

LXII. THE HSIÃO KWO HEXAGRAM.



Hsião Kwo indicates that (in the circumstances which it implies) there will be progress and attain-

ment. But it will be advantageous to be firm and correct. (What the name denotes) may be done in small affairs, but not in great affairs. (It is like) the notes that come down from a bird on the wing;—to descend is better than to ascend. There will (in this way) be great good fortune.

1. The first line, divided, suggests (the idea of) a bird flying, (and ascending) till the issue is evil.

2. The second line, divided, shows its subject passing by his grandfather, and meeting with his

grandmother; not attempting anything against his ruler, but meeting him as his minister. There will be no error.

3. The third line, undivided, shows its subject taking no extraordinary precautions against danger; and some in consequence finding opportunity to assail and injure him. There will be evil.

4. The fourth line, undivided, shows its subject falling into no error, but meeting (the exigency of his situation), without exceeding (in his natural course). If he go forward, there will be peril, and he must be cautious. There is no occasion to be using firmness perpetually.

5. The fifth line, divided, (suggests the idea) of dense clouds, but no rain, coming from our borders in the west. It also (shows) the prince shooting his arrow, and taking the bird in a cave.

6. The sixth line, divided, shows its subject not meeting (the exigency of his situation), and exceeding (his proper course). (It suggests the idea of) a bird flying far aloft. There will be evil. The case is what is called one of calamity and self-produced injury.

LXII. The name Hsião Kwo is explained both by reference to the lines of the hexagram, and to the meaning of the characters. The explanation from the lines appears immediately on comparing them with those of Tâ Kwo, the 28th hexagram. There the first and sixth lines are divided, and between are four undivided lines; here the third and fourth lines are undivided, and outside each of them are two divided lines. The undivided or yang lines are great, the divided or yin lines are called small. In Hsião Kwo the divided or small lines predominate. But this peculiar structure of the figure could be of no interest to the student, if it were not for the meaning of the name, which is 'small excesses' or 'exceeding in what is small.' The author, accepted by us as king Wăn,

had in his mind our distinction of essentials and non-essentials. Is it ever good to deviate from what is recognised as the established course of procedure? The reply is—never in the matter of right; but in what is conventional and ceremonial—in what is non-essential—the deviation may be made, and will be productive of good. The form may be given up, but not the substance. But the thing must be done very carefully,—humbly and reverently, and in small matters.

The symbolism of the bird is rather obscure. The whole of it is intended to teach humility. It is better for the bird to descend, keeping near to where it can perch and rest, than to hold on ascending into the homeless regions of the air.

Line 1 is weak, in an odd place, and possessed by the 'idea of exceeding,' which belongs to the hexagram. Its correlate is the strong 4, belonging to the trigram *K'ăn*, the attribute of which is movement. There is nothing to repress the tendency of 1; rather it is stimulated; and hence the symbolism.

Line 2 is weak, but in its proper place, and in the centre. Its correlate is 5, which is also a weak line. The lines 3 and 4 between them are both strong; and are supposed to represent the father and grandfather of the subject of 2; but he or she goes past them, and meets with the grandmother in 5. Again, 5 is the ruler's seat. The subject of 2 moves on to him, but not as an enemy; but humbly and loyally, as his minister according to the attributes of a weak line in the central place. It must be allowed that this view of the symbolism and its interpretation is obscure and strained.

The subject of line 3 is too confident in his own strength, and too defiant of the weak and small enemies that seek his hurt.

Line 4 is also strong, but the exercise of his strength by its subject is tempered by the position in an even place. He is warned, however, to continue quiet and restrain himself.

Line 5, though in the ruler's seat, is weak, and incapable of doing anything great. Its subject is called king or duke because of the ruler's seat; and the one whom in the concluding sentence he is said to capture is supposed to be the subject of 2.

The first part of the symbolism is the same as that of the Thwan under hexagram 9, q. v. I said there that it probably gave a testimony of the merit of the house of Kâu, as deserving the throne rather than the kings of Shang. That was because the Thwan contained the sentiments of Wăn, while he was yet only lord of Kâu. But the symbolism here was the work of the duke of Kâu, after his brother king Wû had obtained the throne. How did the symbolism then occur to him? May we not conclude that at least the hsiang of this hexagram was written during the troubled period of his regency, after the accession of Wû's son, king K'hang?

The Khang-hsî editors find in the concluding symbolism an incentive to humility:—'The duke, leaving birds on the wing, is content to use his arrows against those in a cave!'

Line 6 is weak, and is at the top of the trigram of movement. He is possessed by the idea of the hexagram in an extreme degree, and is incapable of keeping himself under restraint.