

After his death a volume of *Menagiana* was published; it was afterwards expanded into two, and, with great additions, into four in the Paris edition of 1715.

MENANDER, the most famous Greek poet of the New Comedy, which prevailed from about the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.) to 250. He was born at Athens in 342, and died, it was said, by drowning in the harbour of that city (Piræus) in 291. His social tastes induced him to write plays rather for the upper classes, and to raise comedy to a gentility which it had hardly possessed in the hands of the preceding comic poets. He was the associate, if not the pupil, of Theophrastus, who himself had been a disciple of Plato and Aristotle, and he was the intimate friend and admirer of Epicurus; but he also enjoyed the more distinguished patronage of Demetrius Phalereus (who was likewise a pupil of Theophrastus), and of Ptolemy the son of Lagus.¹ His principal rival in the art was Philemon, who appears to have been more popular with the multitude, and for that reason probably more successful. It is said that out of a hundred comedies Menander gained the prize with but eight. All the extant plays of Terence, with the exception of the *Phormio*, are avowedly taken from Menander; but some of them appear to have been adaptations and combinations of more than one plot, although Terence himself says in the prologue to the *Adelphi* (11) that he copied the Greek model closely, "verbum de verbo expressum extulit." Julius Caesar called Terence *dimidiatus Menander*, as if two halves of different plays had been fitted into one.²

The Attic New Comedy, says Dr Wagner,³ "may be designated as essentially domestic," i.e., as opposed to that free discussion of the politics of the day which gave to the Old Comedy the place which is held by the "leading articles" of a modern newspaper. "The stock characters were such as the stern or weak father, the son whose follies are seconded by a slave or a hungry parasite, the pettifogger, active in stirring up law suits, and the gasconading soldier of fortune."⁴ These and cognate subjects, which formed the stock-in-trade of Menander's plays, are summed up in two well-known lines of Ovid—

"Dum fallax servus, durus pater, improba lena
Vivet, dum meretrix blanda, Menandros erit."

It is a good remark of Dr Wagner's⁵ that the last-mentioned of these, the *meretrix blanda* (which probably refers especially to the *Thais*), "holds the most important and conspicuous part in the New Attic Comedy, while married ladies are continually represented as the plague and bore of their husbands' lives." Intrigues with these, generally through the medium of a clever confidential slave, are for the most part the very point or pivot on which the plot turns.

The more literary Romans greatly admired Menander as a poet. Pliny (*N. H.*, xxx. 1, § 7) speaks of him as "Menander litterarum subtilitati sine æmulo genitus." Propertius, contemplating a visit to Athens,⁶ anticipates the pleasure of reading Menander in his native city—

"Persequar aut studium linguæ, Demosthenis arma,
Libaboque tuos, scito Menandre, sales."

¹ In allusion to this Pliny writes (*N. H.*, vii. 30, § 111), "Magnum et Menandro in comico socco testimonium regum Ægypti et Macedoniae contigit classe et per legatos petito: majus ex ipso, regie fortune prælata litterarum conscientia." This seems to say that Menander had been invited to the courts of Alexander and Ptolemy, as Euripides had been to that of Archelaus, king of Macedonia, but had preferred to write comedies for the Attic stage.

² Thus the *Andria*, *Heautontimorumenos*, and *Hecyra* are described severally in the *tituli* prefixed as *Græca* or *tota Græca Menandri*. The *Eunuch* and *Timorumenos* are each based on two plays of Menander, and the *Adelphi* was compiled partly from Menander and partly from Diphilus.

³ *Introduction to Terence*, p. 6 (Bell, 1869).

⁴ Professor Jebb, *Primer of Greek Literature*, p. 101.

⁵ *Ut sup.*, p. 7.

⁶ *El.*, iv. 21. 27.

He elsewhere speaks of him as "mundus Menander," neat, terse, and urbane; and his skill in depicting the character of a fascinating Thais is alluded to here and in ii. 6, 3:

"Turba Menandrea fuerat nec Thaidos olim
Tanta, in qua populus lusit Erichthonius."

Of this comedy, the *Thais*, Professor Mahaffy remarks⁷ that perhaps it was the most brilliant of Menander's plays, "the manners and characters of the personage being painted with thorough experience as well as genius." Nevertheless, only five verses of this play have been preserved to us, one of which is that quoted by St Paul (1 Cor. xv. 33), "Evil communications corrupt good manners." The same critic, in praising Menander's style as the purest model of the New Attic, observes that a remarkable feature of the New Comedy was "its utter avoidance of rhetoric" (p. 489). The influence which this art had on Euripides is well known. Sophocles was not wholly exempt from a kind of rhetorical pedantry, and the speeches in Thucydides are so many exercises of the author in that art. But, as rhetoric pertained essentially to public life, it was likely to have a much less scope in scenes borrowed almost solely from social and domestic experiences.

Menander, however, did not neglect the other branch of a liberal Attic education,—philosophy. A follower and a friend of Epicurus, whose *summum bonum* was the greatest amount of enjoyment to be got out of life, he carried out in practice what he advocated by precept; for he was essentially the well-to-do gentleman,⁸ and moved in the upper circles of Athenian society. "The philosophers of the day" (i.e., the schools and universities in our modern systems of teaching) "were still," says Professor Mahaffy,⁹ viz., even during the period of the New Comedy, "the constant butt of the dramatists." He adds that, "what is still stranger, political attacks on living personages, not excepting Alexander the Great, were freely and boldly made."

On the whole, our estimate of the spirit and object of Menander must be formed rather from his imitator and copyist Terence than from the fragments which remain, about 2400 verses in all, as collected by Meineke in his *Fragmenta Comicorum Græcorum*. For, as Professor Mahaffy well observes,¹⁰ the extracts made by Athenæus, our principal authority, have reference chiefly to "the archaeology of cooks and cookery," while Stobæus was a collector of *γνώμαι* or wise maxims,—a most unfortunate and worthless kind of citation." It follows that no sound conclusions as to dramatic genius, or of the knowledge of human nature, can be drawn from detached verses preserved without the least reference to these particular points. The extraordinary popularity of Menander must have been due to literary merit, if not to great originality. Mr Mahaffy observes on this¹¹ that "there is so much of a calm gentlemanly morality about his fragments, he is so excellent a teacher of the ordinary world-wisdom—resignation, good temper, moderation, friendliness—that we can well understand this popularity. Copies of his plays continued long in existence, and were certainly known to Suidas and Eustathius as late as the 11th and 12th centuries, if they did not survive to a yet later period."¹²

In respect of language, Menander occupies the same position in poetry which his contemporary Demosthenes does in prose. In both the New Attic is elaborated with great finish, and with much greater grammatical precision than we find in writers of the Old Attic, such as Sophocles and Thucydides. A considerable addition to the vocabulary of every-day life had now been made, as was indeed inevitable from the versatile character of the language and the genius of the people who used it. Many new verb-forms, especially the perfect active,¹³ now occur, and indeed form a characteristic innovation of the style of Plato. The earlier prose was in its general vocabulary to a considerable extent poetical, and such a concurrence of short syllables as in the Platonic ἀποδοκιμαχίες

⁷ *Hist. Class. Gr. Lit.*, i. p. 488.

⁸ Pliny calls Menander "diligentissimus luxuriosus interpres," *N. H.*, xxxvi. 5.

⁹ *Hist. Class. Gr. Lit.*, i. p. 480.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 487.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 487.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 490.

¹³ A curious example is ἀπεκράδαται, the transitive perfect of ἀποκρίσθαι. Similarly we have the unusual forms κέρρηκα (frag. 559), ἐψόθηκα (727), συγκέχρηκα (810).

(ἀποδοκιμαχίαι) is ill-suited even to choral metre. The Old Comedy was worked by men of real genius, who "were indeed giants, while the men of Menander's day only showed how strong and thorough was the culture which in art and literature outlived the decadence of the nation."¹⁴

In all, we have, as collected by Meineke, 1045 fragments of Menander, of which 515 can be referred to known plays, the titles of those quoted from amounting to ninety, and including the Terentian *Andria*, *Adelphi*, *Eunuchus*, *Heautontimorumenos*. These fragments contain about 1650 verses or parts of verses, not including a considerable number of words quoted expressly as from Menander by the old lexicographers. Besides all these there are not fewer than 758 monostich verses separately preserved in MSS., though some of these are met with in the other and longer fragments. Many of the fragments are obscure, some corrupt; and they have been a fertile field for critical acumen from the time of Bentley. Not unfrequently we come upon the shrewd or original remark of an observer. Thus (frag. 7) "A poor man has no relations, for no one acknowledges him, lest he should beg." Frag. 145, "Everything that takes place is brought about by law, necessity, or fashion." 237, "The gods do not save men through any human means (prayer or sacrifices); if they did, the human would have more power than the divine." 275, "Poverty is the most easily cured of all evils, any friend can do it by merely putting his hand in his pocket." 397, "A poor man who lives in a large town makes himself more wretched than he need; for he cannot help comparing with his own the luxurious lives of the rich." 435, "No man realizes the extent of a sin when he commits it; it is afterwards that he sees it." 460, "A man is convinced not so much by what is said as by the manner of saying it." 474, "There is one thing only that hides vulgarity, villainy, and every other fault,—wealth. Everything but that is carped at and criticized." 517, "People who have no merit of their own generally boast of their birth and their ancestors. But every living man has ancestors, or he would not be a living man." 578, "Wealth acts on a man as wind does on a ship,—it often forces him out of his proper course." 663, "Many a young lady says a great deal in her own favour by saying nothing at all." 683, "A man who abuses his own father is practising blasphemy against the gods." In fact, Menander is characteristically a sententious writer, like Euripides, with whom in the general style of his writings, though not, of course, in his somewhat loose and irregular versification, he is sometimes compared. (F. A. P.)

MENCIUS, the Latinized form of Mǎng-tszé, "Mr Mǎng," or "Mǎng the philosopher," a name in China only second as a moral teacher to that of Confucius. His statue or spirit-tablet (as the case may be) has occupied, in the temples of the sage, since our 11th century, a place among "the four assessors"; and since 1530 A.D. his title has been "the philosopher Mǎng, sage of the second degree."

The Mǎngs or Mǎng-suns had been in the time of Confucius one of the three great clans of Lǎ (all descended from the marquis Hwan, 711–694 B.C.), which he had endeavoured to curb. Their power had subsequently been broken, and the branch to which Mencius belonged had settled in Tsáu, a small adjacent principality, the name of which still remains in Tsáu hsien, a district of Yen-cháu Shan-tung. A magnificent temple to Mencius is the chief attraction of the district city. The present writer visited it in 1873, and was struck by a large marble statue of him in the courtyard in front. It shows much artistic skill, and gives the impression of a man strong in body and mind, thoughtful and fearless. His lineal representative lives in the city, and thousands of Mǎngs are to be found in the neighbourhood.

The dates of some of the principal events in Mencius's life are fixed by a combination of evidence, and his death is referred by common consent to the year 289 B.C. He had lived to a great age,—we say to his eighty-fourth year, placing his birth in 372 B.C., and others to his ninety-seventh, placing it in 385. All that we are told of his father is that he died in the third year of the child, who was thus left to the care of his mother. She was a lady of superior character, and well discharged her trust. Her virtues and dealings with her son were celebrated by a great writer in the first century before our era, and for two thousand years she has been the model mother of China.

¹⁴ Mahaffy, *Ibid.*, p. 490.

We have no accounts of Mencius for many years after his boyhood, and he is more than forty years old when he comes before us as a public character. He must have spent much time in study, investigating the questions which were rife as to the fundamental principles of morals and society, and brooding over the condition of the country. The history, the poetry, the institutions, and the great men of the past had received his careful attention. He intimates that he had been in communication with men who had been disciples of Confucius. That sage had become to him the chief of mortal men, the object of his untiring admiration; and in the doctrines which he had taught Mencius recognized the truth for want of an appreciation of which the bonds of order all round him were being relaxed, and the kingdom hastening to a general anarchy.

When he first comes forth from Tsáu, he is accompanied by several eminent disciples. He had probably imitated Confucius in becoming the master of a school, and encouraging the resort to it of inquiring minds that he might resolve their doubts and unfold to them the right methods of government. One of his sayings is that it would be a greater delight to the superior man to get the youth of brightest promise around him and to teach and train them than to enjoy the revenues of the kingdom. His intercourse with his followers was not so intimate as that of Confucius had been with the members of his selected circle; and, while he maintained his dignity among them, he was not able to secure from them the same homage and reverent admiration.

More than a century had elapsed since the death of Confucius, and during that period the feudal kingdom of Cháu had been showing more and more of the signs of dissolution, and portentous errors that threatened to upset all social order were widely disseminated. The sentiment of loyalty to the dynasty had disappeared. Several of the marquises and other feudal princes of earlier times had usurped the title of king. The smaller fiefs had been absorbed by the larger ones, or reduced to a state of helpless dependence on them. Tsin, after greatly extending its territory, had broken up into three powerful kingdoms, each about as large as England. Mencius found the nation nominally one, and with the traditions of two thousand years affirming its essential unity, but actually divided into seven monarchies, each seeking to subdue the others under itself. The consequences were constant warfare and chronic misery.

In Confucius's time we meet with recluses who had withdrawn in disgust from the world and its turmoil; but these had now given place to a class of men who came forth from their retirements provided with arts of war or schemes of policy which they recommended to the contending chiefs, ever ready to change their allegiance as they were moved by whim or interest. Mencius was once asked about two of them, "Are they not really great men? Let them be angry, and all the princes are afraid. Let them live quietly, and the flames of trouble are everywhere extinguished." He looked on them as little men, and delighted to proclaim his idea of the great man in such language as the following:—

"To dwell in love, the wide house of the world, to stand in propriety, the correct seat of the world, and to walk in righteousness, the great path of the world; when he obtains his desire for office, to practise his principles for the good of the people, and when that desire is disappointed, to practise them alone; to be above the power of riches and honours to make dissipated, of poverty and mean condition to make swerve from the right, and of power and force to make bend.—these characteristics constitute the great man."

Most vivid are the pictures which Mencius gives of the condition of the people in consequence of the wars of the states. "The royal ordinances were violated; the multi-

tudes were oppressed; the supplies of food and drink flowed away like water." It is not wonderful that, when the foundations of government were thus overthrown, speculations should have arisen that threatened to overthrow what he considered to be the foundations of truth and all social order. "A shrill-tongued barbarian from the south," as Mencius called him, proclaimed the dissolution of ranks, and advocated a return to the primitive simplicity,

"When Adam delved and Eve span."

He and his followers maintained that learning was quackery, and statesmanship craft and oppression, that prince and peasant should be on the same level, and every man do everything for himself. Another, called Yang-chü, denied the difference between virtue and vice, glory and shame. The tyrants of the past, he said, were now but so many rotten bones, and the heroes and sages were no more. It was the same with all at death; after that there was but so much putridity and rottenness. The conclusion of the whole matter therefore was—"Let us eat and drink; let us gratify the ears and eyes, get servants and maidens, beauty, music, wine; when the day is insufficient, carry it on through the night. Each one for himself." Against a third heresiarch, of a very different stamp, Mencius felt no less indignation. This was Mo Ti, who found the source of all the evils of the time and of all time in the want of mutual love. He taught, therefore, that men should love others as themselves; princes, the states of other princes as much as their own; children, the parents of others as much as their own. Mo, in his gropings, had got hold of a noble principle, but he did not apprehend it distinctly nor set it forth with discrimination. To our philosopher the doctrine appeared contrary to the Confucian orthodoxy about the five relations of society; and he attacked it without mercy and with an equal confusion of thought. "Yang's principle," he said, "is 'each one for himself,' which does not acknowledge the claims of the sovereign. Mo's is 'to love all equally,' which does not acknowledge the peculiar affection due to a father. But to acknowledge neither king nor father is to be in the state of a beast. The way of benevolence and righteousness is stopped up."

On this seething ocean of lawlessness, wickedness, heresies, and misery Mencius looked out from the quiet of his school, and his spirit was stirred within him to attempt the rescue of the people from the misrule and error. It might be that he would prove the instrument for this purpose. "If Heaven," he said, "wishes that the kingdom should enjoy tranquillity and good order, who is there besides me to bring it about?" He formed his plan, and proceeded to put it in execution. He would go about among the different kings till he should find one among them who would follow his counsels and commit to him the entire administration of his government. That obtained, he did not doubt that in a few years there would be a kingdom so strong and so good that all rulers would acknowledge its superiority, and the people hasten from all quarters to crown its sovereign as monarch of the whole of China. This plan was much the same as that of Confucius had been; but, with the bolder character that belonged to him, Mencius took in one respect a position from which "the master" would have shrunk. The former was always loyal to Cháu, and thought he could save the country by a reformation; the latter saw the day of Cháu was past, and the time was come for a revolution. Mencius's view was the more correct, but he was not wiser than the sage in forecasting for the future. They could think only of a reformed dynasty or of a changed dynasty, ruling according to the model principles of a feudal constitution, which they described in glowing language. They

desired a repetition of the golden age in the remote past; but soon after Mencius disappeared from the stage of life there came the sovereign of Ch'in, and solved the question with fire and sword, introducing the despotic empire which has since prevailed.

An inquiry here occurs—"How, in the execution of his plan, was Mencius, a scholar, without wealth or station, to find admission to the courts of lawless and unprincipled kings, and acquire the influence over them which he expected?" It can only be met by our bearing in mind the position accorded from the earliest times in China to men of virtue and ability. The same written character denotes both scholars and officers. They are at the top of the social scale,—the first of the four classes into which the population has always been divided. This appreciation of learning or culture has exercised a most powerful influence over the government under both conditions of its existence; and out of it grew the system, which was organized and consolidated more than a thousand years ago, of making literary merit the passport to official employment. The ancient doctrine was that the scholar's privilege was from Heaven as much as the sovereign's right; the modern system is a device of the despotic rule to put itself in Heaven's place, and have the making of the scholar in its own hands. The feeling and conviction out of which the system grew prevailed in the time of Mencius. The dynasties that had successively ruled over the kingdom had owed their establishment not more to the military genius of their founders than to the wisdom and organizing ability of the learned men, the statesmen, who were their bosom friends and trusted counsellors. Why should not he become to one of the princes of his day what Í Yin had been to Thang, and Thâi-kung Wang to King Wan, and the duke of Cháu to Wú and Ch'ang? But, though Mencius might be the equal of any of those worthies, he knew of no prince like Thang and the others, of noble aim and soul, who would welcome and adopt his lessons. In his eagerness he overlooked this condition of success for his enterprise. He might meet with such a ruler as he looked for, or he might reform a bad one, and make him the coadjutor that he required. On the strength of these peradventures, and attended by several of his disciples, Mencius went for more than twenty years from one court to another, always baffled, and always ready to try again. He was received with great respect by kings and princes. He would not enter into the service of any of them, but he occasionally accepted honorary offices of distinction; and he did not scruple to receive large gifts which enabled him to live and move about as a man of wealth. In delivering his message he was as fearless and outspoken as John Knox. He lectured great men, and ridiculed them. He unfolded the ways of the old sage kings, and pointed out the path to universal sway; but it was all in vain. He could not stir any one to honourable action. He confronted heresy with strong arguments and exposed it with withering sarcasm; but he could work no deliverance in the earth. The last court at which we find him was that of Lú, probably in 310 B.C. The marquis of that state had given office to Yo-ch'ang, one of Mencius's disciples, and he hoped that this might be the means of a favourable hearing for himself. So it had nearly happened. On the suggestion of Yo-ch'ang the marquis had ordered his carriage to be yoked, and was about to step into it, and proceed to bring Mencius to his palace, when an unworthy favourite stepped in and diverted him from his purpose. The disciple told his master what had occurred, reproaching the favourite for his ill-timed intervention; Mencius, however, said to him, "A man's advancement or the arresting of it may seem to be effected by others, but is really beyond their power. My not finding in the marquis of Lú a ruler who would confide

in me and put my lessons in practice is from Heaven." He accepted this incident as a final intimation to him of the will of Heaven. He had striven long against adverse circumstances, but now he bowed in submission. We lose sight of him. He withdrew from courts and the public arena. We have to think of him, according to tradition, passing the last twenty years of his life in the congenial society of his disciples, discoursing to them, and giving the finishing touches to the record of his conversations and opinions, which were afterwards edited by them, and constitute his works. Living, he may have been a failure: dead, yet speaking in them, he has been a great power among the ever-multiplying millions of his countrymen. Nor will any thinker of the West refer to them without interest and benefit. Mencius was not so oracular, nor so self-contained, as Confucius; but his teachings have a vivacity and sparkle of which we never weary, and which is all their own.

We will now attempt to indicate briefly the more important principles which our philosopher thought would have been effectual to regenerate his country, and make an end of misery and heresy within its borders.

And first as to his views on government, and the work to be done by rulers for their subjects. Mencius held with Confucius—and it was a doctrine which had descended to them both from the remotest antiquity—that royal government is an institution of God. An ancient sovereign had said that "Heaven, having produced the people, appointed for their rulers, and appointed for them teachers, who should be assisting to God." Our philosopher, adopting this doctrine, was led by the manifest incompetency of all the rulers of his time to ask how it could be known on what individual the appointment of Heaven had fallen or ought to fall, and he concluded that this could be ascertained only from his personal character and his conduct of affairs. The people must find out the will of Heaven as to who should be their ruler for themselves. There was another old saying which delighted Mencius,—"Heaven sees as the people see; Heaven hears as the people hear." He taught accordingly that, while government is from God, the governors are from the people;—*vox populi vox Dei*.

No claim then of a "divine right" should be allowed to a sovereign if he were not exercising a rule for the good of the people. "The people are the most important element in a nation; the altars to the spirits of the land and grain are the second; the sovereign is the lightest." Mencius was not afraid to follow this utterance to its consequences. The monarch whose rule is injurious to the people, and who is deaf to remonstrance and counsel, should be dethroned. In such a case "killing is no murder."

But who is to remove the sovereign that thus ought to be removed? Mencius had three answers to this difficult question. First, he would have the members of the royal house perform the task. Let them disown their unworthy head, and appoint some better individual of their number in his room. If they could not or would not do this, he thought, secondly, that any high minister, though not allied to the royal house, might take summary measures with the sovereign, assuming that he acted purely with a view to the public weal. His third and grand device was what he called "the minister of Heaven." When the sovereign had become a pest instead of a blessing, he believed that Heaven would raise up some one for the help of the people, some one who should so conduct himself in his original subordinate position as to draw all eyes and hearts to himself. Let him then raise the standard not of rebellion but of righteousness, and he could not help attaining to the highest dignity. Mencius hoped to find one among the rulers of his day who might be made into such a minister, and he counselled one and another to adopt measures with that object. It was in fact counselling rebellion, but he held that the house of Cháu had forfeited its title to the throne.

What now were the attributes which Mencius considered necessary to constitute a good government according to his ideal of it? It must be animated by a spirit of benevolence, and ever pursue a policy of righteousness. Its aims must be, first, to make the people well off, and next, to educate them. No one was fit to occupy the throne who could be happy while any of the people were miserable, who delighted in war, who could indulge in palaces and parks which the poorest did not in a measure share with him. Game laws received his emphatic condemnation. Taxes should be light, and all the regulations for agriculture and commerce of a character to promote and encourage them. The rules which he suggested to secure those objects had reference to the existing condition of his country, but they are susceptible of wide application. They carry in them schemes of drainage and irrigation for land, and of free trade for commerce. But it must be, he contended, that a sufficient

and certain livelihood be secured for all the people. Without this their minds would be unsettled, and they would proceed to every form of wild licence. They would break the laws, and the ruler would punish them,—punish those whom his neglect of his own duties had plunged into poverty, of which crime was the consequence. He would be, not their ruler, but their "trapper."

Supposing the people to be made well off, Mencius taught that education should be provided for them all. He gave the marquis of Thang a programme of four kinds of educational institutions, which he wished him to establish in his state—in the villages and the towns, for the poor as well as the rich, so that none might be ignorant of their duties in the various relations of society. But after all, unless the people could get food and clothing by their labour, he had not much faith in the power of education to make them virtuous. Give him, however, a government fulfilling the conditions that he laid down, and he was confident there would soon be a people, all contented, all virtuous. And he saw nothing to prevent the realization of such a government. Any ruler might become, if he would, "the minister of Heaven," who was his ideal, and the influence of his example and administration would be all-powerful. The people would flock to him as their parent, and help him to do justice on the foes of truth and happiness. Pulse and grain would be abundant as water and fire, and the multitudes, well clothed, and well principled, would sit under the shade of their mulberry trees, and hail the ruler "king by the grace of Heaven."

Secondly, as to Mencius's views about human nature. His conviction of the goodness of that encouraged him to hope for such grand results from good government, and his discussion of this subject gives his principal title to a place among philosophical thinkers.

Opinions were much divided about it among his contemporaries. Some held that the nature of man is neither good nor bad; he may be made to do good and also to do evil. Others held that the nature of some men is good, and that of others bad; thus it is that the best of men sometimes have bad sons, and the worst of men good sons. It was also maintained that the nature of man is evil, and whatever good appears in it is the result of cultivation. In opposition to all these views Mencius contended that the nature of man is good. "Water," he said, "will flow indifferently to the east or west; but will it flow indifferently up or down? The tendency of man's nature to goodness is like the tendency of water to flow downwards. By striking water you may make it leap over your forehead; and by damming and leading it you may make it go up a hill. But such movements are not according to the nature of water; it is the force applied which causes them. When men do what is not good, their nature has been dealt with in this way."

Mencius had no stronger language than this,—as indeed it would be difficult to find any stronger,—to declare his belief of the goodness of human nature. With various, but equally felicitous, illustration he replied to his different opponents. Sometimes he may seem to express himself too strongly, but an attentive study of his writings shows that he is speaking of our nature in its ideal, and not as it actually is,—as we may ascertain, by an analysis of it, that it was intended to be, and not as it has been made to become. In fact, his doctrine of human nature is hardly to be distinguished from that of Bishop Butler, while the Christian prelate is left far behind so far as charm of style is concerned.

Our author insists on the constituents of human nature, dwelling especially on the principles of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom or knowledge, the last including the judgment of conscience. "These," said he, "are not infused into us from without. Men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs." But man has also instincts and appetites which seek their own gratification without reference to righteousness or any other control. He met this difficulty by contending that human nature is a constitution, in which the higher principles are designed to rule the lower. "Some constituents of it are noble and some ignoble, some great and some small. The great must not be injured for the small, nor the noble for the ignoble."

One of his most vigorous vindications of his doctrine is the following:—"For the mouth to desire flavours, the eye colours, the ear sounds, and the four limbs ease and rest belong to man's nature. An individual's lot may restrict him from the gratification of them; and in such a case the superior man will not say, 'My nature demands that pleasure, and I will get it.' On the other hand, there are love between father and son, righteousness between ruler and minister, the rules of ceremony between host and guest, and knowledge seen in recognizing the able and virtuous, and in the sage's fulfilling the heavenly course;—these are appointed (by Heaven). But they also belong to our nature, and the superior man will not say, 'The circumstances of my lot relieve me from them.'" In his preliminary dissertation to the 7th edition of this encyclopædia, Sir James Mackintosh has said that in his sermons on human nature Butler "taught truths more worthy of the name of discovery than any in the same department of inquiry with