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A LETTER

TO

PROF. F. MAX MULLER

ON THE



SACRED BOOKS OF CHINA,

PART I.

1/2

BY INQUIRER.

C. P.



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A LETTER TO PROF. F. MAX MULLER ON THE
SACRED BOOKS OF CHINA,* PART I.



The Shu King, Shih King, and the Hsiao King.

PROF. F. MAX MULLER, A.M.

I CHERISH a very high respect for you as a scholar and a man. I am much indebted to you for your translations from the Sanscrit; and for your valuable contributions to the study of comparative religion. Every one highly appreciates the fairness of the principle which as editor you have presented for the guidance of those who are the translators of the Sacred books of the several religions of the East—viz: "that the object is to give translations of these texts without any colouring in the first place from the views of the translators;" but that they should *correctly* express the meaning of the originals. The translations of the Chinese books of which Vol. III of this series is a reprint in part, by Rev. Prof. Legge, have been published so long that Chinese scholars have expressed their opinions in regard to them.

They have received a good degree of approval as fair translations of the originals, except in one particular viz, in regard to the manner in which Dr Legge has expressed the Chinese words *Ti* and *Shangti* in the translation. He himself was cognizant of the fact that in this particular there is a disapproval of his translation; as he says "he examined the matter again. He considered the question whether he

* The Sacred books of the East, translated by various oriental scholars and Edited by F. Max Muller, Vol. III.

The Sacred books of China. The text of Confucianism. Translated by James Legge. Part I. The Shu king, Shih King. The Hsiao King, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press 1879.

should leave the names Ti and Shangti untranslated? or whether he should give for them, instead of God, the terms Ruler and Supreme Ruler. After a full reexamination," he says "he had determined to retain the term God for Ti and Shangti in this volume." Dr. Legge had present to his mind the objections to his retaining the term God in this volume; for in his preface he refers to the object in view in publishing these Sacred Books as above referred to, and says, "A reader confronted everywhere by the word God might be lead to think more highly of the primitive religion of China than he ought to think." As a preliminary point, in entering upon the discussion it becomes a matter of the first importance to settle in what particular sense Dr. Legge uses the term God in this English version of the Sacred Books of the Chinese, as the equivalent of Ti and Shangti of the original. Webster in his English Dictionary, which is accepted as an authority in Great Britain, as well as in the United States of America defines the word God as follows; (1) "The Supreme Being: Jehovah; the eternal and infinite Spirit, the Creator and the Sovereign of the Universe." (2) "A false God; a heathen deity; an idol.." (3) "A prince: a ruler" &c. I suppose Dr. Legge uses the word in the *first* of the senses above given for he expressly repudiates the use of it in the other senses as unsuitable to translate Ti and Shangti. I am confirmed in this view of his meaning by repeated declarations made by him. In the preface to this volume, p. xxiii, he says, "More than twenty-five years ago I came to the conclusion that "Ti" was the term corresponding in Chinese to our "God," and that "Shangti," was the same, with the addition of "Shang," equal to "Supreme." In the paper prepared by him for the General Conference of Missionaries in Shanghai, in 1877, on "Confucianism" he says, on p. 3 of the pamphlet edition, "All the members of the Conference will not agree with me, when I repeat here my well known conviction, that the Ti and Shangti of the Chinese Classics is God—our God—the true God." This language is clear and explicit. It was addressed to a body of *Christian* Missionaries from Great Britain, the United States of America and Germany, who are engaged in making known the God of the Sacred Scriptures among the Chinese people. The God whom this body of Missionaries regard as "God—our God—the true God" is Jehovah. "God over all blessed forever."

Dr. Legge herein declares his conviction, which he has held for twenty-five years, that Ti and Shangti of the Chinese Classics is the true God, the "Our God" of Christians, who is Jehovah. In these Books Ti and Shangti are interchanged very frequently with "Tien"

which Dr. Legge translates by its proper English equivalent Heaven. This constant interchange in use of Ti and Shangti with Heaven makes it evident that Ti and Shangti are *synonymous* with Heaven and they always refer to the Being who is called Heaven. On this point Dr. Legge says on p. xxiv, "The term Heaven is used everywhere in the Chinese classics for the *supreme power*, ruling and governing all affairs with an omnipotent and omniscient righteousness and goodness; and this vague term is constantly interchanged in the same paragraph, not to say the same sentence, with the personal names Ti and Shangti;" p. xxv.—"Here then is the name Heaven, by which the Supreme Power, in the absolute, is vaguely expressed; and when the Chinese would speak of it by a personal name they use the term Ti and Shangti." In his translations of the Shu King, published in 1865, Dr. Legge says p. 198—"The name by which God was designated (among the Chinese) was *Ruler and the Supreme Ruler* (Ti and Shangti), denoting emphatically his personality, supremacy and unity. We find it *constantly interchanged* with the term Heaven by which the ideas of supremacy and unity are *equally conveyed*." Heaven is the *absolute name* of the Being referred to; and Ti and Shangti are terms used very frequently to this Being. By the language, which I have quoted above, as used by Dr. Legge in the preface to his books, and in his paper on Confucianism, I understand Dr. Legge to imply that *the Being* referred to in the Chinese classics by the terms Heaven, Ti, and Shangti is the True God, the Jehovah of the Sacred Scriptures. This understanding of his meaning is further confirmed by what is found at page 478 of this volume when Dr. Legge says in a note, "Since Heaven and God have the same reference, why are they here used, as if there was some opposition between them? The nearest approach to an answer to this is found also in the extensive explanation "Heaven (Tien) just is God (Ti). According to this view, Heaven would approximate to the name for Deity in *absolute*,—*Jehovah*, as explained in Ex. xv. 14; while Ti is God, our Father in Heaven:" Dr. Legge has also expressed his belief that the Being worshipped by the Emperor of China, at the Temple of Heaven in Peking, at the winter solstice, is the True God. In his Book "the notions of the Chinese concerning God and spirits" at p. 81 after quoting from some of the prayers and odes which are used in that service he says "Let the descriptions which are contained in these sacred songs be considered without prejudice, and I am not apprehensive as to the answer which will be returned to the question," Who is He, whom the Chinese thus worship? I am confident the Christian world will agree with me, in saying, "This God (viz.,

Shangti) is our God." His full belief in this conviction was expressed in actions by Dr. Legge when he visited the altar to Heaven in Peking shortly before he left China in 1874. As stated by Rev. Dr. Nelson in his pamphlet in review of Dr. Leggé's paper on Confucianism—p. 3 "he (Dr. Legge) visited the altar to Heaven when taking off his shoes, he ascended the steps of the altar and sang the (Christian) doxology," recognizing thus the worship of God as handed down for 4000 years." I am thus particular to give a full and clear statement of Dr. Legge's views in his own language that I myself and all others may understand clearly what they are. I understand Dr. Legge to say that he holds that the Chinese in the Chinese Classics write about the true God, Jehovah, that they use Tien, Heaven, as the absolute term to designate Jehovah, and Ti and Shangti are used when referring to God as synonymous with Heaven. Dr. Legge is accountable to God for his opinions on matters of faith. But when these opinions are printed in a series of translations which are published under your editorship, and with a statement that implies that the translation "is *without* any colouring in the first place from the views of the translator," it is incumbent on those who do not concur in the views thus expressed to declare their dissent therefrom; and to show that the translation of the Chinese text, as published in vol. III of "The Sacred Books of the East," is very *seriously coloured* by the views of the translator. I, having studied the subject, hereby declare my dissent from the opinions expressed by Dr. Legge. And I respectfully request your consideration of the reasons which I set before you in this letter, to show that the translations, as published under your editorial care, is not made in accordance with the principle you presented for the guidance of the translators; but that it is coloured very greatly by the views of the translator.

As Dr. Legge has referred in his preface to a controversy which has been long pending in China and known as "the term question" (*i.e.* what is the proper word by which to translate Elohim and Theos into Chinese in the translation of the Sacred Scriptures in this language) I declare in advance that the matter now at issue has *no necessary connection* with the "term question." What is now under consideration is 1st a matter of *fact*; in regard to the religious belief and worship of the Chinese—and 2nd of the faithfulness of the translation of two words of the original in which this fact is stated.

1st.—The matter of *fact* under consideration is this, *what Being* is designated *Tien*,—Heaven, in the Chinese classics? Dr.

Legge expresses his full belief that the Being thus designated, and which has been the chief object of the Chinese worship since the earliest record—and which Being is still worshipped by the Emperor at the altar to Heaven in Peking, at the winter solstice, is the True God—is Jehovah. From this view I differ entirely, and before proceeding further I will first state some points on which we entirely agree. I agree with Dr. Legge in the opinion that by the word Tien, Heaven, the Chinese, in their classics or so called Sacred Books, designate the Being whom they suppose is the Supreme Power in China; a Being exercising power and control, setting up and displacing Kings and Rulers. To this Being they attribute *many* divine attributes and works. He is the chief object of reverence and worship. I agree with Dr. Legge that *this Being* is also frequently, in these Books, called Ti and Shangti—that these words are designations of the same Being who is called Heaven. But I differ from Dr. Legge on this fundamental point as to what Being is called Heaven in these Book—my belief is that the Being thus revered and worshipped by the Chinese and called Heaven—is *deified* Heaven, the *visible Heavens* considered as a god—as the chief god of the Chinese.

The object I have in view in writing this letter, my dear Sir, is to present to you the reasons which lead me to hold this belief.—But before giving the reasons for this belief, I wish to state what I mean when I say this Being is deified Heaven. My idea is this—The Chinese regard the *visible Heaven* as the external form of a god—just as they regard the clay or wooden image as the external form of the god of war, Kwan-ti. But as this image of Kwan-ti is supposed to be pervaded by a living, intelligent and powerful spirit, so the visible Heaven, in their opinion, is pervaded by a living, intelligent and all-powerful spirit, which exercises power and control over all things. This spirit may be considered as powerful and widely ruling as any one pleases to consider it. And just as intelligent Chinese do not worship the carved image of the idol god, but the intelligent spirit which pervades it, so it may be understood, or said that Chinese do not worship the inert matter which composes the visible Heaven but that they worship the powerful and intelligent spirit which they suppose pervades the Heaven. Yet common language speaks of idolaters *as worshipping the image*; which they do, in the sense of worshipping it as the visible representation of the invisible spirit; and they regard any injury or indignity done to the wooden image as done to the invisible spirit—So it may properly be said that the worship is rendered to *the visible Heaven*, though the more proper and distinctive manner of speaking would be to say they worship the invisible spirit

pervading the Heaven. It is *not* a matter now under consideration whether the Chinese may not have intended *at first* to designate the true God by the visible Heavens as a *symbol*. The simple question now is what Being or object do they worship when they worship *Heaven*. I maintain that they worship *the visible Heaven* regarding it as a god, prevailed by a powerful intelligent spirit which exercises supreme control or rule in China. This supreme god of the Chinese has had attributed to him *as many* of the divine attributes and works as their knowledge of natural Theology enabled the Chinese to assign to him. It is freely admitted that the Chinese have preserved among themselves an extensive knowledge of the divine nature and power, and that they have attributed to their chief god more of the attributes and works of Jehovah, and with less mixture of error, than other heathen people have done in ascribing attributes to their chief gods. This of course is a very interesting and important fact in the study of comparative mythology to those interested in the subject.

My first proposition in conducting this discussion is, that the proper name of the chief god of "the Sacred Books of the Chinese" *Tien*, is Heaven; the second proposition is, that the plain obvious sense of the Chinese text of the Sacred Books, and the general *consensus* or agreement of the Chinese commentators makes it clear, that the chief power designated Heaven, is no other than the *visible Heaven regarded* as a god: and third, that the *significance* of the designation Heaven, in the mythology, in the state worship, and in the ritual, concurs in showing that this chief Power is the *visible Heaven regarded* as a god. And the fourth is, that the concurrent opinion of the Christian missionaries in China, for the last 300 years, including the Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic, and Protestant, with but few exceptions, is that Heaven does not designate the true God. I will now proceed to establish these fundamental propositions by the production of clear testimony. The first proposition would appear to be a *self evident* statement; and yet it is not readily, or clearly admitted by Dr. Legge. He says "The term Heaven is used *everywhere* in the Chinese Classics for the supreme power, ruling and governing all the affairs of men with omnipotent and omniscient righteousness and goodness: and this vague term is constantly interchanged in the same paragraph, not to say, the same sentence, with the personal names *Ti* and *Shangti*:" preface to Sacred Book p. xxiv. In another place he says, "The name by which God was designated (among the Chinese) was the Ruler and the Supreme Ruler;—denoting emphatically his personality, supremacy and unity. We find it *constantly* interchanged with the term heaven, by which the ideas of supremacy and unity

are *equally* conveyed, while that of personality is only indicated vaguely and by an association of mind." Shü King Prologomena p. 193. My proposition is, that the absolute name of their chief god is Tien, Heaven; and that whatever of supremacy, unity, and personality belong to him are comprehended *to the full* by that name. No other title or name can increase them. The character and attributes of every Being are inherent in the Being. No name or title can make any Being any more real or personal than he is in his own nature. A designation or title may direct attention, or give prominence to some particular attribute or relation of a Being, who possesses many attributes; but it can not increase such attributes. The absolute name comprehends the whole of the attributes. These remarks are true of Jehovah as a Being possessed of all excellencies. When we use the name Jehovah we use the absolute name of the one living and true God, who is possessed of all excellencies and who has many relations to his creatures and his works. When we designate Jehovah as the Supreme Ruler we designate him by one of the relations which he contains to the universe. They are true of man as a Being having many relations. Man is the absolute name. Father expresses only one of the relations he may sustain. Tien, Heaven, is the *absolute name* of the chief god of the Chinese. This is evident because it is the name by which *he is most frequently* spoken of in the classics; it is the name which is used when it is stated that he performs his various works; and because the other designations of this Being are spoken of, or explained *as referring to Heaven*. In the Shü King, as Dr. Legge says "the *most common use* of the word Heaven is for the supreme governing power, understood to be omniscient, omnipotent and righteous. It is employed in this way more than 150 *times*." p. 664, under the word Heaven. A reference to the Index, or a reading of the text of all the other classics *makes it evident* that the name Heaven is used with a *like frequency* in speaking of their chief god, in all the classics. The same thing occurs in their worship of Tien, Heaven. The altar at which the worship is performed, is the altar to Heaven; and the same phraseology is used of all the different buildings connected therewith. The following are a few passages in which Heaven is used in the Sacred Books on p. 47. "Great Heaven regarded you with its favours and bestowed on you its appointments," p. 51. Heaven is sending down calamities upon him, "p. 52. It is virtue that moves Heaven, p. 181. "Great Heaven having given this middle Kingdom with its people and territories to the former Kings," &c., p. 86. "Oh! Heaven gives birth to the people with (such) desires, that without a ruler they must fall into all disorders; and

Heaven again gives birth to the man of intelligence to regulate them," p. 90. "The way of Heaven is to bless the good and make the bad miserable." "High Heaven truly shows its favor to the inferior people. What Heaven appoints is without error." Such passages might be quoted to any extent. They are sufficient to show that the exercise of will and of power, the rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, the disposal of all the affairs pertaining to China, as the appointments of Emperors, the inflicting of punishments, sending calamities are all ascribed to *Heaven*.

When the designations Ti, and Shangti, are defined or explained in Dictionaries or Commentaries, they are defined as "referring to Heaven" as "being *the same* as Heaven" or "*another* name of Heaven." It is *nowhere* said, that Heaven is *another* name or designation of Ti or Shangti. This clearly shows that the proper name of the Being referred to, is, Heaven. In Kang Hi's Dictionary the explanation of Shangti is that "he is Heaven." In the Book of History it is said "Shangti is Heaven" In the Fung-shiu Book, it is said "Shangti is another name for Heaven." In Rev. Dr. Medhurst "Inquiry" &c. p. 6, he quotes from Kang Hi a statement as follows, "He who in virtue is united to Heaven is called a Ti" and another "Ti is *one of the names* of Heaven." Dr. Medhurst on p. 7, after quoting some other passages says, "From the above it appears that Ti *was one of the names* of Heaven. A name is that by which a thing is called, the appellation of the being referred to; that Being is Heaven, *the Divinity* in the estimation of the Chinese." Quotations from the classics, rituals, and other Books might be multiplied *ad libitum*, in which Heaven is the absolute name of the chief god; and the statement that Ti or Shangti is one of the names of Heaven. But these will be sufficient, except as they occur in the discussion of the other propositions. In the face of such clear and distinct representation of the Chinese text, referring to *Heaven*, as possessing the attributes and exercising the power of a god; it appears strange that there should be any controversy on this proposition, to use the language of the late Dr. Medhurst, that "Heaven is *the Divinity*, in the estimation of the Chinese"—and this is all the more strange, seeing that the worship of the deified objects of nature, as Heaven, Earth, Sun, Moon and Stars, was one of the earliest forms of idolatry, as well as one of the most wide spread forms of worship. When the worship of the earth, the sun, the moon and stars, still continues in China, why is it so difficult to admit that the worship of deified Heaven existed in China in ancient times; and that it still exists here? The explanation in my opinion is this. In our Christian literature

we are so accustomed to see Heaven used as *the symbol* of the true God, that when we see the same word used in another language and with a meaning so near to that in our own, by the association of ideas, we affix to it the same meaning as we have been accustomed to give it in our language. One example of its use in our language in this sense occurs in *The Edinburgh Review*; for October, 1879 page 578, in the Review of "Froude's Caesar," "Those who believe, that Providence is always to be found with the big battalions have recognized in Caesar *an instrument of Heaven.*" Heaven is of course used here in the sense of God. It is a common and recognized use of the word in the English language. And it has become fixed in our minds as used in that sense. The fact that Heaven is used in this sense by our Blessed Lord in the parable of the Prodigal son, is referred to by Dr. Legge as sustaining his opinion that Tien Heaven in the Chinese Sacred Books refers to the true God. This use of the word Heaven in the Sacred Scriptures and in Christian literature is readily admitted. But it gives *no support* to Dr. Legge's opinion. The use of it by Christian writers is perfectly congruous with the Bible and Christian idea of God. In the scriptural idea, God is conceived of as an Eternal, self-existent, *spiritual Being*, without any visible appearance or material form, the Creator and preserver of all material objects, while entirely distinct and separate from them. Heaven being the most observable and impressive of all objects is *symbol* of the *invisible* God, without any fear of being misunderstood or causing confusion of ideas. The Chinese conception of their chief god is very different from this. Heaven or Tien is to them the most grand and majestic object. To their conception it is uncreated. It overshadows and influences all things. Heaven is supposed to be *pervaded* by an intelligent and powerful spirit. *This is the Divinity* of the Chinese. The *visible object* is as much a *part of it*, as the body is a part of the compound being, man; or the image is a part of an idol god. According to this conception of their god, Heaven can be used as a *symbol* of the divinity, because it is an *integral part* of the Being. These considerations prove that in the Sacred Books of the Chinese, Tien, Heaven is the proper name of their chief god, as truly as Jehovah is the proper name of the God of the Hebrew Scriptures. For as the name Jehovah occurs several thousand times in the Hebrew Scriptures—so the name Tien occurs several hundreds of times in the so called Sacred Books of the Chinese; but Tien, Heaven, is as different and distinct from Jehovah, as Zeus the chief god of the Greeks, or Jupiter, the chief god of the Romans, or Varuna the chief god of the Hindoos, *is different and distinct from Jehovah.*

I proceed now to establish the other propositions that the obvious meaning of the Chinese text and the general agreement of the Chinese commentators, and the position and significance of this god in their mythology and worship, all concur in making it evident that it is the *visible Heaven* regarded as a god, that is designated Tien, Heaven. The simple word Heaven is not the only word which is used in their Sacred Books and rituals in speaking of their god. He is often styled "Azure Heaven," "Heaven above," "Azure above," "High canopy," "The canopied azure," "The Imperial canopy" "The azure canopy," "The glorious azure," "Heaven above, azure." The altar to Heaven is round, made so *expressly* to represent Heaven, the object which is worshipped. The building in which the tablet to Heaven, before which the offerings are placed at the time of the sacrifice, is deposited for safe keeping is round, and is styled "the circular Hall of the *Imperial canopy*." The jade stone gem, which is one of the offerings placed before the tablet at the time of sacrifice is required to be round and azure colored to resemble Heaven. The building called "the altar for prayer in behalf of grain," at which prayer is offered to Heaven is of a dome shape and of a blue color. If there was any intimation that these were used as *symbols* of a purely spiritual being, these varied and particular descriptions would serve to particularize the symbol, but when in connection with the absolute name of the Being these other designations and resemblances are used to represent the external form of the Being who is worshipped, they serve to identify *that object* beyond *all possibility* of mistake or doubt as visible Heaven. But besides these expressions particularizing the color and shape of the object, we have a full and clear statement in regard thereto, some of which read as follows.* "Heaven's merit is that it overshadows all things." When we speak in reference to *its overshadowing all things*, we call it Heaven; When we speak in reference to its ruling and governing, we call it Ti, Ruler. In the Books whether it is styled Heaven or Ruler, the one or the other is used according to *what is referred to*, and these designations are alike honorable. Another part of the commentary on the Shu King in explanation of the use of the two names Heaven and Ti says:—"On account of *its form and substance* it is called Heaven, and on account

* This letter is intended particularly for those who do not read the Chinese Language. I therefore omit the Chinese Character in giving quotations from Chinese Authors, only giving the English translation of their statements. I refer those who wish to compare the translation with the original Chinese of the quotations, and those who wish to see the subject more fully discussed to the pamphlet by Inquirer, on the question, "Who is Shangti in the Chinese Classics, and in the ritual of the State religion of China?" which may be had of Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Booksellers, Shanghai and also at the American Presbyterian Mission Press.

of its ruling and governing it is called Ti, Ruler. In the Chow Book of rites, in explanation of the sacrifice to "great Heaven, the Ruler above" it is said "Heaven and Ti, Ruler, is one and the same,—Heaven speaks of his substance. Ti, Ruler, speaks of lordship or rule," and again, "Because the primordial substance is so great and vast therefore it is called great Heaven; because the seat of his rule *is above* therefore he is called Shangti, Ruler above." Ching Tsze in an explanation of the Shi King says "In reference to *its form and substance* we call it Heaven; in reference to its *ruling and governing* we call it Ti, Ruler." As Dr. Legge states at p. 816 of the Shi King, as published in Hongkong in 1865 that *this explanation* of the meaning of Heaven and Shangti Ruler above, as given by Ching Tsze, is accepted by Choo and *all subsequent writers* it is not necessary to quote more passages on that point.

In the Chinese Three character classic, which is the first book placed in the hands of Chinese children, Heaven, Earth and Man are styled the "Three powers." In the earliest mythology of the Chinese all the objects of worship are divided into the three categories of Heaven, Earth and Man, as they may belong to one or the other of these categories. The spiritual beings supposed to be connected with each category have a distinct designation; those connected with Heaven are called "shin," those connected with earth are called "Ki," and those connected with man are called "Kwai." These different words are singular or plural as they refer to one or more beings. In the progress of time it became a matter of less concern to the people to distinguish to which category any being belonged; and two of these words were joined together as one word, to express these kind of spiritual beings. By joining the third and first word we have a most common compound word to designate spiritual beings which are worshipped, viz: "Kwai-shin." By the joining of the first and second words we have another very common designation of the objects of worship viz. "Shin-ming." This is very commonly used in the Chih-kiang Province. In this expression "*ming*" is used as the synonym and in the place of "Ki." "Shin" is used very frequently for *Heaven itself*, as an individual object of worship. Heaven, "shin" is used in the plural as comprehending the sun, moon, stars, winds, thunder as objects of separate worship, or joint worship. So it is with "Ki." It is used in the singular to designate the earth *itself*, as an individual object of worship. It is also used as the plural to designate the hills and mountains, the streams and seas as the objects of either separate or joint worship. "Kwai" is used to include ancestors, or benefactors as the objects of worship. This system of mythology has

been persistent through the long years of this peoples existence. There has never been any dispute in regard to the words Earth and Man in this system. It has been accepted *as correct* that they refer to the objects which are usually styled Earth and Man. The integrity and consistency of this system of their earliest known mythology requires that the word Heaven as used in connection with Earth and Man be understood also to refer to the *visible Heaven*, as the object of worship as a *whole*; and when its *several component* parts, as the sun, moon and stars, and the powers of nature—the wind, the clouds, rain and thunder are intended.

At the capital of the Empire there exists a system of nature-worship which is an integral part of the state religion. In connection with this there is an altar to Heaven, on the South side of the city; there is an altar to the Earth on the North side of the city—There is one to the Sun on the East side, and to the Moon on the West side of the city. Sacrifices are offered at each of the altars at stated times by the Emperor in person or by his deputy. Every body accepts it as a fact that at the altars to the earth, the sun, the moon, the worship is rendered to the object of nature thus designated, regarded as a god, a nature god; and this worship is considered as coming down from the oldest antiquity. Seeing that the worship of Heaven is a part of this general and homogenous system, every principle of consistency and coherency in a mythological system, *requires* that the worship at the altar to Heaven should likewise be regarded as rendered to the *visible Heaven* regarded as a god. This is all the more evident, seeing that when Heaven is worshipped at this altar to Heaven, at the winter solstice, the sun, moon, and stars, the wind, rain, clouds, and thunder which are styled Heaven “shin” are worshipped conjointly with Heaven, they being counted as secondary objects of worship at that time. If in a ceremony of worship when all the objects of worship are designated by the names of different objects of nature, it should be considered that the other names *all* refer to the natural object so styled, it would be *most inconsistent* and *absurd* to contend that the name Heaven should refer to a spiritual Being having no connection with the natural object by which he is designated.

In connection with the two points already noticed, there is a still further intimate connection and relation in this nature worship of the Chinese, which, if possible, sets forth more clearly the fact that it is the *visible Heaven* deified which is the object of worship. This is the fact which runs through the whole system and forms an integral part of that system—that *Earth* is so intimately connected with and joined to this worship of Heaven. It is also associated with Heaven in the

care and the nurture of all things. In the Shu King at page 125, of this edition it reads "*Heaven and Earth* is the Parent of all creatures:" at page 485 in the classic of Filial Piety it reads "When *Heaven and Earth* were served with intelligence and discrimination the spiritual intelligences displayed (their retributive power)." Dr. Legge in a note to this passage says "the spiritual Intelligences here are *Heaven and Earth* conceived of as Spiritual Beings." On page 485 it reads "The master said, anciently, the intelligent kings served their fathers with filial piety and therefore they served *Heaven* with intelligence! they served their mothers with filial piety, and therefore they served *Earth* with discrimination." On these passages of the Shu King quoted above, Dr. Legge remarks in the first edition of his translation of 1865 page 283, "There can be no doubt that the *deification* of *Heaven and Earth* which appears in the text took its rise from the Yik King, of which King Nan may properly be regarded as the author." On these two passages from the Book of Filial Piety Dr. Legge says at p. 484, "*Heaven and Earth* appear as *two Powers*, or as a *Dual Power*, taking the place of Heaven or *God*. The spiritual intelligences here (i.e. of the text) are *Heaven and Earth* conceived of as *spiritual Beings* "i.e. as deified. From these remarks by Dr. Legge it is clear that Dr. Legge came *very near* accepting the same conception of their mythology as the one I am now presenting. His expression in the notes to the passage from the Shu King, about "the deification of Heaven and Earth" is just the view which I hold which is simply this that they regarded *Heaven and Earth* as gods. In other expressions "Spiritual Intelligences" and "Spiritual Beings" are a repetition of the *same idea* under different forms of expression. I, of course, hold that the idea of the Heathen is that these visible objects are each animated by an intelligent spirit; and that without that they would not be regarded as gods having power and intelligence. Neither is there any *limit* to the power or intelligence which they may attribute to them. To all their idols the heathen *virtually* attribute omniscience and omnipresence by the fact that they worship them: for only Beings possessed of *such attributes* could hear and answer prayers. In one of the native commentaries on the Shu King the following passage from the Yih King is quoted in explanation of the passage quoted from page 125. "How great is the originating virtue of *Heaven*, all things have their beginning from it. How great is the originating virtue of *Earth*, all things were produced by it; it is the complaisant help-mate of *Heaven*." The manner in which these two powers are spoken of in the Yik King, which is one of the oldest of the classics, is as follows. "Tien is *Heaven* therefore we style it *Father*: Kwan

is *Earth* therefore we style it *Mother*." "First there are *Heaven* and *Earth*, then all things are produced." *Heaven* and *Earth* exert their influences and all things are produced." The great virtue of *Heaven* and *Earth* is to produce." "*Heaven* and *Earth* nourish all things." The Tso chuen says "Imperial *Heaven* and sovereign *Earth* truly hear what the king says." Chantsz, says, "When *Heaven* and *Earth* are propitious all things will be prosperous; therefore the "shin" and the "ki" will be gracious." The Sz-ki expresses this idea thus, "When *Heaven* and *Earth* are happily harmonious, and the "yin" and the "yang" mutually efficacious, then the vivifying warmth and the substance overshadow and nourish all things." In the commentary on this passage it is said, "that *Heaven* and *Earth* by their fructifying effects overshadow and nourish all things." Such passages as these could easily be indefinitely multiplied. Here the divine works of producing and nourishing all things are ascribed to *Heaven* and *Earth*; sometimes jointly, and sometimes separately, but in such a way that the production of things is ascribed to *Heaven*, and the nourishing of things to *Earth*. The Book of Rites says "Therefore the Emperor sacrifices to *Heaven* and *Earth*." The commentary on this passage says "*Heaven* has the merit of overshadowing all things; *Earth* has the merit of containing all things. The Emperor with *Heaven* and *Earth* is a Trio, therefore the Emperor sacrifices to *Heaven* at the round hillock and to *Earth* at the square pool." This refers to the sacrifice to *Heaven* at the winter solstice, and to *Earth* at the summer solstice. The "round hillock" is the designation of the place of the sacrifice to *Heaven* and "square pool" the place of sacrificing to *Earth* as given in the rituals. In the Book of Rites it is said "according to *Heaven* serve *Heaven*; according to *Earth* serve *Earth*." The commentary thereon reads, "according to *Heaven's* elevation or *Earth's* depression. *Heaven* should be served with flaming burnt offerings, and *Earth* should be worshipped by burying the victims in the ground, as at the winter and summer solstitial sacrifices." In the Filial Piety classic at p. 496, it reads, The master replied; "of all creatures with their different natures produced by *Heaven* and *Earth*, man is the noblest." These quotations are taken from the Chinese classics. They are standard and authoritative. Similar quotations might be multiplied to any extent, from the rituals, from state papers, Imperial rescripts, &c., If these passages do not make it manifest that the *Earth* is considered as an object of worship jointly with *Heaven*, it is impossible that language could express that fact. And if these passages do not make it clear beyond all possibility of contradiction that it is the visible *Heaven* deified which is the object

referred to by the term Heaven, then it is difficult to conceive what language could express that fact. Besides the many passages, in which the words Heaven and Earth are thus used in conjunction, there is a passage which gives *the reason* for the worship of each *separately*, as two separate Beings, and powers, each having its respective characteristics, merits and functions. The passage is from the Book of Rites giving the reason why the sacrifice to Earth should be *the same* as the one to Heaven, and it reads thus; "This is by reason of considering *Earth* the same as *Heaven* or as "*shin*". *Earth* contains all things, *Heaven* presents the *appearances*; supplies are obtained from *Earth*, rules are obtained from *Heaven*; hence we ought to honor *Heaven* and love *Earth*, and thereby teach the people to increase the thank offering." The explanation reads, "We speak of recompensing the Earth's abundance because *it (earth) has the same merit as Heaven*. To make greater the thanksgiving ceremonies is to increase the recompense. The *containing things*, shows that the merit of *Earth is the same* as that of *Heaven*; therefore they appoint the sacrifice to *Earth*, and make *it equal* to the sacrifice to *Heaven* at the winter solstice, and thus give a worthy recompense to the [*Earth*] god." The Tsieh-chi on the same passage says, "If we obtain supplies, we have wherewith to nourish. Nourishing is a *mother's* function; if we obtain rules, we have wherewith to teach; teaching is a *Father's* function. That which *Heaven* and *Earth* manifest to men is excellent, therefore we ought to recompense them with that which is excellent." The *word* in the above passage translated "considering the *Earth* the same as *Heaven*" is the word "*shin*" used as a verb *i.e.* to "*shin*" the earth. Heaven is styled in Chinese specifically the "*Shin*." The exact meaning then of "*Shin*" as a verb is *to make earth a shin as Heaven is—to make Earth equal* in dignity, merit, and worship with *Heaven*. The functions of each is then stated—*Earth contains* all things—*Heaven* presents the *appearances*, supplies are obtained from *Earth*, rules are obtained from *Heaven*. The fact that *earth* contains all things, shows that the merit of *Earth* is the same as that of *Heaven*—therefore the "*shie*" sacrifice to earth at the summer solstice is made equal to the "*kiau*" sacrifice to Heaven at the winter solstice—As the earth is thus spoken of as equal in merit and sacrifice to Heaven it is called a "*shin*"—the same designation which belongs to Heaven. The other commentator says, "If we obtain supplies we have wherewith to nourish, nourishing is a *mother's* function; if we obtain rules we have wherewith to teach, teaching is a *Father's* function. I submit the matter to all candid scholars if this passage does not *incontestibly* establish these

two points, 1st that the Chinese when referring to *Heaven* and *Earth* as objects of worship and sacrifice refer to *two different* and *distinct* objects having their respective characteristics, properties and functions. Earth contains—furnishes supplies—nourishes. Heaven presents appearances, furnishes rules, teaches; though thus *distinct* and different their respective merits toward mankind are equal, and therefore they should *each* be served with the same equality of sacrifices. 2nd. It being thus clear that two objects are referred to, it is *equally clear* that the objects referred to and to which sacrifices are offered are the *visible Earth* and *visible Heaven* regarded as gods. This is manifest not only from the fact that the words which refer to these objects which are sacrificed to, are those which are constantly used in speaking of the natural objects, but the characteristics and functions ascribed to each respectively are those which are regarded as belonging to these respective objects; the Earth contains all things, furnishes supplies for the support of man and animals out of its abundant fertility, and thus nourishes all living things. The Heaven in its wide spread canopy gives the appearances. By the appearances of the sky and of the sun, moon, stars, clouds, and winds which are regarded as component parts of Heaven it affords rules to men for the direction of their affairs, and for knowing the seasons, and thus it teaches man kind. That such a discussion in regard to the respective merits and sacrifices of *Heaven* and *Earth* could occur on any other supposition than that Heaven meant the visible Heaven regarded as a god is *simply impossible*.

In nearly all the passages in which Tien occurs referring to the Supreme Power Dr. Legge translates it Heaven, in accordance with the fact, which he states correctly, that “the most common use of Heaven in the Chinese classics is to designate the supreme governing power:” yet in several he very inconsistently departs from this usage in his translations. The phrase “Wang-tien Shangti” occurs several times. This is the word Tien Heaven with the adjective Imperial prefixed, with the designation Shangti following it, which Dr. Legge says is *very frequently* used as the *synonym* of Tien. In accordance with this most common use of the words this expression means the chief power which is called Heaven, and here styled Imperial Heaven, and then followed with the synonym Shangti *in apposition* with the commonly used name Heaven thus “Imperial Heaven. “The Rules above,” Dr. Legge in disregard of this common principle of translation renders this passage thus, “Shangti of the imperial heaven.” This changes the word Heaven, which throughout the whole book is so frequently used to designate the chief Power,

and which is the *principal predicate* of the sentence, to signify a *place*, and it changes it from being the predicate of the sentence to be a mere qualifying clause. Such a change is not justified by any rule of grammar, or by any thing in the connection of any of the sentences in which it occurs. There is however one passage from a standard collection of writings, in which this phrase occurs, to which I invite the attention of Chinese scholars. This sentence is of such a character as to afford a *sure criterion* as to the correct translation of this expression; and to make clear its true meaning—The passage which is taken from a work that dates before the Christian era, reads thus:—“For a long time the “*Tien*” (*i.e.* Heaven) has been styled “Wang Tien Shangti, the great *one*, and its altar is called the great altar,—While “*Ti-ki*,” the Earth god, is spoken of as sovereign Earth—Now the “*Ti-ki*” ought to be styled “Wang Ti Shangti” and its altar be called the broad altar.” From this passage it appears clear that the object of the memorialist was to receive from the Emperor a title for deified *Earth*, of the same dignity as the one which *Heaven* had. He states the title of Heaven, and asks that a corresponding title be given to Earth. It is evident beyond all controversy that these titles, the one of the “*Tien*” Heaven and the other of the “*Ti*” Earth, are of the same grammatical construction, and must be translated by the same rules of grammar. I regard the words Heaven in the one, and Earth in the other phrase, as *the predicate* of the verb, and the other noun in each phrase is *in apposition* with its respective noun and the phrase will read in the one part “Imperial Heaven, the ruler above,” and in the other it will read “Imperial Earth sovereign Producer.” But according to Dr. Legge, the first part should read, “The Supreme Ruler of the Imperial Heaven,” and the other, if translated according to the same grammatical rules, would read “Sovereign Producer of Imperial Earth.” In more than one hundred and fifty passages of the Shu King, Dr. Legge says:—“Heaven means the supreme Power” that is, it designates the Being which exercises dominion and rule over all things; and yet in this phrase, where it has the honorable prefix of *Imperial*, it would, by this translation, be displaced from its high meaning of chief Power, and represented merely as a *place* ruled over by Shangti; which word, in all other passages, is used only as a designation of Heaven exercising the function of *ruling*. By reason of the Christian conception of the true God, Jehovah, as ruling over the material heaven, the incongruity of this representation of the matter as connected with the Chinese idea does not strike our minds. But when we consider the parallel phrase as applied to the Earth, the *incongruity* is most manifest. Earth, as a god, is represented as the

producer of all things, and the translation "Imperial earth, sovereign Producer" is *congruous* with the Chinese opinions and statement in reference to that matter. But to translate it, as Dr. Legge translates the corresponding phrase, in reference to Heaven, would require it to be translated, thus:—"Sovereign Producer of Imperial Earth," which would make *earth* to be the *producer of itself*, this is too absurd a rendering to be accepted by any one, as a correct translation of the Chinese text. In connection with the Chinese conception and belief that Heaven is the chief power, to translate the other phrase "the supreme Ruler of Imperial Heaven" is equally as incongruous as the other one in reference to the Earth, for it would make the chief power which is Heaven * *rule over itself*. However little the incongruity may strike us, it is equally absurd in a Chinese point of view to speak of *Heaven ruling over itself* as it is to speak of *Earth producing itself*. With the translation which I contend for, the prayer of the memorialist asking that a title might be given to *Earth* of equal dignity with the one which *Heaven* has long possessed, is coherent and appropriate. In an ode to the Earth, which is sung at the time of the sacrifice to it, at the summer solstice there is an expression which corresponds to the expression applied to *Heaven* in the above quotation, that it is "the great one"—viz "*Earth* is equal to the Imperial *azure*; it is *one* of the two great ones," of course by "the two great ones," *Heaven* and *Earth* are meant. A commentator on this very phrase "Wang tien, Shangti" says, "Heaven and Shangti are the same; in consideration of the vastness of its substance it is called Tien, Heaven: in consideration of its seat as lord being above, it is called Shangti, Ruler above."

This demonstration that the word Heaven in these passages means the visible Heaven, can not be set aside by attempting to show that while Heaven in these passages refers to the visible Heaven, yet that in the great number of passages in which it occurs in the sacred Books and Rituals, it refers to the true God. For the sacrifice which is referred to in the first of the above passages, in which Heaven is compared to Earth, is the *very sacrifice* which is offered Tearly to Heaven, at the altar to Heaven in Peking, and which Dr. Legge has declared his belief is offered to Jehovah. The words "Wang-ti Shangti, in the second quotation, are the very words which are

* Wen Siang, the late distinguished Chinese statesman said to a friend of mine, "How is it that you Foreigners understand so little of our opinions? You print in your books that Shangti created heaven. We believe that Heaven and Shangti are the same. When you say that Shangti created Heaven it makes Heaven create itself." This anecdote was related to me by the gentleman to whom the remark was made.

incised on the tablet to Heaven, which is placed on the altar at the time of *that sacrifice*. This I know certainly, because I saw *this very tablet* myself. Hence the word Heaven in these passages, applies to the very same Being that is meant in all the passages, where Heaven is used to designate the chief power.

Understanding their system of mythology in its obvious meaning, viz; that the Chinese regard *Heaven* and *Earth* as gods, the one the counterpart of the other; each having its appointed worship, titles and sacrifices; makes their whole system *consistent* and *intelligible*—Dr. Legge's opinion that the Being the Chinese style Heaven, is the same as Jehovah, renders their mythology *confused* and *incongruous*, and much of it absurd. Having thus established the truth of the second and third propositions, viz, that the text of the sacred Books, and the general agreement of all the commentators on them; and that the significance of Heaven in the mythology, in the state worship, and in the rituals, *all agree* in showing that this chief Power is the *visible Heavens*, regarded as a god, I close this part of the discussion.

I will be very short in the fourth proposition which is this, the concurrent opinion of the Christian Missionaries in China for the last three hundred years, including the Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic and the Protestant, with but few exceptions, is, *that Heaven does not designate* the true God. The opinion of the Roman Catholic Missionaries is best expressed in the language of the decree of the Pope Clement xi. which reads thus, "That to express our idea of the most high and good God, the name Tien must be *absolutely rejected*. That for this reason it must not be permitted that tablets bearing the Chinese inscription "King Tien," 'adore Heaven' should be placed in Christian churches." Huc's *Chris. in China* Vol. III p. 411. This prohibition of the use of the word Heaven, in referring to the true God, was because it was decided, in view of all the facts placed before those who considered the subject, that the object designated as Heaven in the sacred Books of the Chinese, was the visible Heaven regarded as a god. This is the *testimony* of the Roman Catholic church *till this present time*. With this opinion the Greek Catholic church is understood *to agree entirely*. Their Missionaries in China refrain entirely from using the word Heaven and its synonym Shangti in seeking to propagate Christianity. I am privately informed that the late erudite Archimandrite Palladius, held very decidedly the opinion that Heaven in the classics referred to deified Heaven. His opinion, as expressed to me by a personal acquaintance, was this, "He held that the religion of the ancient Chinese was the same as that now held by them; that their chief god

was a personification of Heaven, and was the same as "Tien laou ye" "venerated Heaven" of the common people, who also personify the sun as "Tai yang ye" "venerated great light." The titles here applied to heaven, and the sun, in the common parlance of the northern people of China, are those which are applied to the officers of government.

Dr. Legge's opinion that Heaven in the classics refers to the true God has been published in China since 1852; and notwithstanding all the prestige of his learning, the number of Protestant missionaries who agree with him in this opinion, so far as they have made it known, may be counted on the *fingers of one hand*. All the others hold to the opinion that Heaven in the classics does not designate the same Being as our God.

In addition to these testimonies from the different ecclesiastical bodies I now present the opinion of one of the most learned Sinologists in official life in China. This distinguished civilian in a recent conversation, after referring to the fact that Shun, one of the early Rulers of China, when he received the government sacrificed "to the hills and rivers after he had sacrificed to Shangti or Heaven, said "this statement shows that from the very earliest date Shangti was regarded as the head of a Pantheon." The record of this early form of worship will be found at page 39 of this volume, and reads as follows, Shun sacrificed specially, but with the ordinary forms to (Shangti) God: sacrificed with reverent purity to the six Honored ones; offered their appropriate sacrifices to the hills and rivers; and extended his worship to the hosts of (shin) spirits" In a note to this passage Dr. Legge says "Who the six Honored ones were cannot be determined with certainty. Ankwo thought they were the seasons, cold, heat, the sun, the moon, the stars, and drought, that is certain spirits supposed to rule over these phenomena and things." On the same page we read, "In the second month of the year Shun made a tour of inspection eastwards as far as Shaiyung where he sacrificed to Heaven, and sacrificed in order to the hills and rivers;" Heaven in this passage is the same as Shangti of the passage above.

These testimonies afford you, my dear Sir, the *data* on which to form your judgment, whether the opinion on this point which Dr. Legge has put into his translation is an *individual* or a general one.

Having thus established the main point in this discussion that *the Being* which is designated Heaven in the Chinese sacred Books, is deified Heaven, it follows as a matter of course, according to our Christian system of faith on this matter—that the chief god of the Chinese is a *false god*. The fact that many of the attributes, works, and worship which properly belong to Jehovah are ascribed to Heaven

does not make *it* the same Being as the true God. The very *essence of idolatry* is the ascription of the attributes, work and worship which belong to God, to some other Being. In this view of the subject, there were two courses open to Dr. Legge in making his translation, as he himself has clearly stated the matter. He could have left the words Ti and Shangti untranslated; or he could have translated them by the words "Ruler" and "Supreme Ruler;" as he translated the absolute name Tien by its proper equivalent Heaven, it would have been in the same line to have *translated* these designations of Tien. Either course would have been satisfactory, and it would have been in accord with the principles which you laid down as a guide to the several translators. Dr. Legge had in a measure before his mind the great and fundamental objection to his doing as he has done; as he says "A reader confronted every where by the word God, might be led to think more highly of the primitive religion of China than he ought to think." Pref. xxiv. This is only part of the truth—by using the word God applied to the chief god of the Chinese sacred Books the reader is in danger of being *mised entirely* as to what Being is their chief god. Trusting to the guidance and learning of the Translator and the reputation of the Editor, which he supposes guarantees the accuracy of the translation, by seeing the word God used in the translation he of course understands that the Being spoken of in these Books is Jehovah; whereas I have proved beyond all successful denial that the Tien of the Chinese text is no other than deified Heaven, *a false god*. Dr. Legge, in following his own particular belief and opinion has on this point been guilty of giving a *gloss* and *not* a translation of the Chinese text, The whole agreement of the Chinese Dictionaries and commentators in regard to the *meaning* of the word Ti is that it means Ruler. The same meaning is given to it by Foreign Dictionaries and Translators. In this opinion Dr. Legge *himself* concurs, as in the preface at p. xxiv, he says "should I give for these the terms 'Ruler' and "Supreme Ruler." He has expressed his views more fully on this point in the Prolegomena to his Translation of the Shu King as published in Hong Kong in 1865. thus, at p. 198, "The name by which God was designated was 'The Ruler,' and 'The Supreme Ruler' denoting emphatically His personality, supremacy and unity." In this quotation, "The Ruler" is the translation of Ti, and "The Supreme Ruler" is the translation of Shangti. *The charge* that in using God to represent Ti and Shangti, Dr. Legge has given a *gloss* and *not* a *translation* of these words, *is established by his own statement* of what is the proper equivalent of the Chinese words Ti and Shangti. So that *even* if Dr.

Legge's opinion that Heaven of the Chinese Classics means the true God were correct, the use of God to represent Ti and Shangti would not be a translation of these words. But when the correct opinion is that the Being designated Heaven in the Chinese Sacred Books is the visible Heaven deified, then the use of God to designate that false god "is a crime as well as a blunder."

I now proceed to notice some of the arguments which Dr. Legge presents in justification of his giving the gloss instead of a translation of Ti.

I.—He says "our word God fits naturally into every passage where the character Ti occurs in the old Chinese classics" Preface p. xxv. I admit this statement as a general one. But it is very strange that Dr. Legge does not see that it is a very flimsy sophism—Idolatry consists in the ascription of the attributes, works and worship which belong to the true God, to a false God. Is it not evident then that in every case when such attributes, works or worship of the true God are ascribed to a false god, the word God can be substituted for the name of the false God and make sense, or "the word God fit naturally into the sentence"? Let us try it with the name of the idol "Goddess of mercy." "The goddess of mercy hears the prayers of the suffering." "The goddess of mercy succours the distressed." "The goddess of mercy heals the sick." In all these sentences we can substitute the word God with propriety and say "God hears the prayers of the suffering." "God succours the distressed", "God heals the sick." But does that prove that the goddess of mercy is the same as "Our God"? By no means; neither does the fact that "God fits naturally" into the sentences when Ti occurs prove that Ti is the same as "Our God." But let us try this a little further. On the supposition that Ti is "Our God," then of course Tien, Heaven, in the Chinese classics is the same as Jehovah, and therefore, according to this principle, Jehovah "will fit naturally into all the passages where Tien occurs in the old classics." In many passages it will, viz; in all the passages where the attributes and works of Jehovah are ascribed to Heaven. But there are many in which it will not fit appropriately. Thus we find such passages as these "*Heaven* and *Earth* are the Parent of all things," "*Heaven* and *Earth* produced all things." In the Book of Rites it is said "According to *Heaven* serve Heaven, according to *Earth* serve Earth" The commentary says "According to *Heaven's* elevation and *Earth's* depression. *Heaven* should be worshipped with flaming burnt offerings; and *Earth* should be worshipped by burying the animals in the ground, as at the summer and winter solstitial sacrifices." The Chan Rites says "Use jade stone and make

six vessels and offer to *Heaven*, *Earth*, and the *four quarters*; the azure jade offer to *Heaven*, and the yellow to *Earth*." The explanation says "the jade should be in shape exactly *round* and *azure* to resemble *Heaven*. The yellow jade should be in shape eight cornered and yellow to resemble *Earth*." It is said "*Heaven* is azure, and *Earth* is yellow. King Woo was able to put away the evils of the Yin rule, and give the people rest. He might be compared to *Heaven* and *Earth*, overshadowing and sustaining all things in order to nourish men." Let us try to substitute Jehovah in these passages for *Heaven*—"Jehovah and Earth are the Parent of all things." "Jehovah and Earth produced all things" "according to Jehovah serve Jehovah, according to Earth serve Earth—according to Jehovah's elevation, and Earth's depression." But it is not necessary to reproduce every sentence—Each reader can do it for himself—I only write out two more sentences—"The jade should be in shape exactly *round* and *azure* to resemble Jehovah." "Jehovah is azure, and Earth is yellow: This is blasphemy. It shows that the principle that the name of "our God" "fits naturally" into sentences applies *only* when the attributes, works and worship which belong to the true God are ascribed to the false god—And all this principle proves in the matter is this, not that *the Being* to which such attributes, work and worship are ascribed is "Our God" but that the attributes, works or worship, *which belong* to our God, *have been ascribed* to the said Being which-ever one it may be, whether Heaven, the goddess of Mercy or Buddha.

II.—Dr. Legge at page 530 of the Translation of the She King as published in 1871, in reference "to the saying that *Heaven* is the Lord and Ruler," says "to say so is *to my mind* exceedingly *unnatural*," all forms of idolatry are to a Christian instructed mind *unnatural*. But this is what the heathen mind in its blindness does—it ascribes divine attributes to objects which are not gods—It is no more unnatural to ascribe divine attributes and works to a deified object of nature, as the Heaven, earth or sun, than it is to ascribe them to a deified man—and the testimony of history is that the worship of the objects of nature was the earliest and most widely prevalent form of idolatry.

III.—In the She King at page 316 of the edition of 1871, Dr. Legge quotes the explanation given by Ching E—of the use of the two names Heaven and Shangti—viz "With reference to its form we speak of Heaven; with reference to its Lordship and rule we speak of Ti"—and says "this explanation, which is accepted by Choo and all subsequent writers, is absurd; *We* are as good judges of what is *meant by Heaven*, as a name for the Supreme Power as

Ching E was; and however the use of it may be explained it certainly carries our thoughts above and beyond the visible sky." This last assertion that the word Heaven carries *Christian minds* beyond the visible sky is no doubt correct. But that is not the question under consideration. The question is what did the Chinese mind understand by Heaven? Ching E and Choo and all *subsequent writers*, Dr. Legge tells us, say it referred to the *visible Heaven* deified, Dr. Legge says such a statement is absurd to his mind. I suppose most persons will accept the testimony of the Chinese writers as to *their own conception and understanding* of the matter. They will also willingly accept Dr. Legge's statement that such a conception appears absurd to him. But we are *now anxious* to know how the Chinese understand it. When a translator evidently seeks to make the writers whom he is translating express the sentiments he thinks they ought to express, he gives the most grave occasion to watch his translations and this state of mind very naturally leads to using a gloss on that point, rather than a translation.

I will only notice one of the many ways in which this gloss of Dr. Legge is calculated to mislead. It falsifies history.—By the general consent of the writers of all countries all other nations of antiquity are represented as having worshipped false gods as the Babylonians, Phoenicians, Hindoos, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Etrurians &c., and it has been considered by most writers that the Chinese have done so also. But Dr. Legge by *this gloss* conveys the idea that the Chinese preserved the knowledge and worship of the true God, as the chief object of worship in their state religion through all the 4000 years of their national existence—while the simple fact is that deified Heaven has been the chief object of worship—and it has been worshipped by the Emperor conjointly with the sun, moon, and stars, and the powers of nature. This statement of the nature of the early religion of the Chinese shows that they fell into the same form of idolatry as the other nations of antiquity, viz; the worship of the objects of nature. The Chinese selected the same object for their chief god, as did the Hindoos, Greeks Romans, Etrurians and other nations, viz, Heaven—The Hindoos called it is Dyaous Piter (and Varuna) and the same name is continued in Jus-piter or Jupiter of the Romans. The Chinese also call Heaven Father—and earth Mother. This identity of religious conceptions and worship among the nations of antiquity, is, if possible more manifest as it concerns the Etrurians and the Chinese. For according to the statements of Rev. Isaac Taylor in his Research on Etrurian antiquities, in their language, which appears to be cognate with the Chinese, their chief god was *Tina*, Heaven, and was regarded

by their neighbours the Latins as the same with Jupiter. Every one must see how near Tina is to Tien. Receiving the statements of the Chinese in their proper sense, we have the history of all the nations, as to their religious notions, congruous and consistent.

IV.—There is another argument which Dr. Legge has used very frequently, and upon which he lays great stress. It is a sentence found in Confucius, "Doctrine of the Mean" at page 268 of Vol. I. of "Chi Clas." 1861, and it reads as follows, "By the Kiau and Shie sacrifice they served [Shang-ti] God." The Kiau sacrifice is the one, to Heaven at the winter solstice; the Shie sacrifice is the one to Earth at the summer solstice. I have clearly proved, what Dr. Legge, also states, that Shang-ti is the designation of Heaven. If we substitute in this passage the absolute name of the being referred to i.e. Heaven, it will read, "By the Kiau and Shie sacrifices, they served Heaven." Heaven is the name commonly used in the books referring to this fact. That "Kiau is the sacrifice to Heaven," can be found scores of times in the Chinese classics. Dr. Legge states in his notes on this passage that two of the most distinguished Chinese commentators think that "Sovereign Earth is to be understood after Shang-ti to complete the sense making the sentence read, By the Kiau and Shie sacrifice they served Shang-ti and Sovereign Earth." This reading is in full accord with all statements in standard authors in regard to these sacrifices. It also accords with the immediately following context of this book which reads "by the ceremonies at the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors. He who understands the ceremonies of sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, and the meaning of the several sacrifices to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into his palm." The immediate context thus presents the generally prevailing objects of worship Heaven, Earth and ancestors.—How absurd to say that two of these natural objects refer to the spiritual Being Jehovah: and the third of *the series* refers to natural men as objects of worship. Dr. Legge's own mind has been the victim of a mere illusion. Some thirty years ago, in the early period of his Chinese studies, he adopted the view that Shang-ti of the classics is God; and finding this one sentence in which Confucius uses Shang-ti instead of Heaven in speaking of this sacrifice, he said "here is the indubitable proof that the Emperors, when worshipping at the altar to Heaven worship God; Confucius says so"—whereas Confucius says *no such thing*; Confucius simply says, as do scores of other writers, that in the Kiau sacrifice *they served Heaven*. The argument in Dr. Legge's mind rested on the wrong meaning which he himself has put upon the word Shangti. When that word

s proved, as it has been, to refer simply to deified Heaven the argument from this passages of Confucius falls to the ground.

It is not my purpose, Dear sir, to enlarge upon the wrong done to the science of comparative mythology by Dr. Legge's disregard of the principle which you had presented for the guidance of the several Translators, in giving a gloss instead of a translation on one of the most fundamental points in the Sacred Books of the Chinese. I consider that I have done my work in calling your attention to the matter, and presenting to you the undeniable proofs that Dr. Legge on this point is wrong, philologically, mythologically, logically and historically wrong. He presents to the Readers of his translations, with the sanction of your respected name, that the chief god of the Chinese is the same Being as the God of Christians when in truth the *Chinese themselves* understand their chief god to be the visible Heaven deified. In thus presenting the subject he *not only hinders* the object you had in view in having this series of Books published, but he does that which is directly calculated to *entirely mislead* in the prosecution of the study of comparative mythology. For as a matter of course, the readers of this Book, who do not know the Chinese language, will accept this translation from the learned Professor of Chinese in Oxford University, having your name as Editor in the Title page, as a faithful translation of the original, and will accept of his opinion on this fundamental point as correct: when the facts submitted to your consideration show it to be merely an *individual opinion*. It, of course, does not pertain to me to suggest what a regard for your own reputation as an advanced Teacher of comparative mythology, and as the Editor of this series of Books, may require you to do in the matter. That can be safely left to your own consideration. But you will permit me to say that however this gloss, appearing under such circumstances may hinder a correct understanding of the subject in Europe *the fact* remains *every where apparent* in China. The abundant literature of the Chinese on the subject in their Sacred Books, their commentaries, and their rituals together with the phraseology of the spoken language make it clear that the chief god of this people is deified Heaven. The imposing state worship in the Capital of the Empire, the magnificent dome that is visited by all visitors to Peking, and the impressive altar to Heaven *all declare* with a concurrent testimony that *Heaven*, deified Heaven is the chief god, of the state religion of China.

t With great respect for your varied learning and for your efforts
o promote a study of the various systems of religion that have
prevalled in the world, I am, yours very faithfully,

INQUIRER.

APPENDIX TO LETTER TO PROF. F. MAX. MULLER.

I HEREWITH append some passages from Chinese authors which are not in the pamphlet on Shangti. With the translation I also give the Chinese text. "The great Shun looking at the regular position of the sun, moon and five planets, saw that the decree of Heaven was with him. Upon this, having undertaken to discharge the duties of the son of Heaven [*i.e.* Emperor] and to manage the affairs, he sacrificed to Heaven and Earth at the round Hillock, and stated the reasons for undertaking the government. Because of this he looked up and considered, this azure heaven, its original material so bright and vast, how can it be there is no lord and sovereign to manage the decree? He determined to confer an honorable title and designated it, 'Imperial Heaven, the Ruler above,' again 'Heaven Lord the great Ruler, thus corresponding to the title *Heaven above*.'"* "Ti is one of the names of Heaven? the reason why it is named Ti is that Ti means to judge. Representing that Heaven is impartial without limit, does not distinguish between itself and others; that Heaven examines and judges with the utmost justice and intelligence, for these reasons, it is styled Ti. The principles of the five Emperors (.. Ti) were the same as these; they were able to examine and judge therefore they had the designation Ti. Heaven and Ti are one and the same. The Lords of men can be designated Ti but they cannot be designated Heaven; because Heaven is *so designated* according to its substance. The Lords of men cannot be of the same substance as Heaven."†

"At the round hillock to sacrifice to expansive Heaven, the Ruler above, is to recompense our origin. Thus to recompense our origin, is because of the deifying of Heaven." ‡

* 大舜見七政齊平，知天命攸在，遂攝行天子之事，敷奏上帝，祈天永命。理庶務，祭天地於圓丘，類告攝政之由，因仰思蒼蒼者上，又曰：天主大，適符上帝，審諦之，言神也，言通也，言五帝一人，不可忘此帝也。

† 圓丘以祀昊天上帝者，報本也，報本所以神天之道。