Maxim

The superior man in his role as a leader gathers men together, organizes their tasks and coordinates their functions so that everyone works together in pursuit of the goals of the whole organization. He makes sure that the various divisions work together with one another, and not think solely about the portion of the work assigned to their own division.

The Lines

1. [6] A man who gives over his life to unworthy endeavors becomes worthless to himself and others. His existence means little to others, and thence to himself. Everyone avoids him.
2. [9] If a man has good potential but neglects his development, he is hardly better than the man who throws his life away. His life may be of some minimal value, but his negligence only means that his potential is never fully realized.
3. [9] A good man may work on his own development with diligence, but still not be recognized and be of benefit to his fellow men. This is a reproach to those in positions of leadership whose duty it is to see that the nation benefits from the talents of its best men.
4. [6] In the course of a man's development, it may be that a man must withdraw from involvement with others and work on himself. At such times, he may seem to be of little use to anyone else. But such time-off is necessary in order to be of even greater service later on.
5. [9] A man may be a truly great man, but little recognized. He has much to offer, but somehow no one comes to draw from him of his generous offerings. Therefore, it is essential that mankind seek out those who are wise in their midst and make the effort to reap the benefits they have to offer. Such a man will not force himself upon others; others must go to him.
6. [6] The sources of wisdom in our midst are available for the benefit of all the people. True wisdom is inexhaustible, and only increases, the more it is tapped. It is an expression of

wisdom to recognize wisdom, to open oneself thereto and to be enriched thereby. Doing this is a responsibility we all have.

49. A Time of Revolutionary Change

The Decision

A TIME of revolutionary change finds opposing forces in conflict with one another, and with each trying to replace the other. This represents a very determined opposition, because one of the forces is going out of existence while the other is coming in, and there is no possibility of their co-existence. In order to bring about this shift, the man who adopts revolutionary change as his mission should be certain of three things: (1) that he has the support of the majority of people who will be affected by the change, (2) that this is a necessary change, and there is no other way of resolving the existing difficulties, and (3) that the time is right for the change to occur. It never happens that all the people affected will support change, and revolutionary change should never be undertaken for "light and transient causes." Even under the worst of conditions, there will be some who believe that allegiance should predominate over every other sentiment. The best time for undertaking revolutionary change is after a long train of abuses have demonstrated that only a drastic change will answer the present need. It is inevitable that such drastic transformations will be called for from time to time as people and nations go through the cycles of their existence. Nevertheless, when revolutionary change is decided upon, it is essential that it be conducted in the right way, i.e., that everything be done in a way that the people affected by the change can support with their whole heart, and that the people be kept informed of the intentions and the goals of the revolutionary change as well as the progress that is being made. In this way, revolutionary change does not become a cloak for nefarious schemes that go on out of the people's view. This also means that the leaders for revolutionary change have no ideas about personal gain, but pursue change for the benefit of all the people affected. When the principal leader can carry out the revolutionary change with that degree of disinterestedness, he will be revered and honored as a benefactor of his people.

The Maxim

By carefully observing the cycles that Nature goes through, and by noting the same kinds of cycles in the lives of men, a man can discern a certain orderliness that arises in what at first appears to be chaos and a lack of direction. Change is the essence of the Universe, and the forces compelling change build up until a revolution comes about as a necessary consequence. Thus, in the life of mankind, the conditions of social life go through a stage of development until the time is ripe for a new mode of living, a new life style. The wise man sees this and accepts it; he adapts to it and embraces change as a necessary element of life itself. And when changes finally do occur, he is not upset nor destroyed by it, but sees it as the natural unfolding of existence. Like the beast in the forest, he sees the signs of a new season developing, and he makes preparations to receive it.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] Revolutionary change is avoided at first, if at all possible. If undertaken before the time is ripe, it will surely result in failure, and failed attempts to overthrow an oppressive force usually serve to make that force even stronger. Therefore, it is essential that the man seeking revolutionary change exercise complete control of the situation in the beginning, remain calm, and avoid premature moves that might only serve to wreck the enterprise before it has a chance to get off the ground.

2. [6] Reformation is the correction of existing conditions without completely eradicating the old and installing a new system. Only after reformation has been tried, but has failed, should a revolution be undertaken. Moreover, it is absolutely necessary that careful plans be made for such a drastic change, otherwise the changes will be chaotic, will surely get out of control, and will result in the defeat of the revolutionary agenda, if it is suppressed, or a disorganized disaster run rampant if it is not. If the result of the revolution is not to be a set of conditions as bad or worse than what is being overthrown, it is essential that the revolution be led by a man in whom the people have complete confidence -- a man of superior abilities who is able not only to overthrow the old, but also is able to guide and direct the installation of a new and better system. The first step to take is to make a deliberate declaration of the reasons for the revolution, that is, an explanation of the intolerable conditions that demand change, and then a description of the kind of system which the revolutionaries wish to bring about to replace the existing order. Only when the necessities, the purposes, and the goals of the revolution are clearly enunciated is it likely to result in an improvement to the untenable conditions.

3. [9] There is a right time to begin a revolution. If one begins too hastily, before careful plans are laid and preparations made, or for a cause that is not sufficient to support the struggle, the effort will end in disaster. But if one waits too long, the interest engendered by a worthy cause is allowed to dissipate, and the people too easily lose interest. A revolution should be discussed and considered, but when the time for change is clear, the moment must be seized if the job is to be completed successfully.

4. [9] Most revolutions have ended with a subversion of the very liberation they were intended to establish. For a revolution to succeed truly, it must be conducted in accordance with the highest aspirations of the human spirit. If a revolution is undertaken for lesser reasons -- because of a loss of face, or because of a desire to punish an ethnic group that is the subject of long-standing animosity, or some such ignoble motive -- then the revolution has no worthy purpose, and its implementation will be corrupted by its leaders turning their efforts to self-serving ends. Only when men feel they have enlisted in a noble cause will they be inspired to pursue honesty, justice and probity in every aspect of their endeavors.

5. [9] When a great man proposes a revolution to his people, his personal greatness expresses itself in a clarity of purpose in all that he does that is obvious to all. There is no ambiguity and no uncertainty. The reasons, the justifications, the purposes, the goals of the revolution -- all these things are clear and unquestioned. Every honest man can see that this is a worthy cause. Such a great man, with such a worthy mission, need not even consult the oracle, because the people immediately enlist themselves in support of this high-minded endeavor.

Top. [6] A great revolution involves great changes in a large number of basic issues. But invariably, there are a multitude of minor issues that undergo change also. Even inferior people recognize that a change has occurred, and their behavior reflects some of the change also, even if their changes are on the surface, and do not go down to fundamental issues. But it is never possible to wipe out every vestige of old prejudices and traditional practices. One must be satisfied with a settling of the big issues, and not expect every minute little outcropping of the old ways to disappear. Even after a great, successful revolution, the world will not then be made perfect. If an attempt was made to make it perfect, it would defeat the big picture and turn a time of liberation into a time of rigid oppression.

50. Providing Nourishment to Mankind

The Decision

ALL THINGS in the physical world find their true meaning and proper relationships in the spiritual world. It is by understanding this connection that a man is able understand his place in the Universe and envision the path he should take so that his life will be in harmony with the Universal forces. When a man is able to establish in his own life the harmony between Heaven and Earth, he can understand the way the power of Heaven works through his life on this earth in determining his Fate. And when he understands that, he will know how to act to bring himself into that harmonious relationship. Doing this enhances his potential and brings him genuine success and exceptional good fortune. Thus, the highest, the deepest, and the truest human values are not derived from the calculated judgments of man, but from the understanding of man vis-à-vis Nature, i.e., the life of man in relation to the natural order of things. In this way, the highest values and the comprehension of Universal forces are manifested in man's life -- not independently of man, but through the agency of man himself. The superior man, the great man, the sage, are all designations for the men on this earth who have identified themselves with the powers of the Universe, and who serve as sources for understanding these powers. It therefore behooves every man to honor and respect these men, and to learn from them the true meaning of universal things.

The Maxim

By seeking to understand his life in relation to the powers of the Universe, a man is able to draw the benefits of these powers into his own life and discover the Fate that these powers produce. He does this by acting in accordance with the Universal powers, which puts him in harmony with those powers, and fills his life with the beneficial results that accompany those powers.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] Every man has a place in society, and every man can find success in life if he conducts himself in the right way, i.e., if he follows the right path. Not every man is destined to be a leader or a great man or sage. But by aligning himself with the universal forces of right, he can become everything he is naturally capable of becoming. This means he can find success, accomplish things, and be recognized as a good man and a contributor to his

community. Every man is recognized by his fellow men, not for what he feels inside about his inner worth, but for what he accomplishes externally for the benefit of others. But he cannot make real progress in accomplishing things that benefit others unless he pursues rightful goals in a rightful way.

2. [9] It is the duty of every man to do something significant with his life -- something that distinguishes him as a person and that makes a contribution to the life of his community, however modest the contribution may be. Unfortunately, if he does this, he is bound to evoke the envy of some members of the community who view achievement in a competitive light. But as long as the man does not brag about his accomplishments and allows his work to speak for itself, this kind of petty envy will be seen by others for what it is, and it will do him little harm.

3. [9] A man of great abilities and good character remains unrecognized by his fellow men. He works hard and is quite productive, but the work he produces gains scant notice and has little or no influence. He feels frustrated and upset by this lack of recognition, and wonders if there is something wrong with him, or if his work is defective or unworthy. He fears that all of his personal assets and all the work he is doing is going to waste, and he asks himself if perhaps he should be doing something else that might be more effective. It is important for such a man only to make sure that what he does and how he does it is in alignment with the forces of the Universe, that is, with what is right. If those conditions are fulfilled, he need not worry. He should be patient, for in time his frustration will be relieved, his work will be recognized, and what he does will have influence on others. What is important is not what others think or recognize, but whether what he does is guided by what is right.

4. [9] A man has accepted a great but difficult opportunity which has great responsibilities, but he is not adequate for the task. Moreover, he does not even make as much an effort as he could, and wastes his time with unworthy companions, leaving the work in the care of others. This entire enterprise reeks with failure, and the man deserves nothing but personal humiliation for such an inept handling of his job.

5. [6] A kindly man of great modesty who is responsible for an important enterprise attracts expert helpers who ably assist him in carrying out his tasks. It is important that the man realize that it is his kind and modest attitude and his openness to able men that has enabled him to gather together these outstanding assistants, and this in turn is what has enabled him to be as successful as he has become. Were he to change and become proud and boastful following his great success and good fortune, he would be in danger of undermining the entire enterprise. It is his openness that holds everyone together, that makes them feel that they will be listened to and thus be effective, and that causes them all to want to contribute their very best. It is vital, therefore, that he retain this modest, open attitude and continue with the prescription for success that has worked so well for him thus far.

Top. [9] The wise sage, in dispensing his beneficial work to mankind, does so with the purest attitude and the utmost mildness of manner. His thoughts and intentions are in perfect harmony with the universal forces, and he finds favor with God and with men. He dispense his gifts freely and openly to all who choose to receive them, and the greatness of his vision is clear to all. The work he does is of great benefit to mankind and is influential over all who come within his sphere.

51. Sudden Change

The Decision

The shock of sudden change is terrifying and easily disturbs the fearful and those entrenched in complacency. Many of life's changes are gradual, but others come upon us suddenly and unpredictably turn our world upside down. But the man who is familiar with the nature of change in the universe takes it all in his stride. He gladly embraces the change, and does not allow it to disturb him in the least. He sees in change the manifestation of natural forces. He knows what must be done, and proceeds to do it with confidence and a steady hand in the face of disturbance all about him. A leader of men establishes a steady course; he is not deterred by the fear of Sudden Change. He knows that his measures will often make drastic changes in traditional or customary procedures, and he proceeds cautiously, but without the slightest element of fear.

The superior man, when faced with Sudden Change, remains steady in his sense of the Divine presence in this world. He seeks always to place himself in accord with the will of Heaven and makes that his lodestar. With a clear vision of what he is about, he does not allow his reaction to Sudden Change to sway him from a steady course. This overreaching vision guides him as he examines himself, and as he faces the sudden ups and downs in his own life.

The Maxim

The superior man, when faced with sudden change, remains steady in his observation of the Divine presence in this world. He examines himself in order to place himself in harmony with the will of Heaven, and he makes that will his lodestar. With a clear vision of what he is about, he does not allow reactions to sudden change to sway him from a steady course of action. Thus he discovers that reverence for the Divine will is the fundamental guiding principle in the formation of human society.

The Lines

1. [9] Sudden Change often appears as sudden loss at first. But after this initial reaction, a man realizes that change need not mean disaster, but can lead to its very opposite and produce advancement instead. Thus, change brings the occasion for real joy.
2. [6] Sudden Change often does indeed produce great and unavoidable loss. But the change also creates new situations in which the loss is recoverable. Thus, while taking necessary precautions to avoid further loss, the wise man awaits the opportunity to recover his losses in the new situations that are brought about.
3. [6] A Sudden Change of events can bring catastrophe, and the man is at a loss for what to do. In the face of such confusion and change, a man cannot know what steps he should take, and is inclined to passively submit to his fate. But inactivity is not the answer. If he will seize the initiative, a way out of the disaster can be found.
4. [9] Not every Sudden Change can be turned to advantage. If a situation is unyielding, if no chance for recovery opens up, then a person is stuck with nowhere to go.

5. [6] When a series of Sudden Changes befall a man, there is a danger of being swept away by it all in a haze of confusion. Thus it is important that the man focus clearly on his rightful course and keep that ever in mind, regardless of the turn of events.

6. [6] Disastrous change results in confusion and loss of direction. A man finds it impossible to determine in which direction he should proceed. Whatever he might do only promises to make things worse. Under such circumstances, the wise man comes to a halt and refuses to proceed with any kind of plan. He listens to no one, but waits until a rightful path becomes clear to him. By doing nothing until the time is right, he saves himself from harm.

52. A Time to Remain Quiet

The Decision

THERE is a time to move forward and a time to keep still, but a man relates to both most properly from a condition of stillness. It is from a state of quiet stillness that a man gains a proper perspective on his life in relationship to the world about him. He is able to see both activity and rest as parts of the continuum of life, which alternates from one to the other as required by the circumstances in which he is involved at any given moment. But it is in stillness that he is able to reflect on his life and judge the propriety of movement, and this stillness, together with quiet contemplation, is the proper state of mind from which to begin movement, and the proper state to return to after movement. When mind and body are still, both are in a receptive state that makes them ready to respond to whatever the outside world presents them. With a quiet mind, the focus of the man is not on his inner self, but on the exterior world that is happening around him at that very instant. When he has that kind of mental focus, his mind is pure, and he is ready to deal with the outer world in all its complexity. He no longer sees the world as a competitive struggle, as a clash of his values with the values of others, but as simple events. This provides him with a genuine peace of mind, and allows him to deal with the outer world, not from a perspective of man-against-man struggle, but as events that occur in accordance with the natural laws of the universe. When he can do that, he can then act in such a way as will be in harmony with those laws, and he will be able to relate to all persons as is proper. When his actions are in harmony with the will of Heaven as expressed in these natural laws, his deeds will be correct and his actions will be the most beneficial possible with respect to the existing conditions.

The Maxim

The mind of man has a tendency to ruminate over the whole field of his existence. His mind jumps from thoughts of past injuries to present fears or concerns, from recent events to future possibilities, from today's needs to tomorrow's hopes. With this incessant rambling, a man keeps his spirits in turmoil and his sensibilities agitated. But in a time of quiet, which can nourish his spirit, he allows all these ruminating thoughts to evaporate and focuses his mind on the present place and the present moment. In that state of amazing stillness, when everything he sees moves gently and everything he hears enters and leaves his consciousness without sticking, he realizes that, by far, the anxieties of man are all the creation of his own mind, and the calmness of this moment is able to bring peace to his spirit.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] At the very beginning is the time to stop and consider the direction one is about to take. It is in the time before a man becomes involved in all the complications and possibilities that are thrust upon him, that he can see things clearly and disinterestedly, i.e., with a mind that looks at things objectively and is not overridden by personal interests. If a man carefully considers the way before him at this time, he is not likely to go wrong. If the man sets his sight on a path that is honest and true, he will be able to identify the right path. But halting at the beginning does not mean that he procrastinates or wanders around aimlessly. It is essential that he begin in a timely manner and stick conscientiously to the work that lies before him.

2. [6] If a man is working for someone else, he does not have control over his overseer. There is a tendency for the subordinate to be swept along by whatever direction the leader takes. Even if the leader heads down a wrong path, the subordinate cannot stop him, and, indeed, can only with great difficulty prevent himself from going down the same path. If the leader is a strong man and determined to go ahead with the path he has chosen, there is nothing that a subordinate can do about it. At most, he can refuse to follow him.

3. [9] When practicing quiet meditation, it is absolutely necessary that a man not try to quiet his mind by forcing it to stop entertaining thoughts. Such rigidity can be very dangerous, and will increase tension and anxiety, rather than decreasing them. A man must let thoughts pass through his mind like birds flying through a belfry. He should let thoughts come and let them go without holding onto them. He should observe them as they enter, and as they leave, without dwelling on them and without chasing after them. When a man does not actively pursue thoughts, when he does not use a time for meditation in order to plan the day's activities or to think through some interesting topic, then he will experience an inner composure and be perfectly calm.

4. [6] Keeping the mind free of self-centered concerns and desires is the first step towards a mind that is liberated and free to contemplate the world and the universal forces that act upon the world. Practicing meditation leads the man in that direction. What he is able to do in meditation, he is eventually able to do in other activities where the thinking processes are not needed. Thus, meditation that frees the mind from the wordy thought processes helps free the man from the dominance of self-centered ideas. Even if a man's meditation is imperfect, even if he is unable to carry it over into other daily activities, an approximation of the meditative state still affords some benefits. Moreover, early attempts at practice can lead to improved performance later on.

5. [6] Learning how to quiet the mind helps a man learn how to quiet his tongue. Often, when a man is involved in a tense situation, he babbles on with his mouth as a result of his nervousness. But if he can learn to relax and free his mind from anxious thoughts, he can avoid those situations where he may chatter on, saying things that cause him embarrassment and later regrets. When he learns the techniques of meditation, his speech will be relaxed and the words he deliberately chooses to speak will have greater effect.

Top. [9] When a man achieves the highest meditative skills, the tranquility of his mind pervades his entire life and personality. He not only is able to remain calm and collected in ordinary situations, but he has a calm acceptance of himself and every aspect of his life. This

pervasive tranquility is the mark of a superior man. His presence emanates a sense of peace, and his calm and settled counsels bring good fortune to all who associate with him.

53. Gradual, Progressive Development

The Decision

A MAN'S character develops gradually by taking deliberate action, starting from a position of quiet tranquility. An inner calmness enables him to contemplate a situation carefully and thoroughly, to plan exactly what is the correct path to take, and then to act purposely and deliberately, avoiding any thoughtless blunders. A man of character does not rely on his automatic reflexes, but contemplates his moves and then acts with great determination. Thus, developing character is not a matter of training one's automatic or natural responses, but of learning how to deliberate wisely and to proceed with perseverance. Such carefulness necessarily takes time, and the man of character does not rush into situations and relationships until he feels confident that he has taken all the necessary steps that will make him fully aware of what he is getting into, and that he has resolved in his inner self exactly what he should do. If it is his intent to influence others, he recognizes that a proper approach is one that respects the correct way of deciding by others and does not try to get the other person to act on impulse. Rather, he takes a more gradual approach that allows the other to consider quietly and to act decisively. Those who coerce or trick others into making a sudden decision may obtain what they seek, but their victim will have regrets and will seldom stand by the decision they were pushed into making so hastily. Those who would develop their own character cannot expect to do so by suddenly embracing some new idea, but through careful contemplation and deliberate action. Because all these forms of development proceed gradually, perseverance is a major element, since any long-term course of remedial action is in danger of being abandoned if the man does not pursue it faithfully and diligently.

The Maxim

A superior man has influence upon everyone around him. His character places him above the multitude, and all look up to him. This influence does not come into being all of a sudden, however. The character of the superior man is the result of a long development, and his influence upon people is also the result of a long development. Nothing worthwhile concerning character or influence develops overnight. Anything of this nature that occurs suddenly never has a long-lasting effect. Indeed, the sudden appearance of someone attempting to influence other people is usually the mark of a charlatan. A man's character takes a long time to develop, and is the result of many experiences with a variety of tests and trials through which the man learns to deal with difficult situations and to do it with thought and persistence. Then, after his development is obvious to all, he wins the respect of all. His wise and good counsel is sought, and he exercises a strong influence on everyone who knows him. Such a man is not influential just because he thinks he has the right set of theories and beliefs, but because of the kind of character he has and the kind of man he is.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A young man seeking the path of wisdom and truth starts out with no one to help him. He must struggle along on his own, it is difficult for him to discern the right path, and his progress is slow and hesitant. He is honest and open, but he is also determined, and this subjects him to frequent criticism. The difficulties and the criticisms act as guideposts, however, and prevent him from settling too quickly into an improper path. But because he is sincere and really tries to do what is right, he will ultimately succeed.

2. [6] A man finds success, and his first impulse is that he wishes to share it with his friends. After a long period of uncertainty, when finally the man has some security, it is natural that he feels a certain amount of elation and confidence. What better way to celebrate one's good fortune than to invite a few friends over? His purpose is not to glorify himself, but to share and be generous.

3. [9] A man, in his anxiety to move ahead, pushes too hard and brings himself and those close to him into danger. He was not content to move forward one step at a time, but tried to leap ahead hastily, and this is seen as threatening by those above him. This need not have happened if the man had been reasonable and willing to let things develop naturally, i.e., if he had been willing quietly to take the smallest possible step forward, and reserve further movement for a later time. Nevertheless, if the man will hold steady now and not agitate for a better position, but will be content to remain where he is and only defend what he has accomplished thus far, he can avoid a disaster.

4. [6] A man's path takes an unintended turn. He is uncomfortable with the situation that he has gotten into and the way it has developed. He fears that it might not turn out well for him, and that he will have much to regret if he is not careful. This is a time for him to avoid any aggressive moves and to remain flexible. He should be content to hold back, remain where he is, avoid difficult situations, and not try to push higher at this time. He should withdraw from the forefront, avoid a leadership role, and find a safe place on the sidelines. In this way, he can continue to hold on to whatever he has gained up until now, even though there are dangerous situations developing around him.

5. [9] The man has achieved a high position, and his work figures prominently in the eyes of many. But his accomplishments have tended to isolate him from others, and this isolation creates mistrust and misunderstanding. His actions and motives are misinterpreted, and he is looked upon with suspicion. Other persons who mean him no good are only too glad to suggest behind his back that he has been acting improperly. As a result, all that he is attempting to accomplish comes to a standstill, and he seems to have lost the confidence of everyone. But if he will just hold on patiently, these questions about himself will eventually be resolved. Because everything was based on doubts, not facts, when the elements in doubt do not devolve into real misconduct, the doubts will evaporate, and the man will find himself back in the good graces of those who are important to him.

Top. [9] The man's work is over. He has accomplished great things, and he is honored and revered. He has "fought the good fight," and his work has been a real benefit to mankind. He has known the fullness of having lived a meaningful life. What he leaves behind is considered by all who knew him as a treasure, and his entire life is pointed to as an example of how a good man should strive to conduct his life -- not for himself alone, but engaged in service to his fellow man.

54. An Awkward Subordinate Relationship

The Decision

A PERSON enters into a subordinate relationship with a head man in a community that includes other subordinates who are all more powerful than the newcomer. The power relationships have been long established, and the newcomer, though favored by the head man, is viewed as one who might disrupt the community's organization and possibly replace others, which would not at all be to their liking. It is a very delicate relationship in which any forward or aggressive moves made by the new person will be viewed with suspicion and anger. This person, therefore, must behave with the utmost reserve in order to prevent more powerful subordinates from turning into vicious enemies. If this person were to try to push himself forward into a more commanding position, there would be an uproar and the others would be incensed. It is essential, therefore, that the new person try to establish friendly relationships with each one of the other subordinates who have, in fact, a higher status than does the new person. This is a very difficult situation, because each one of these other subordinates could make life impossible for the newcomer.

The Maxim

The possibility that a misunderstanding may arise exists in every relationship where people are closely associated. Once people become involved with one another, all the odd idiosyncrasies of each one's personality comes to the fore and has the potential to become a source of disagreement, dislike, or any other kind of emotional clash. This is human nature, and this is the kind of interpersonal conflict that is almost inevitable, if one is not careful. It is necessary, therefore, that a person closely involved in relationships with others keep in mind the reason why the community exists. By remaining focused on the purpose of the group and concentrated on topics and problems that relate to that purpose, it is possible to avoid personal issues that have nothing to do with the group's purpose. In this way, a man can steer clear of the pitfalls that lie in wait when groups of people are associated together in close quarters.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man who is a newcomer and a subordinate has an excellent relationship with the head man, who has taken a liking to him and will help him along. It is important, however, that this newcomer keep himself quietly in the background, and not try to step out in front of the other subordinates who are of higher rank than he. This might seem to place him at a greater disadvantage than need be, and he might think it will prevent him from accomplishing some of the tasks he is capable of. But by not pushing himself forward and maintaining a friendly relationship with subordinates of higher rank, he can still accomplish many things without seeming a threat to the others, although he may not enjoy as much status and recognition as he would like.

2. [9] A man feels he has fallen out of favor. Whereas he had hopes of a productive relationship with the head man, the head man seems to ignore him and leaves him to his own devices. The man feels abandoned and shut-out, and this is a great disappointment to him. But he remains loyal and does not depart. He accepts his situation and resolves to accom-

plish as much as he can, regardless of the apparent neglect. Perhaps things will change for the better in time, but he remains steady, even though there is no assurance that his situation will improve.

3. [6] A man is in a position of little status, and yearns for something better. He is unable to move ahead through the ordinary competitive channels, however, and chooses to make headway in a way that is not flattering to his reputation, even though it is not exactly illegal or wrong. Thus, there is a trade-off: he gains some of the advantages that he so eagerly seeks, but he is not thought highly of because of what he must do to win these gains. His gains entail some losses. The choice is his. It is a real choice with real consequences, however. If he stays where he is, it is unlikely he will never move ahead.

4. [9] This man is in a position of little status, but he decides that he would rather remain where he is than do something that is somewhat less than honorable in order to make advancements. Opportunities seem to pass him by, and true to his choice, he remains in a position of little status. But eventually his better character is recognized, he is honored for his faithfulness and integrity, and somewhat belatedly he receives a position that is just as good as that which he might have obtained had he been less circumspect. In the end, he acquires what he had hoped for and does so with his reputation completely intact.

5. [6] A man of high status and good reputation takes a position of lower rank than he previously held. Where others might see this as an embarrassing or even humiliating step down, he accepts the position with dignity and sees it only as an opportunity to continue his work and to be of service to his fellow man, though with much less pressure. He looks askance at all concerns about rank, class and pride, and focuses instead on the task at hand. As a result, all goes well, the relaxed situation suits him, and he has great success.

Top. [6] A man occupies a high position, but it has little meaning for him. He performs his tasks perfunctorily, but his heart is not in it. He is looked upon as a worthless drudge and a bureaucratic plodder. He accomplishes little, he has no influence, and little self-respect. Nothing good could come of him.

55. The Pinnacle of Success

The Decision

THE MAN takes action in accordance with clear insight and understanding, and he is thus able to lead others to the very peak of greatness. But since change is the nature of the Universe, the wise man realizes that this pinnacle of success, once attained, can only be enjoyed briefly and cannot last forever. Achieving the height of success means, inevitably, that decline of one sort or another must eventually follow, just as the sun at its zenith must then begin to move towards its setting. But the superior man is not discouraged by this realization; he knows that it is futile to try to remain always at a peak. He is grateful to have known true abundance, and rejoices in the present moment of success. Even though he must later descend from the pinnacle of success, his achievement will not vanish. Only a man who pursues what is great can know this level of success, and only a man who can put aside concerns about decline can successfully lead others at a time of great abundance. Therefore, in his leadership of others, he speaks only of the joy that all should have over the

greatness they have achieved, and forbears any mention of the inevitable descent from the heights. Understanding and action are the traits necessary for achieving the pinnacle of success. Although the man's ventures may decline from this pinnacle, by maintaining those traits that got him this far, the decline will not mean a complete reversal.

The Maxim

Clarity of vision permits a man to issue valid directives; force of action enables him to carry them through to a successful conclusion. Thus the superior man must retain active control over the enterprise for which he is responsible. He carefully looks into all matters that affect the enterprise and oversees the administration to be sure that decisions are carried out thoroughly and precisely.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] To join with another who seeks to achieve the same goals through action and clear understanding can only serve to bring about success. With such combined forces, success is assured. No matter how much time they spend working together, they will both find the association stimulating and highly productive.

2. [6] Inferior people are active, and their powerful influence confuses the situation, so that a leader is unable to identify the persons on whom he might depend to accomplish a great work. Under such circumstances, a superior man is envied and disparaged by inferior people, and anything he does is met with distrust and opposition. He is unable to energetically pursue anything that might be productive. All such a man can do is hold to the clarity of his inner vision and stand by what is true. Eventually, the truth of the situation will be comprehended by the leader, and he will realize that the superior man is the only one capable of doing the job.

3. [9] A man's effectiveness can be completely pushed to the side by the prevalence of inferior men, who rise and make their presence known before the leader. The situation is so dominated by inferior people, nothing the man does will turn out successful, despite his best efforts. Although his influence is completely crowded out, he cannot be blamed for this outcome. He is prevented by the circumstances from being effective.

4. [9] The influence of dark forces begins to fade. Persons of clear knowledge and action are able to come together, and a superior man meets a leader who is like-minded with himself. The man's enthusiasm is matched by the leader's wisdom, and the combination means that a favorable outcome is then possible.

5. [6] When a leader is modest and has an open mind to the counsel of wise and able assistants, a large number of good ideas can be made available for consideration by everyone. Many excellent possibilities can be presented and acted upon utilizing the combined intelligence of everyone involved. This results in some great projects that lead to outstanding success, with recognition and prosperity for all.

Top. [6] If a man becomes obsessed with his success, if he is overcome with pride and arrogance because of his own achievements and so dominates everyone that he closes his mind to their counsel, then he loses touch with those he needs most, he loses sight of the whole

point of his endeavors, and all his efforts come to naught. Abundance becomes an empty shell because the man got carried away with it all. He ends up alone and with nothing.

56. A Time for Travelling

The Decision

A MAN who travels to another location needs to exercise extreme care. As a stranger, he will have few friends and acquaintances, and it behooves him to maintain his best behavior in order to stay out of trouble and avoid difficulties. A person who is traveling about does not have a circle of friends and established contacts upon whom he can depend if problems arise, therefore it makes sense for him to avoid risky situations. In dealing with people he meets along the way, he should be agreeable and compliant. They are in familiar territory and he is not, so they can help him if he wins their approval and needs help. If he comes into conflict with them, they have many more resources to turn to than he, therefore he should avoid conflict if at all possible. If he conducts himself very carefully and is not pretentious in his contacts with strangers, he will get along well, because most people will try to help a pleasant stranger. It is extremely important that a man avoid any kinds of illegal acts while traveling. Difficulties with the law are much more complicated, and can be much more difficult, if a person is not a native of the area. Such persons can easily be put in jail when a native of the place would receive only a stern dressing down. The traveler, therefore, should endeavor to associate only with highly reputable people and only go to reputable business establishments. If he is careful and circumspect, he will be left to go his way freely, and he will accomplish all that he expects to do.

The Maxim

If a man runs into legal problems, he should try to settle them as quickly as possible. Nothing is gained but ill will if a person tries to use the threat of legal action in order to force concessions from other people. In a legal disagreement, both sides feel they are correct, and each sees coercion from the other side as evidence of malice and evil intent. A man who is upright and who has right on his side has not need to threaten another. Persons of good will settle their differences as quickly as possible.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A man who travels afar moves amongst people whose customs are unfamiliar to him, as his manners are unfamiliar to them. This is not the time to engage in trivial or superficial activities that might easily be misunderstood or incorrectly interpreted. A stranger in a strange place cannot be sure how his actions will be viewed. He does not know how people will respond to him. Therefore, he should be serious but pleasant, friendly but not overbearing, kind but reserved, open but dignified. Any kind of exceptional behavior subjects the stranger to the possibility of rejection.

2. [6] A traveler's modest behavior wins him acceptance, and he is able to settle down. The people he meets are good to him, and are willing to help him find necessities and manage comfortable accommodations. He makes friends with one person in particular, and this per-

son is a great help to him in getting settled and getting acquainted with all the amenities the new location has to offer him.

3. [9] If a man who is a traveler causes difficulties with everyone he meets, if he knows only complaints and criticisms of things that are not to his liking, he will drive good people away from him and make life miserable for himself and all around him. If he intrudes into matters that are not his concern and places demands upon people he has only recently met, he makes himself unwelcome and causes people to shun him. By being unpleasant and difficult, mostly because everything is different and he is unable to adjust to the differences, he puts himself into a situation where he can expect nothing but problems.

4. [9] A traveler who is able to adjust outwardly to his surroundings, but who has many ambitious plans and schemes, will find himself unable to sit back and enjoy himself. He is trying to do too much, to manipulate too many projects, and this causes him to be on edge and in constant turmoil. Because he is in a strange place, he is not familiar enough with the customs and manners in order for him to be at ease and to fit in with the normal flow of things, and this keeps him in a constantly unsettled state. This forces him never to forget that he is a stranger in unfamiliar surroundings.

5. [6] The traveler wishes to settle down and find some form of employment. He meets with someone who is interested in him, he makes a good impression and is generous and affable. He is not shy and withdrawn, but friendly and outgoing with strangers. He makes friends and is accepted in the new circles. He is successful and able to make a good life for himself amongst these people who were once strangers.

Top. [9] The traveler was not careful in making his living arrangements and choosing his associates. He is casual about everything, and doesn't bother selecting the right kind of people as acquaintances. He laughed it off and thought at first that it didn't matter, since he was only interested in having some fun. But then he discovers he has chosen people for friends who are not interested in serious friendship with him, and he has neglected and alienated those who might have been much worthier company. The bad companions drop him when they perceive he has nothing to offer them, and the potentially good ones see him as an insubstantial person and are not interested. He has demonstrated that he appears to have no principles, that he is willing to mingle freely with inferior people, and that he does not wish to take time to nurture the friendship of the respectable people in the community. The result is, he has lost his chance to move in the better social circles and has become a virtual outcast.

57. The Effect of Gradual, Penetrating Influence

The Decision

A GREAT man of clear judgment and penetrating wisdom influences his associates. He uncovers hidden motives and exposes dark intrigues. He accomplishes this, not by single acts of surprising revelation, but by an influence that works constantly, but gradually and consistently, in the same direction, accompanied by an unending series of small, incremental gains spread out over a long period of time. Although influence of this kind does not draw attention to itself and may not even be noticed, it is much more effective than a sudden at-

tack, because its constant presence becomes a part of the social fabric -- an ever-present background that serves as a constant inducement. This kind of influence, however, because it is spread over a long period of time, requires that the man have a steady, clearly-defined goal which he adheres to unrelentingly. By unceasingly applying pressure, always in the same direction, the correct end result is achieved. If a man does not have the strength and endurance, or lacks the position to keep up this kind of unrelenting pressure, he must align himself with a powerful man who is able to conduct such a campaign. This kind of endeavor requires great strength and a high level of persistence. If this is beyond the man's capacity, he must subordinate himself to a leader who possesses these characteristics.

The Maxim

It is vitally important that a leader share his thoughts -- his goals, his hopes -- with the people he leads, and makes sure that they embrace them and understand them. If a leader does not explain himself, he cannot expect his people to pull together to accomplish the goals he sets. When everyone understands the goals, they are able to do things at their own level that will help further those goals, and everyone's individual effort will be pointed in the same direction. If people don't understand the goals, unforeseen events can upset them and cause them to become confused. But when everyone is prepared and all pull together, great deeds can be accomplished.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] To be influential, a man must remain steady and directed towards a clearly-defined goal. Indecision defeats his purpose, confuses those he would influence, and wastes his resources. Gentleness, which is proper, refers to the manner of one's conduct, not to things like determination and goal orientation. If a leader is doubtful about the direction in which he wants to move, how can he expect his followers to move ahead with confidence? If he doesn't want to step aside and let someone of a more resolute character take the lead, then he must deliberately choose a carefully thought-through course and proceed slowly but orderly.

2. [9] It often happens that people fall under the influence of mythical ideas of doubtful origin. Often, no one knows exactly where such ideas came from, and are unable to find any rational reason for clinging to them. They are rumors or traditions or delusions or prejudices or old-wives tales that have been passed around by word of mouth, but which many people cling to and allow to influence their actions. When such ideas stand in the way of progress, it is necessary to examine them closely and take a completely rational, scientific approach to them. Where did these ideas come from? How did they get started? Is there any basis for them in reality? Are they based mainly on irrational fears? Most often, these ideas are fictions implanted in the minds of gullible believers by priests and charlatans who have something to gain by spreading such falsehoods. By discussing the subject openly, clearly identifying these deceptions, revealing the lack of an intelligent basis, and exposing the real reasons why they have been passed along, these false ideas are brought out into the light of day and deprived of their power over people.

3. [9] There is a point beyond which careful consideration and reflection becomes dalliance and procrastination. Unending questions about which path to take turns into a hindrance to

progress and an excuse for doing nothing. After all the important facets have been identified and taken into account, a decision should be made, and it becomes time to move on. By going back over a decision and endlessly reconsidering and re-evaluating the basis for the decision, the energy needed to move ahead is dissipated, a person loses his initiative, and he sinks into a sea of self-doubt. New facts always require that a decision be reconsidered; but rehashing old facts and past decisions is a waste of time and effort.

4. [6] A superior man possessing long and valuable experience occupies a highly responsible position. He is a man of modest character, but he has great enthusiasm and determination. He is a good organizer and a careful planner, and he is unafraid to face difficulties and take the needed action. He performs his tasks with a high sense of rectitude, his work is a great service to mankind, and his beneficial influence encourages all who associate with him. Such a man possesses all the keys to success.

5. [9] The man enters upon work that has had a mediocre beginning. Great changes are needed if the goals of the enterprise are to be successfully met. His entrance upon the scene provides the opportunity to make the vast changes that are needed. If carefully planned and well-executed, all can be accomplished successfully. But there are very many changes that need to be made, and many of them are quite complicated. The need for change is obvious, but exactly what those changes should be is what is difficult and what has prevented their being implemented already. The man, therefore, does not rush into the many changes, since that might produce confusion and failure. He plans each change precisely and takes whatever time might be necessary so that he is sure everything will be done right and will correct the problem. Then after the change is effected, the man does not then move on to something else. Not at all. He carefully reviews the changes and assures himself that they have been carried out as intended and have indeed solved the problem. He is also careful to see to it that workers do not slip back into old habits and revert to the old ways of doing things. This kind of checking can only be done over a considerable period of time. If he makes these kinds of careful plans and then carefully reviews the changes that were made, he can feel confident that his work will be successful.

Top. [9] The man sees clearly the misconceptions and delusions he is up against, but he lacks the power and influence to overcome them. These ideas are strongly held, and he is unable to convince people to abandon them. If he tries to attack these ideas, he will convince no one, and turn everyone against him. Unfortunately, there is nothing he can do about this. He must accept the situation and learn to live with it.

58. A Time of Joyous Collaboration

The Decision

A MAN with a joyous attitude attracts others to himself and is able to exert great influence upon them. This enables him to unite with others in the performance of great endeavors, for men are delighted to enlist in a joint effort when the coming together gladdens their hearts. This joy that unites men together is not based on silliness and frivolity, however, but on purity of intent, a sense of confidence, and the prospect for achieving success. When men are united together with the assurance of success in the pursuit of a noble and honorable goal, the feeling of joy becomes contagious. Such joyful feelings make success all the more certain

because they awaken a high level of enthusiasm and a willingness on the part of all participants to make extraordinary efforts to achieve the common goal. Joyousness, therefore, rests upon a firm commitment within, and a gentle and friendly manner without. Friction and animosity are completely unknown. Camaraderie and mutual assistance abound. Such an attitude is the basis for rightful action and the necessary ingredient for great success. Force and domination can sometimes obtain the appearance of success, but it is not a sustainable drive, and it eventually undermines morale. But when men are united by high spirits and enthusiasm, they make extraordinary exertions and willingly endure all manner of hardships and sacrifices.

The Maxim

The best conditions for learning occur when there is an exchange of knowledge in a friendly environment between persons who are interested in sharing their views with one another. That kind of social interaction gives learning a vitality that makes it an engaging experience for everyone, and it enables participants to explore the hidden corners of topics that an individual might easily overlook when studying alone. The coming together of many different ideas and diverse viewpoints enables everyone to understand the extent to which concepts may be applied and used to explore areas that any given individual might otherwise avoid. This kind of learning becomes much broader, and much more integrated with an individual's total experience, than is the learning that occurs when a person is isolated from other learners.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] A man experiences joy within himself and is not dependent on any external approval. He needs neither praise nor the approval of the world because his confidence rests on a heart that is honest and that honestly seeks what is right. Since his heart is open and his mind is not filled with self-centered ideas, since he himself is content and is free of acquisitive desires as well as emotional revulsions, he journeys through life with happiness and good fortune as his lot.

2. [9] Any man may sometimes be tempted to associate with inferior people and indulge in entertainments that are vulgar and degrading. But a superior man finds such activities distasteful and invariably regrets the time wasted on them, even if only for a short while. Eventually, he realizes that such dalliance is futile, that there is no real pleasure involved, and he resolves to avoid such diversions completely. Even his inferior associates recognize that he experiences no real joy in such things, and they cease trying to persuade him to accompany them.

3. [6] The superior man finds joy in his very existence. His thoughts and meditations bring him pleasure as does his work and his recreational activities, which are educational, uplifting and enlightening. But the inferior man is empty inside. He has no interest in constructive activities or enlightening experiences. Instead, he seeks entertainments and diversions that will distract him from a recognition of his inner vacuum. He is miserable if he is isolated and alone for any length of time. He depends on the external world to fill his emptiness, and his lack of an internal life attracts an endless stream of empty diversions. The more he indulges in filling this void with idle pleasures, the less he is able to cultivate the

life of his mind. His spirit shrivels, his personality deteriorates, and his life sinks deeper into meaninglessness.

4. [9] If a man cannot decide between the enlightenment and development of his mind, and the idle entertainments offered by the world, he will feel himself torn between them. It is a choice between the deeper joys of cultural activities, and the frivolous pleasures of mindless amusements. Finally he realizes that distractions have no depth and provide no genuine satisfaction; that only the finer pleasures of art, literature and similar uplifting activities bring any lasting satisfactions; that meaningless entertainments leave him disappointed, whereas meaningful ones make him feel better about himself. The choice becomes obvious, the uncertainty is eliminated, and he enjoys a richer, happier existence.

5. [9] A good man with worldly contacts will meet persons or opportunities that mislead him into unrewarding and unprofitable activities. Often, these diversions seem harmless at first, and a person can easily allow them to take over more and more of his time. The harmful effects are so little noticed, and their intrusion is so gradual, the man is hardly aware of what is happening or of the danger he is slipping into. But if he becomes aware of what is has been going on and awakens to the danger, he can take steps to extricate himself, and he escapes unharmed.

Top. [6] A man has allowed himself to be seduced by empty pleasures that encourage his self-indulgence. If he has no inner depth, no central core of being, these diversions easily take over his whole life and he cares about nothing else. He is completely possessed by them, they have in fact taken over his life, and he is no longer in control. Whatever becomes of him is determined by these outside forces, not by himself. If his diversions are physically harmful, he will be physically harmed. If they are intellectually degenerative, his intellect will suffer. He is at their mercy.

59. Dissolving Divisiveness

The Decision

PEOPLE are brought together by dissolving the sentiments of individual, self-centered interest that tend to make a man think only about his own concerns and what will benefit him separate and apart from everyone else. Rather than being an expression of man's essential nature, self-centered interest is actually a block or deterrent to the full flowering of an individual's real nature. Man is obviously a social animal, and his highest development could hardly be reached apart from his fellow man. This interrelationship is depicted by ceremonies, both religious and civil, that involve large groups of people coming together to perform various sorts of ritual observance. These gatherings help impress upon the consciousness of man his connections and his interdependence with other men. The emotions aroused by these ceremonies reinforces the common heritage of the participants. It is through these kinds of collective activities that the myth of isolated individualism is dissolved and people are able to work together to accomplish great undertakings and achieve great social goals. Only a leader who has freed himself from a focus on self-interests can lead a people in that direction, however. If he thinks only of his own gain, or the profit obtained for his associates and supporters, he is already corrupt and could never inspire others to be uncorrupted.

The Maxim

All too easily, people fall into a mode of thinking that isolates them from their fellow man. Their selfishness and obsession with worldly possessions hardens their feelings towards one another, and they lose sight of the fact that "we are all in the same boat" -- that in many vital senses, we all share the same fate, and we all can benefit if we will help one another. This tendency towards isolation can be overcome by religious devotion. By humbling themselves before the Supreme Deity and realizing that their existence represents but a brief struggle in a creation extending over infinite time, they can join with their fellow men in worship and experience the fellowship of similarly situated men.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] As soon as divisiveness arises, it should be faced up to and eradicated. If a man waits until it gains a foothold, it will be much more difficult to eliminate, and may, in fact, bring down disaster. As soon as evidences of discord, distrust and dislike begin to arise, it is important to get to the source of the disagreement, to discuss the differences, to uncover them and eliminate them through mutual understanding, so that all can return to working together in mutually supportive ways.

2. [9] As soon as an individual detects in himself an alienation from his fellow men, when he realizes that he mistrusts some and dislikes others, it is essential that he take steps to eliminate these divisive feelings. He should not let himself slip into a growing separation unawares, but should rely on his own inner examination of the causes, based on a sense of justice and fairness, and a wish to be on good terms with everyone. He should not let ill will fester, for this has a deteriorating effect upon his own personality and can only lead to worse and worse relationships with his fellow man. If he is able to resolve his bad feelings and heal the breach in his relationships, he will avoid a situation that can only lead to regret.

3. [6] When a man's sense of duty calls him to responsibilities that are far beyond his personal interests, it becomes necessary for him to forget about himself and his mundane needs. What he seeks to accomplish will be of enormous benefit to mankind and is of far greater importance than his own material existence. So he abandons such personal concerns and is thereby enabled to complete the great and difficult task that lies before him. By focusing entirely on his calling, on the job that lies ahead, and on the accomplishment of this thing above all other things that might concern him, he arrives at the concentrated state of mind that will permit him to achieve this great humanitarian goal.

4. [6] A man engaged in work that is for the benefit of mankind does not allow himself to be concerned with the interests of those closely associated with himself. What he seeks is of far greater importance than the acquisitive wishes of self-centered friends. He cannot find the proper approach nor develop the proper policies if he allows himself to descend to such petty private interests. What he seeks is far greater than the needs of any single individual, and only he who is able to go beyond such small matters is capable of achieving great and lasting things. Not everyone is able to see this, however. Only he whose vision encompasses the great connectedness of all humanity.

5. [9] There are times when ideas have enormous power. When people are torn apart from one another, when what was a great movement is breaking up with disputes and disagree-

ments -- it is at just such a time that a great man can step in and electrify everyone with a solution, a purpose, an ideal that can bring all the fracturing groups together and prevent their scattering abroad. It is at just such a time -- just when it appears that everything is lost and all is dissolving into bickering factions -- that a tremendous insight can serve as a rallying point to bring everyone together and to resolve all their differences. This is the time when a man in a leadership position can eliminate misunderstandings and bring an entire movement back together.

Top. [9] By taking precipitate action, a man can rescue himself and all those associated with him. In this way, danger is avoided and all are saved from harm. He recognizes the danger, and he knows that it will soon do great harm to everyone if he fails to act and they remain where they are. Therefore he does whatever the situation demands in order to avoid the danger and to assure that everyone is out of harm's way. He does not remain to face the danger, nor to stand his ground against it. He escapes with all the people that are important to him, and escape is unquestionably the right move for him to make.

60. The Necessity of Limitations

The Decision

THE LIFE of man is defined by its limitations. Without limitations, man would be without purpose, goals, or direction. Limits must be set on everything to prevent excess and waste. Limits on expenditures establish economy and proper management. The limits on human activity determine the boundaries of morality and propriety in all its myriad forms. A superior man places limits on his personal interests, and this makes possible his loyalty to those above him, and his faithfulness to those below him. Limitations, therefore, are necessary for success in every area of human life. By learning to work within limitations, a man learns to manage his affairs in good times and bad. By keeping his expenditures within the limits of his income, a man can live without the pressing burdens of financial worries. The limitations imposed by nature tell a man which crops can be safely grown. Limitations imposed upon government officials prevent the adoption of excessive policies, while limitations placed upon the powers of government prevent the people from undermining their own welfare by demanding programs that reach beyond the nation's fiscal capacity. Nevertheless, in all things limitations must be reasonable and held within bounds. Excessive limitations placed upon one's personal life create narrowness and deprivation. Excessive limitations placed on others restrict their development and create resentment leading to rebellion. Limitations should contribute to the happiness of man, not to his destruction.

The Maxim

A man achieves success in his life by limiting his endeavors to a certain prescribed path. If he is unable to set goals and adopt clearly defined purposes, his activities will be without focus and whatever he accomplishes will only be by accident. More likely, he will have no purposeful activities at all, and he will waste his time and substance in being tossed to and fro by whatever external currents happen to play upon him. If everything is a possibility for him, nothing becomes a likelihood. Limitations, therefore, define the man as a person and outline his character. Strength of character requires that effort be pointed in a chosen direc-

tion. A superior man finds liberation, not by escaping all duties and responsibilities, but by limiting himself to a chosen field of beneficial action.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] Sometimes a man comes up against what seems at the time to be insurmountable limitations. When this happens, it is important that the man recognize the situation and not try to go beyond what is possible. By staying within the limits set on his forward movement, he is able to consolidate his resources, sharpen his skills, and adequately plan his next move. Then, when the time is ripe, he will be in a position to take whatever further steps are indicated at that time. Careful planning is necessary for the accomplishment of great enterprises.

2. [9] When a man prepares for action, there comes a time when preparation is complete, obstacles are out of the way, and action is most appropriate. Before that time, he is not really ready. After that time, he has missed the opportunity. If worrying and fretting cause him to delay when the time is ripe, the result will be failure.

3. [6] The man who seeks only the pleasures of frivolous entertainment has no sense of limitations. He is looking for as much of those things as he can find to fill as many hours in the day as he has. Such a path is hardly the way to a fulfilling life, and invariably leads to a sense of emptiness and futility. And just as invariably, he will seek to blame others or circumstances for his fruitlessness. Only when he comes to realize that the vacuity of his life is his own doing, that the path he pursues cannot possibly provide a sense of fulfillment, will he be able to focus himself and his life upon a more productive path.

4. [6] If a man's life is limited by artificial values that do not naturally suit him, he will get nowhere because all his energies are directed at maintaining the form while ignoring the substance. Limitations that lead to success exist for a purpose: they contribute directly to the achievement of the man's goals and purposes, and in fact are necessary to accomplish the goals successfully. Other kinds of limitations that only help make life more complicated and add nothing of themselves detract from the goal and siphon off energy needed to achieve it.

5. [9] A man who seeks to establish limitations on others cannot exempt himself. In fact, he will be much more successful if he presents himself as a model for limited behavior. "Do as I say, not as I do" has little influence on others and instead earns their contempt, not their respect. But if the man adopts the limitations himself and can show how successfully they work, his words and example will exert tremendous influence. With such an approach, success will come to all who adopt the limitations.

Top. [6] All normal men aspire to some degree of personal liberty. For a youth, a reasonable level of liberty is seen as an entitlement as he approaches adulthood. If limitations are imposed that go too far in suppressing what is seen as a reasonable degree of personal liberty, the normal, healthy person will surely rebel. If he who imposes the limitations thinks that he, as an authority figure, has the right to impose any limitations he chooses, no matter how severe, then his actions can only lead to disaster, because they violate human nature and force a reaction in their object. There is one exception to this rule, however. There are occasions when the strictest limitations are needed in order to heal the body or the mind. If a

person has lost control over his own behavior, if he is unable to do what he must or unable to resist what he must not, then it is necessary for him to submit himself to whatever limitations are required in order to rescue him from misfortune. These may indeed be unpleasant and even unbearable; but the difficulties that have engulfed him demand no less.

61. The Power of Truth

The Decision

To experience the Power of Truth in his activities, a man must have an open mind, free of bias and prejudice. Through this power, he is able to exert great influence on others, for there is nothing stronger and more enduring than truth. When, therefore, a man is aligned with truth, he cannot be dismissed. His actions rest on the foundations of the universe itself.

A person who acts in accord with truth is kind to others, because he knows the struggle that all have in finding and embracing what is true. He is respectful and receptive towards those who have a greater understanding of truth than himself, for he knows he has much to learn. Hence, there is no room in his character for arrogance; the knowledge of truth is infinite, and all her genuine seekers remain forever open to new discoveries. It is only through a united effort guided by truth that great works are possible. It is through the Power of Truth, therefore, that the development of all mankind is nurtured.

When a man must lead difficult people, he must place absolute reliance on what is true. With a mind that is receptive and that harbors no judgments of others whatsoever, he must understand those he would lead and see, as it were, through their eyes. He cannot do this if he harbors even a single judgment or conclusion in his mind about them. At the same time, he must stand firm in his commitment to truth and use his capacity to know truth in order to bring those he would lead to the right path. When actions are thus grounded in what is true, even the most difficult problems can be overcome.

That which is true leads invariably to that which is right. It is not the mere understanding of others, the mere experiencing of their point of view, that enables the superior man to lead. Deceitful men with evil intent act through similar understandings. It is by bringing the truth to bear on the understanding thus effected that he can exert a constructive influence.

When a leader must judge the acts of others, he seeks an understanding that penetrates to their heart. Thus, the truth of the situation is brought to light and reality is faced squarely. Every situation has its own unique circumstances, and the superior man recognizes and addresses these, and makes them a basis for his judgment.

The Maxim

When a leader must judge the mistakes of others, he should seek an understanding that penetrates to their heart and appreciates the individual circumstances surrounding the occasion. Thus, the truth of the situation is brought to light and the moral reality is faced squarely. Every situation has its own unique circumstances. The superior man recognizes and addresses these, and makes them a basis for his judgment. In this way, he does not just focus on the violation of a rule, but rather upon an understanding of the offender and his moral responsibility.

The Lines

1. [9] The man who relies on the Power of Truth must prepare himself. Such ability does not come casually neither is it the result of an instantaneous decision. It is a way of life. Only with such a serious attitude, developed over a long time, will he be uninfluenced by external circumstances and manipulative intents.
2. [9] A man's inner thoughts are reflected in his words and deeds, and his every expression has influence upon all around him. Others will respond to him if his inner being is congenial and his spirit resonates with their spirit. If his inner being is consonant with what is true, others will know, and his influence will spread far and wide. This influence depends on the Power of Truth; he cannot fake this influence.
3. [6] If a man's relationship with others rests on intimacy alone, and is not founded on truth, the man will be always off balance. All of his actions will depend on the response of his companions, not on the dictates of his own character. His stability will be controlled by circumstances.
4. [6] A man turns with respect to those who are stronger in the truth than he, but he stands firm against the contrary and divisive influences that have no part in truth. Only when he has an unwavering inner commitment to truth can he do this.
5. [9] A leader leads with the force of his whole character. His principles come from within and influence all around him. These principles are founded in what is true, and serve to unite all his followers. Without this foundation in truth, the unity breaks apart at the very first crisis.
6. [9] If a leader relies on empty pronouncements while his heart is not dedicated to truth, he may deceive many and succeed for a while, but in the end he must fail. Deception can never be the foundation for real advancement.

62. Leadership in Difficult Times

The Decision

A MAN of great modesty but of limited strength is not in a position favorable to leadership and great accomplishments. Nevertheless, he can be moderately successful if he takes certain precautionary steps. He should not attempt to embark upon any great enterprises, but should confine his activities to small projects that are within his means. A man of imagination can always envision great and noble projects, but it would be a mistake for a man with small resources to attempt such grandiose undertakings. It would be far better if he would confine himself to projects that can be accomplished easily with the resources available to him. Modesty and conscientiousness are always the key ingredients of the highest degree of success, but it is essential, when resources are limited, that modesty not become passivity and that conscientiousness not become pusillanimity. As a leader, the modest man must be careful to adhere to his inner strengths and not allow himself to become a powerless figure, swept along by the surrounding forces. Modesty does not equate with being spineless and impotent. It is imperative, if the man is to accomplish anything at all, that he retain the dignity and authority of his position and that he remain in complete control. His modesty and lack of strength only mean that he does not commence great tasks, that he remains cogni-

zant of his lack of resources and capabilities, and that he does not anticipate great successes or notoriety. He is sensible of the reality that conditions are not favorable for anything but modest gains, so he maintains a low profile and does not attempt any great reforms.

The Maxim

The superior man remains ever conscious of his duty to his fellow man. To the ordinary man, he may be seen as heavy-seeming, ponderous and overly serious. He is meticulous about things that others tend to ignore, and conscious of responsibilities that others tend to avoid. He is sincere in his attempts to empathize with those troubled in spirit, and always willing to help those in genuine difficulty. He is modest in his expenditures and unpretentious in his material possessions. This alone tends to differentiate him from other men. But in all things, he is content to live simply and with limited resources.

The Lines

Bottom. [6] A modest man, when resources are weak, should try to make the best of the situation as it presently exists. He should attempt improvements only as a last resort, when change becomes imperative and there are no other alternatives. If he tries to alter the situation before he is able to increase his strength and develop his resources, he is bound to fail. To go along with things as they have always been done may be quite unsatisfactory, but to attempt to improve them when conditions are unfavorable will at best result in a waste of time and accomplish nothing.

2. [6] The modest man does not stand on ceremony. He has a duty to perform, and if he is unable to do it in a way that reflects highly on himself, he will do it by whatever more modest means are available to him. At such times, he is led by duty, responsibility, and necessity, not by pride or a desire for recognition. This is not the time for him to seek acknowledgment of his status or recognition of his position. To accomplish his main task is his primary purpose.

3. [9] A righteous man who has done no wrong often feels that he has nothing to fear and that no one can touch him. As a result, his overconfidence leads him to neglect taking ordinary precautions that could save him from needless harm. He thinks that to take defensive measures would suggest that maybe he has something to hide, and perhaps he is not as upright as he tries to project. And so, he moves ahead while ignoring the possibility of threats to him and his integrity. But there are often dangers perpetrated by evil men who wish to attack even the most innocent, and to dismiss the possibility leaves a good man unprepared. To fail to take defensive actions in the face of such possibilities can leave even the most guiltless man subject to great difficulties that just a little bit of prevention could have avoided.

4. [9] Sometimes in a very difficult situation, a man can avoid an unfortunate outcome by doing nothing -- that is, by taking no action and simply stepping aside. Situations often have a way of healing themselves without any movement on the part of the person in a weak or potentially dangerous position. In an extremely dangerous situation, doing nothing at least assures that the man does not make a mistake. It may be that any positive act would make the situation worse and bring the man into danger. This does not mean that he gives up or abandons his cause; on the contrary, he continues working towards his goal inwardly

and privately. He remains ever ready to accept an improvement of the situation and to receive benefits, but he makes no outward move in that direction.

5. [6] A man is fully capable of leadership and of helping the people find a way out of difficult times, but he is unable to do anything because he is in a weak position where he is alone and without the right kind of assistance. What he envisions will be of great benefit to the people, but he cannot accomplish it by himself; the job requires assistants with special skills. His first step, therefore, is to find helpers who can provide the needed skills and complete the task. These skilled helpers themselves are modest men and not well known, but they have proven their abilities by the work they have done in the past. By identifying these helpers and seeking them out, a good working team can be assembled, and the great and difficult task can be accomplished.

Top. [6] In a time when only minor tasks can be contemplated, if a man is ambitious and seeks to accomplish a great work, and then refuses to back off regardless of the difficulties, he cannot avoid an unfortunate outcome. Such a man, who sets his will against all indicators and refuses to heed the signs of the time, has placed himself in opposition to the movement of Fate. There is nothing that can save him from a disastrous ending.

63. A Transition From Old to New

The Decision

AT A TIME of transition when the old is being transformed into the new, everything seems to be in order and to be coming along nicely. But it is at just such a time that great care is necessary. Because everything seems to be going smoothly, it is all too easy to relax and stop paying close attention. Since everything is going well, we say to ourselves, "Let good enough alone!" or "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Such maxims may sometimes be appropriate, depending on the circumstances. But when a man considers things in the context of change, he realizes that nothing remains steady; everything is in a constant state of flux. If it isn't broken now, it may well be after a brief period, and it may very well become so if it isn't carefully attended to now. Remember the law that states that a system left to itself tends towards disorganization, not organization. Thus, when everything seems to be in order and approaching an optimum state of existence, it is at just such a time that an excessive movement can remove it from that optimum state and introduce a tendency towards chaos. But it is also at just such a time that most men are inclined to divert their attention to things that need fixing, and it is through that kind of inattention that evil slips in unawares, that minor faults are overlooked, and that signs of decay are not noticed. A decline after reaching the pinnacle of success is a general rule affecting all things that exist in time. Nevertheless, this is not an absolutely inevitable rule. It may be avoided by expending great effort and exercising great care.

The Maxim

Just when things are going well is the time when something is likely to come along and disrupt the steady upward process. A wise man recognizes this fact, and does not assume that things will go well forever. It is at just such times when other men are turning their minds to other matters that the wise man increases his attention and prepares for a reversal of

fortune. Then, when the reversal comes, he is not taken by surprise, is already prepared for it, and is little injured by the ensuing decline.

The Lines

Bottom. [9] Immediately after a significant transition takes place, the momentum of change is still effective, and there is a tendency for it to be carried too far. If change is overdone, it creates uncertainty and weakness, a need for a pullback, and the introduction of confusion that could lead to chaos and disaster. The wise man, therefore, exercises caution at this time when everyone else is pushing ahead with elation and recklessness. He holds back, and even though he may receive some slight injury from the pullback that necessarily follows when a general movement goes too far, his caution prevents the minor loss from becoming a major one.

2. [6] After a complete change to a new order of things, a man feels that the new leadership is ignoring him, and that he lacks the opportunities that are necessary for the advancement of what he seeks to accomplish. Those in new positions of leadership may seem content with the changes that the recent transition has brought, and care nothing for new projects or developments. They are content to sit back and rest upon what they have done. Everyone seems to have lost their sense of mission and their interest in moving forward, and are now chiefly concerned with their own power, position and reputation. This causes the man to consider some ostentatious way of bringing his ideas to everyone's attention, but this would be a mistake. If he becomes a part of the same struggle for power and position that engages everyone else, all that he intends will be corrupted and will come to naught. His wisest course is to guard his integrity, maintain his position, consolidate his resources, refine his plans, and develop his skills in preparation for a time when they can be profitably employed. After the present hollow scene has played itself out, a desire for substance and for men with great ideas will arise, and the man's day will arrive. If he stands firm for his principles and for his solid vision, if his goals are really worthwhile, it is impossible that they will lose their value. All he needs to do is wait patiently for the wheel of Fate to turn, and he will be in a position to realize his goals.

3. [9] When a time of transition is complete and the new order is well-established, a new and revitalized administration usually seeks to expand its powers and enlarge its field of influence. It is filled with energy, and to fail to employ that energy in some constructive way is to invite stagnation and decline. This can mean a long and difficult struggle to move into other territories and incorporate them into the expanding enterprise, however. In order for this to succeed, it must be done correctly and in accordance with what is right and just. It should not be parceled out to parvenus who would not be considered worthy to hold a leading position at home. To expand an operation, but to include inferior people as part of the expansion, is a sure way to bring on disaster to the entire enterprise.

4. [6] When a transition is complete and a community is at the height of its power, it is almost inevitable that some kind of scandal will occur that points to the presence of evil and corruption. This will surely invoke outrage from the people, but since the general tenor of the transition is highly favorable, these problems are easily dispensed with, and the people are mollified. Nevertheless, the wise man looks upon these outcroppings of corruption as

symptomatic of hidden internal weakness and decay. He studies the matter carefully, looks for causes, and takes corrective action.

5. [9] In the evolution of civilization, there occurs growth and development in the ways men express their spiritual feelings. This, too, is subject to transitional periods in which simple devotion is replaced by more complex forms and more expensive settings. But in spiritual matters, empty dogma, ostentatious show, material magnificence, and gaudy spectacle are completely without importance. Indeed, they tend to encourage external appearances that serve only as facades that hide a vast emptiness and a profound meaninglessness in the spirit of man. What really counts is the inner man, the seriousness of his convictions, and his respect for, allegiance to, and compliance with universal law. Ritual and dogma too often serve as a cloak that is thrown over the inner poverty of inferior and evil men, but a simple and honest respect for the powers of the Universe are the marks of a truly devout man.

Top. [6] When there is a transition bringing with it significant change, there is often a temptation to turn around, look back, and contemplate the mistakes and evils of the past. But this is a dangerous distraction and can lead to unfortunate consequences. By contemplating the past, a man renews and reinforces his attachment to the past and the power it has over him. If he is to experience change and renewal, if he is to pass through a transition from what he once was to the new man he aspires to be, he must put the past behind him, let go "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and set his sights upon what lies before him. It is his dwelling on the past that ties him to it, and that makes him a prisoner of its injuries. Negativity is not eliminated by driving it home again and again, but by dispensing with it and replacing it with a new viewpoint and a positive, progressive outlook. By turning his face so that he looks forward, not backward, he escapes the past and enjoys the flowering of a new summer and a productive life.

64. Nearing Completion

The Decision

Work is nearing completion. The task of creating order out of disorder and chaos is almost finished. This is like drawing one great effort to a close in preparation for a new phase of life. It is difficult, because one must tie together the remaining loose ends of a great undertaking. But the likelihood of success is also great because the end is in view and the efforts needed to bring it to a worthy conclusion are in evidence. Nevertheless, one must be extremely cautious; it is not a time for boldness. An error now could bring all previous efforts to naught. Too much is at stake, too much has been invested, to put everything at risk now. It is not a time to test new directions or methods; it is a time to complete carefully the plans and intentions that have guided you thus far.

Finishing up a great task requires that one carefully analyze the remaining components and properly assess their place in the completed whole. That view of the completed whole is possible now, so it is necessary to relate the unfinished portions to the completed structure, which can now be projected. This is not easy, because that relationship is not obvious and requires careful consideration. But if all these remaining elements can be put together in

their proper order and relationship, the job will be finished. To do this, however, one must have a clear understanding and formulate a valid plan.

The Maxim

Finishing up a great task requires that a man carefully analyze the remaining components and properly assess their place in the completed whole. A view of the completed whole is possible now, so it is necessary to relate the unfinished portions to the completed structure, since all of it can now be projected. This is not easy, because the concluding effort requires careful consideration and precise control. But if all these remaining elements can be put together in their proper order and relationship so as to produce the desired result, the job will be finished successfully. To do this, however, one must have a clear understanding of the end result and formulate a valid plan for getting there.

The Lines

1. [6] Rushing ahead to completion is a mistake. Even though completion is near, things must be allowed to work themselves out in their own time. Judicious caution when the end is in sight avoids a regrettable calamity.
2. [9] Patience and caution are needed as the end approaches, but it is important not to let patience turn into indifference and carelessness. Even though one must not rush ahead, one must still keep completion in mind and work steadily towards it if ultimate success is to be achieved. Constant attention and effort is still required, but it must be controlled and restrained.
3. [6] The time has arrived! Completion of the task is at hand! But one lacks the resources to bring things to a close. Forging ahead regardless of capacity to do so could only result in catastrophe. At such a time, it is necessary to find those who can add to the effort and then, under these new circumstances, make the supreme effort needed to bring it to a successful close.
4. [9] The final phase requires enormous effort and determination. It is necessary to proceed as though with one heart and one mind and not be deterred by doubters. Evil forces may try to intervene, but they must be vigorously overcome. Once the battle is over, once completion is realized, the rewards of successful completion will be won.
5. [6] Completion is accomplished. The culmination of a long and faithful struggle is finally realized. The rewards for all one's efforts are at hand. The result is an important and useful contribution that will remain in existence for the benefit of many.
6. [9] Completion brings celebration, and why not? The great work is completed, and the benefits are to be enjoyed. Nevertheless, one must remain circumspect and celebrate with discretion. It would be foolish to detract from the completion of a massive undertaking with a single act of foolishness.

Comments

Hexagram 33

Comment on the Decision

One is reminded of the strategy that General Washington used to defeat the British in the American Revolutionary War. He almost never engaged in a full-fledged encounter with the British forces, but withdrew and used small acts of harassment to deplete their strength. Eventually, the British were exhausted, were led into a trap, and forced to surrender. It was a brilliant strategy, but had Washington engaged in a full assault upon the superior British forces, he almost surely would have been soundly defeated, and the Revolutionary cause would have been lost.

Hexagram 41

Comment on the Decision

The teaching here is similar to that found in the Jefferson Bible:

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

72 And Jesus answered him, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

73 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

74 The second is thus: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

75 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

76 And the scribe said unto him, Thou speakest rightly, Master, in that thou hast said, God is one; and there is none other but he:

77 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love thy neighbor as thyself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

Hexagram 49

Comment on Line Two

"The services [are needed] of [a] great leader whose talents and whose weight of character [are] peculiarly necessary to get the government so under way as that it may afterwards be carried on by subordinate characters." --Thomas Jefferson to David Humphreys, 1789.

"The moderation and virtue of a single character [i.e., George Washington] have probably prevented [the American] Revolution from being closed, as most others have been, by a subversion of that liberty it was intended to establish." --Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 1784.

The American Revolution was one of the few that set forth a document listing the causes for the revolution and the general principles which the revolution sought to install, i.e., popular self-government. This was the Declaration of Independence, although its purpose was not to set forth the goals of the revolution. Rather, it sought to make a formal declaration as an independent group of states so that foreign nations would feel at liberty to deal with the Americans as an independent nation. Nevertheless, the document did set forth "the necessities, the purposes, and the goals of the revolution."

It is interesting to note that the French Revolution did not have a leader comparable to George Washington, neither did it have a revolutionary document that set forth the goals of the Revolution, though there was a Declaration of Rights. The absence of such a leader that all the people could look up to was no doubt one of the major factors why the French Revolution ended in chaos.

Hexagram 49

Comment on the Fourth Line

The U. S. Declaration of Independence begins with the basis of human rights, which are the highest aspirations of the human spirit, and which served as a foundation for the justification of the revolutionary cause.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights; that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." --Declaration of Independence as originally written by Thomas Jefferson, 1776.

Hexagram 49

Comment on the Bottom Line

"Unsuccessful rebellions, indeed, generally establish the encroachments on the rights of the people, which have produced them." --Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 1787.

Hexagram 50

Comment on Line Five

One cannot read this line of the hexagram without thinking of some of the recent U. S. Presidents. Whatever one's politics, one must admit that both George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan are, or were, kindly and relatively modest men. They themselves did not have exceptional abilities in governmental administration, but they were able to gather around themselves able men who were capable of doing a good job running the government. Then, one might compare those administrators with Lyndon Johnson, who was considerably more arrogant and hardly a modest man. He had some fairly competent men to assist him,

but it was Johnson who ran the show, and his competent men did not have much influence other than to do their assigned tasks efficiently. Johnson certainly went his own way in Vietnam, and the result was one of the biggest disasters this country has experienced. Many of Johnson's able assistants left before the end of his second term. Johnson was never a "kindly and modest man," and this line of the hexagram cannot be said to describe the course his administration took, but the turn of events illustrate what happens when an arrogant leader dominates able assistants.

Hexagram 50

Comment on Line Three

"Our dependency makes slaves out of us, especially if this dependency is a dependency of our self-esteem. If you need encouragement, praise, pats on the back from everybody, then you make everybody your judge." --Fritz Perls

Hexagram 52

Comment on the Third Line

A Zen master once described the process of meditating thus:

"Concentrate attention in the ear, hearing all sounds at once and refusing none. A person becomes disturbed by noises if he refuses these sounds entrance. You cannot refuse thoughts that rise to the shelf of the mind like air bubbles from unconsciousness and semi-consciousness to consciousness. Nevertheless, such bubble must be burst before they reach the highest state. Let these thoughts come, but do not entertain any of them. Your mind must be like a mirror, reflecting but never holding what it reflects."

Hexagram 52

Comment on the Fourth Line

Maintaining a quiet mind is a good idea during other kinds of activities also. Jefferson recommended it when walking.

"Never think of taking a book with you [on your walks]. The object of walking is to relax the mind. You should therefore not permit yourself even to think while you walk; but divert yourself by the objects surrounding you." --Thomas Jefferson to Peter Carr, 1785.

Hexagram 53

Comment on the Bottom Line

There once was a young man in his late teens. He was just entering upon adulthood, and he was just beginning to understand the responsibilities of an adult as well as the temptations and challenges that an adult faces. He was idealistic, and he deliberately made a strange resolution: he resolved that he wanted to know "The Truth," even if it made him unhappy. He dedicated himself to the Truth. What a hard road he had taken for himself! In a world submerged in lies and deceit, full of religious people who overtly confess that they believe

in telling lies "in order to make things go smoother." In a business world, where an honest man is avoided and only taken advantage of. In an academic world, where ego is more important than truth, and where a truth presented without considering the feelings of those who disagree is taken as an act of war. And here is a young man who chose to go against all of that! Imagine the ridicule and the criticism! He was mocked and laughed at -- treated as a fool for being honest and truthful. And, in fact, he suffered many indignities from which he could have saved himself simply by telling a lie. He himself was not really a strong person and hardly perfect. His attempts to seek the truth caused him to fumble, to fail, to embarrass himself, to make mistakes that others avoid simply by following a conventional, well-trodden path. Occasionally, he came across someone who respected him for what he was trying to be. Perhaps there was only one or two people in his life who admired him. Battered and bruised, he struggled with his own development for many decades. How easy it would have been if he could just follow the path that most people follow! But after a while, he couldn't do that if he wanted to. He was beyond that stage, and any attempts to be other than what he was end in dismal failure. But he kept the faith, even if shakily, and eventually the pieces began to fall into place. His life began to work for him, and he had no regrets.

Hexagram 53

Comment on the Third Line

There once was a man who held a highly responsible professional position at a governmental agency. His work was outstanding, and he was able to push through many innovative changes in the program he was responsible for. He was so good at his job, his performance actually raised the status of his position well above the level at which it was rated. For this reason, he applied to have his job upgraded, not so much for himself, but to upgrade the area for which he was responsible. But instead of trying to move up one position, he pushed to move up two! To make matters worse, he was in no way discreet about all this, but did it quite openly. Everyone knew he was applying to have his position upgraded. Unfortunately, this made his supervisors very uncomfortable, and even though he actually merited a two-step increase, he received only one. But even then, everyone felt threatened by him after the way he pushed for the upgrade, and they did everything they could to hold him back in his higher position, and tried to defeat his progressive moves. As things ended up, he had less power and influence after his upgrade than he had before, he became frustrated and disgusted, and within a year he had resigned his position and was gone. Other people in the same organization had gotten position upgrades, and no one even knew about it. Without doubt, if the man had been more discreet and had not pushed so hard, he could have gotten the modest upgrade he actually did get, no one would have felt threatened, and everything would have worked out better for him and all concerned.

Hexagram 61

Comment on the Third Line

"Our dependency makes slaves out of us, especially if this dependency is a dependency of our self-esteem. If you need encouragement, praise, pats on the back from everybody, then you make everybody your judge." --Fritz Perls

Hexagram 63

Comment on the Fourth Line

This line brings to mind a situation that occurred during the Eisenhower administration. It was revealed that Eisenhower's chief of staff, Sherman Adams, had received a vicuna coat from someone with an interest in influencing the government. This resulted in a great uproar in the press and with the public, but Eisenhower enjoyed a high degree of popularity, the chief of staff was dismissed, and the incident was generally overlooked. Nevertheless, this and similar incidents probably weighed on Eisenhower's mind, and when he left office, he delivered a message in which he warned against the dangers to the government arising from the "military-industrial complex." His statement was taken as highly significant, and is frequently referred to, even today.

Hexagram 63

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Hexagram 63

Comment on the Maxim

One can only think of the typical stock market investor who, when the market has been rising and is actually reaching its peak, thinks it will go on rising forever. The real novice often is finally convinced and buys at just that point, whereas the seasoned investor knows that stocks never keep going up forever, prepares himself for the inevitable decline, takes much or all of his profits, and thereby protects his investments in the downturn.

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Born in New Orleans, Louisiana (Feb. 7, 1930)

Graduate of Jesuit High School, New Orleans (1947)

Graduate of Southeastern Louisiana College, Hammond, B.Mus. Ed. (1952)

Employed as estimator in construction industry, Baton Rouge (1955-62)

Graduate of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, M.S. in L.S. (1969)

Head Librarian, Shenandoah College, Winchester, Va. (1969-74)

Section Head (Supervisor), DBPH, Library of Congress (1974-78)

Regional Librarian, BPHLS, Oregon State Library (1983)

Self-employed, Investor, Consultant, etc. (1978-present)

Publications

About 20 various booklets, articles in newspapers and music journals, plus a large number of Letters to the Editor of the New Orleans Times-Picayune and other newspapers. Editor of the "Musical Mainstream," a Library of Congress publication. The article, "Music for the Blind and Physically Handicapped from the Library of Congress," *American Music Teacher*, Feb/Mar, 1976, was included in the anthology, *Meeting the Needs of the Handicapped: A Resource for Teachers and Librarians*, edited by Carol H. and James L. Thomas, and published in 1980 by Oryx Press.

Significant Accomplishments

Initiated the "Music Article Guide Service," which provided blind patrons with a bi-monthly index to articles in a large number of periodicals, and the actual articles read on tape upon request. Wrote specifications and negotiated contract for the LC publication, "Dictionary of Braille Music Signs," by Bettye Krolick, which received the highest "Distinguished" award from the Society for Technical Communication. Devised a method for producing large print music scores from the printed score (previously hand copied) for partially blind music patrons at the Library of Congress.

Thomas Jefferson Web Sites

I first became interested in the writings of Thomas Jefferson after a visit with my son, Bobby, who had for some time been a student of Jefferson's life and writings. We both agreed that there was a need for some kind of publication that might make Jefferson's ideas on politics and government more readily accessible to the public. At first, we thought of something that might be freedom's alternative to "Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung," perhaps even calling it "Quotations from Chairman Jefferson." I began making a collection on handwritten cards of all the relevant quotes from Jefferson's writings, eventually amassing about two thousand excerpts. I then considered compiling these excerpts into an organized, composite work, presenting Jefferson's thoughts on the theory and practice of government in his own words and in a continuous narrative. A couple of my friends, Kent Nelson and David Dillon, strongly urged me to get a computer to facilitate this work, but that did not happen until much later.

After struggling hard with the composite-work project, and after finally acquiring a computer (again with the assistance of Bobby, who is an industrial engineer), it appeared that a continuous narrative was not practicable. I then abandoned that approach and put the materials I had collected into the form of a series of quotations, organized under topics, and, with Bobby helping on setting up the homepage, we installed Thomas Jefferson on Politics & Government on the World Wide Web. Beginning with hardly more than 300 quotes, the collection has grown, and now contains almost every significant expression of principle that Jefferson made with respect to politics and government. Although the bulk of the work has been done, there is still some refinements that are possible, and I expect that the work of minor rearrangements and additions will go on indefinitely.

After the Jefferson Quotes site was substantially complete, I began a second site, The Jeffersonian Perspective, in order to use the quotes and provide "commentary on today's social and political issues based on the writings of Thomas Jefferson." I have found that the more I work with Jefferson's writings and the better I understand his point of view, the more I am impressed with this, our most brilliant Founding Father and, in my opinion, possibly the greatest political philosopher who has ever lived. In his many writings, Jefferson described a political philosophy that was realistic, practical, and understandable, but also one that was based on a fundamental comprehension of the meaning of human existence in a state of freedom. No one before or since has approached his wisdom and insights.

Later on, I became acquainted with the compilation Jefferson made for his own use of the ethical teachings of Jesus, familiarly known as The Jefferson Bible. Jefferson took the Gospel stories and extracted all the moral teachings, believing that there was a great historical person back there, but that the "religious people" had taken that reality and almost buried it. The result of his labors was this compilation of the moral philosophy of Jesus, which Jefferson considered the sublimest the world has ever known. This was not available on the Web, it was the foundation of Jefferson's own moral code, and it seemed a perfect companion to the other two sites.

In the Spring of 1997, while trying to track down a quote attributed to Jefferson, I obtained a copy of B. L. Rayner's Life of Thomas Jefferson, from the New Orleans Public Library and, as the saying goes, "fell in love." Here was a lively and interesting biography by someone who lived at the same time as Jefferson. The book was full of the republican spirit and demonstrated how Jefferson was the intellectual force behind the creation of the American republic, and truly, as Willard Sterne Randall has written, "invented the United States of America." And seeing that the book was neglected and forgotten, I determined to make it available on the World Wide Web. After six weeks of intensive typing, a revised and corrected edition was produced and installed on June 15, 1997.

On December 1, 1997, the Thomas Jefferson on Politics & Government website was moved to the Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia. This new location will allow the website to outlive the editor, and will also provide the benefits of specialized facilities at the University.

Other Interests

Classical music, books (non-fiction) and book collecting, politics and writing are my chief interests. My favorite TV shows are: Charlie Rose and 60 Minutes. I have two sons (Bobby and Carl) and seven grandsons (Bobby's sons: George and John; Carl's sons: Carl, Bobby, Michael, Christopher and Anthony). Bobby (Eyler Robert, Jr.) completed his PhD in Engineering Science at LSU in 1998, and is now an Assistant Professor in the School of Engineering Technology at the University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg. Bobby has his own home page at:

<http://www.set.usm.edu/~bcoates>

I would enjoy hearing from anyone on any topic of mutual interest. My email address is:

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Metairie, LA 70002

I pledge allegiance to the Constitution
of the United States of America
and to the Republic which it defines,
One Nation, by the grace of God,
securing our inalienable rights to
life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all.