

1850-1864

THE TAEPING REBELLION

IN CHINA;

A NARRATIVE OF ITS RISE AND PROGRESS,

BASED UPON ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION
OBTAINED IN CHINA.



P R E F A C E.

THE political and commercial relations between China and the Western Powers are rapidly becoming of such great and increasing importance, that it is the duty of those who have lived for some time in that empire, and have had opportunities of observing the character of the people, together with the system of government, to make known the result of their experience. This conviction has, in a great measure, led to the publication of the present volume.

The career of the Taepings has long attracted the notice of all Europeans interested in whatever relates to the development of the Chinese nation; partly on account of the semi-Christian tenets promulgated by them, but principally because of their influence over the tea and silk districts, and consequent power to injure or advance the prospects of trade. Hence, by devoting a considerable portion of time since my return to England to the arrangement in a connected form of such of my notes as related to the Rebellion, and which were compiled during my stay in that part of China mainly occupied by the contending forces, I considered that my purpose would be adequately fulfilled.

The History of the Rebellion, when related step by step, throws much light upon subjects connected with the political condition of the empire, and in this work

ample use has been made of such proclamations and letters as referred thereto. The time embraced by the narrative extends over several years, and consequently it has been necessary to take extracts from the accounts either written or published by those of the European community in China, who were enabled to obtain trustworthy information respecting the early proceedings of the Taepings. In most instances the writings and translations of our missionaries have been the documents principally relied upon, and I here take the opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Secretary of the London Missionary Society, together with other friends, through whose kindness I have been permitted to make use of the data I required.

The opinion, now so generally entertained, that a time is fast approaching when Great Britain will become involved in grave political difficulties upon subjects relating to China and Japan, is based upon a consciousness of the extraordinary changes that have occurred of late in our respective positions.

Twenty years have not yet elapsed since the English obtained the cession of the little rocky island of Hong-kong, and were allowed, subject to many indignities, to trade at five of the seaports. Japan was then all but unknown, and the interior of China was strictly closed to the intruding foot of the foreigner. Now, thanks to a steady and determined policy, Englishmen have the power to traverse with impunity every part of that enormous empire.¹ A minister and his staff are established at Pekin: ten seaports are thrown open for trade,

¹ *Vide* Treaty signed at Tientsin, 1858, and Convention of Pekin, 1860.

together with such cities bordering upon the principal commercial river (Yang-zte) as were considered by our merchants the most advisable to settle in. Protection is ensured to the Protestant Missions, and a valuable portion of the mainland near Hongkong is ceded to us in perpetuity. Japan also is thrown open, and almost unrestricted commerce permitted.

There is, however, one serious drawback to all this. It is evident that in proportion to our hold in these countries, so will be our chances of political complications with them, and probably not with them alone. Another great Power has not been idle in obtaining from the Chinese government advantages even greater in importance than the above. After waiting quietly for nearly a century and a half, Russia has at last been able to throw aside the treaty that confined her to the northern banks of the Amoor, and has extended her territory along the coast above four hundred miles due south, including the whole country contained within a line drawn from the southernmost point on the coast to the lowest curve of the Amoor. She has also gained a position long coveted:—Victoria Harbour, immediately opposite the northern islands of Japan, is said to be capable of sheltering a large fleet, and has also river communication with the interior. The possession of this port is of especial importance to the Russians, because it is not only much less liable to be frozen in than the mouth of the Amoor, which is not usually navigable for more than six months in the year, but it also gives them much better opportunities for carrying into effect their commercial purposes.

The French, who have now concluded their military operations in Cochin China, have obtained, as a kind of indemnity, a considerable extent of the sea-board of that country, in which is included another very good harbour. Thus China appears to be placed in a very precarious position : Russia overshadows her from the North, France saps up to her from the South, and England is calmly planted near the centre. But although, looking at these circumstances, it might fairly be inferred that China is destined to fall under the rule of one of these Powers, and become governed in the same manner as British India, yet any one acquainted with the Chinese people will at once acknowledge the extreme improbability of this result. During the four years that I was in Chinese waters, and which period was partly passed in the steaming rivers of the South, and latterly in the more active duties attending gunboat service in the North, I had fair opportunities of judging of the character of the people of all classes living near the sea-board, and am of opinion that it is almost impossible to overrate their extraordinary capabilities. I found them to be laborious, intelligent, truthful, easily commanded, and, when properly armed and led, courageous. They have also the power of endurance in a remarkable degree. This trait in their constitution was clearly exemplified at the time of our hostilities in 1856-57, when our surgeons all bore unanimous testimony to the unflinching and calm behaviour of those Chinese that came under their hands for the purpose of undergoing amputation. But perhaps the most prominent quality

of their character, and one which will be chiefly instrumental in developing the resources of the empire, is the untiring energy displayed by them whenever they have a special object in view. At our Treaty Ports their never-ceasing efforts in accumulating wealth sufficiently evidence this; and also in their ordinary occupations in the villages the same pushing tendency is observable.¹ With this activity they also combine great patience. “Le temps pour point d’appui et la patience pour levier, voila les deux grands principes de leur physique,” writes M. Huc, who in these few words well conveys the just result of his long experience of the Chinese people. Their eager industry is, however, most conspicuous in the continents and islands to which they emigrate. At Singapore, where all the labour and small trade is performed by them, and where the equatorial climate tends, above all things, to promote languor and idleness, nothing is so striking as the contrast between these indefatigable trading strangers and the indolent Malay natives.

It is probable that it will be through the agency of the Chinese that the hidden resources of Borneo, Sumatra, and the other little known islands of those seas, will be brought to light; and also it is clear that the now unprofitable districts and waste lands of

¹ Monsieur Simon, a French agriculturist, sent out by the Emperor Napoleon to report upon the Chinese system of agriculture, informed me that in no other part of the world had he seen such productive results as were brought about by the field-labourers, partly through the manure employed, but principally by their personal exertions. In a paper lately forwarded to the “Institut,” at Paris, M. Simon has given some valuable statistics respecting farming, land-tenure, &c.

Northern Australia will soon become populated and cultivated by them.

The annual emigration from the provinces of the China sea-board is estimated to be about eighty-thousand, (this is exclusive of the coolie traffic to Peru and the Spanish West Indies). Of these Australia receives one-third, the islands one-fourth, and California about one-eighth ; the remainder become distributed over other parts of America, and as portions of the crews of the merchant-ships in the Pacific Sea. Out of the eleven thousand emigrants to Singapore, it is found that one-fifth return to China ; and at San Francisco the departures average one-fourth of the arrivals. The Chinese are peculiarly averse to leaving their own country, and it is not on account of the prospect of higher wages that they do so, but because their native districts are over-populated. This has been exemplified of late by the sudden overflow of the inhabitants of the northern provinces into outer Manchuria : also inquiries made into the relative wages received by them at home and abroad led to a similar conclusion.¹

The time has now for ever passed away for the Chinese to be looked upon as a stagnant, non-progressive race. The late hostilities with England have at last

¹ At Singapore the monthly wages of a Chinese day-labourer average three dollars ; journeymen tailors, carpenters, &c., receive from six to nine. In Southern China I found the agricultural labourers in the receipt of (with their allowance of rice) nine pence per diem ; good workmen as tailors or carpenters received (also including rice) from six to seven dollars per lunar month. Considering that an acre of the best rice-growing land is usually let for under five dollars a-year, the agricultural wages cannot be deemed low.

opened their minds to the necessity of keeping pace with other nations. Nowhere is this alteration in their character so apparent as in their advancement in military skill. The improvement in the means of attack and defence at the Taku forts in 1860 as compared with 1858, was most unmistakeable, and upon visiting some of these forts after their capture, I was much struck with the cleverness or ingenuity displayed in the fittings of the turn-tables for gun-carriages, fuzes for shell, plans for magazines, &c.

Our merchants also find that there is an increasing demand for revolvers, rifles, and other modern weapons. Future events will undoubtedly prove that there is no absence of personal courage among the Chinese,¹ and I am convinced that, when well drilled and officered, their armies will be found both daring and efficient.

When speculating upon the numerous contingencies that may hereafter affect our relations with China, it must not be forgotten how vast are the capabilities for development now lying almost dormant in the interior

¹ I may here relate an incident that occurred on the coast of China, exemplifying their contempt of danger. A pirate junk, chased by H.M.S. 'Algerine' up a small river to the northward of Amoy, suddenly grounded, and her crew escaped to the shore. A party of seamen and marines landed in pursuit, and quickly, with their Enfield rifles, came within range; a running skirmish then commenced, in which several of the Chinese were killed; amongst others, an elderly looking man was wounded, and fell helpless on the ground. The distance between him and the advancing party was rapidly lessening, when a young pirate was seen to turn back, and, in the face of a heavy fire, run to the spot where the old man lay. Here, although only fifty yards distant from his pursuers, he stopped, took his disabled companion on his back and carried him off. This heroism met with its deserved reward, and he was allowed to escape unharmed.

of that country. Apart from the wide field that yet remains for the expansion of the trade in silk, tea, cotton, &c., there exists a mine of inexhaustible wealth all but untouched, and which will have an incalculable influence over her future destiny. It is now generally known that two of the northern and three of the central provinces contain immense coal deposits, embracing thousands of square miles. At present the quantity of coal annually extracted from them falls short of a million and a half tons, but there would be no difficulty in increasing the supply indefinitely.

The commerce of Australia, New Zealand, and the numerous islands in the Pacific is now in its infancy, and there can be no doubt but that future centuries will witness an extension such as can be but faintly conceived. China, with her coal-beds, rivers, harbours, and toiling population, will then, as far as human foresight can predict, represent the most commercially important position in the world.

Army and Navy Club, 1862.

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ERRATUM.

Page 31, line 5, *for 1842-43 read 1841-42.*

THE TAEPING REBELLION.

CHAPTER I.

Historical sketch from the period of the Tartar Conquest until the outbreak of the Rebellion.

THE narrative of the progress of the Taeping rebellion, from the time of its outbreak in the province of Kwang-si, A.D. 1850, requires to be preceded by a slight summary of the state of the Chinese empire at that period, together with a notice of the resources for education, and the qualifications demanded for appointments to office under government.¹ Many of the early proclamations issued by the rebel chiefs bear immediate reference to their position as representatives of a conquered people, and would not be readily comprehended except by those well acquainted with the circumstances attending the Tartar conquest.

The examinations by public competition have been of considerable weight in moulding the character and influencing the actions of Hung-siu-tsuen (the Taeping leader), whose life, from boyhood until his thirty-fifth year, was principally passed in severe study as an aspirant for literary honours, or as a teacher at the

¹ Throughout these pages the word European is to be understood as applicable to all people who, however geographically distributed, own a common European origin.

village-schools in his native district ; and, consequently, those readers who desire fully to understand the career of this extraordinary man should make themselves conversant with the Chinese scholastic and competitive systems. To this end, I shall, in as condensed a form as possible, give such data upon these subjects as will fulfil that object to the extent necessary for the present purpose.

The Tartars obtained their first permanent footing in China proper early in the twelfth century. It was during the reign of Whey-tsong, eighth emperor of the Sung dynasty, that the Manchus, or Eastern Tartars, invaded the country, and rapidly conquered the provinces situated to the north of the Yellow River (A.D. 1127). They steadily continued their progress during the rule of succeeding emperors, until Kan-tsong, tenth of the Sungs, was forced to remove his court to Hang-chow, chief city of the province of Che'-kiang, and thus leave the invaders in possession of Northern China.

The Manchu chief fixed upon Honan, in the province of that name, for his capital. For one hundred and seventeen years the Manchus retained their conquest, and, by judiciously accommodating themselves to the customs of the people, obtained a considerable degree of popularity. During this time, Southern China remained steadfast to the rule of the legitimate sovereigns, and the Tartars, notwithstanding their endeavours, were unable to possess a single foot of ground south of the Yang-zte-kiang.

Towards the close of the year 1207, Genghis-Khan, the chief of the Western Tartars (Mongolians), having consolidated his empire, which then included a great

part of Central Asia, and bordered upon the western frontier of China, gave to his dynasty the name of Yuen. It was shortly subsequent to this event that the Chinese emperor solicited the aid of these Mongols, hoping by that means to overthrow the power of the Manchus. A long and severely contested war ensued, which ended in the total destruction of the Manchus, and not one of the race was left within the limits of the Great Wall. Their chief in vain sued for peace, and it is stated by Du Halde that, finding that all his overtures were rejected with scorn, he sent a message to the emperor, telling him that “to-day the Western Tartar takes my empire from *me*, to-morrow he will take yours from you.” This prediction was soon verified. The Mongols quietly took possession of the provinces vacated by the Manchus, and very shortly gave cause for the emperors to bitterly regret having called them to their assistance. Upon the accession of Ta-Tsong, fifteenth of his dynasty, they passed over the Yang-zte, and, spreading over the south-western provinces, rapidly reduced them to subjection; then, converging to the eastward, they hemmed in the emperor, until he was forced, with all his court, to embark on board his fleet, and there find refuge. The succeeding emperors being, as it happened, mere infants, the Mongols found their plans for conquest much facilitated; and thus, in the year 1280, they became masters over all China, with Kubla-Khan for their first emperor.

Taking as a criterion the numbers that perished, one of the most disastrous naval actions on record closed the existence of the Sung dynasty. The Tartar fleet

engaged that of the Chinese off the coast of the province of Kwang-tung, and utterly destroyed it. One hundred thousand men are said to have perished in this action, amongst whom were the young emperor and his court.

The Mongolian dynasty of Yuen ruled peaceably, with the exception of some troubles consequent upon the subjugation of the extreme southern provinces, until the year 1347. About this time there was much dissatisfaction felt by the Chinese, on account of the unfair distribution of government offices, the Tartars being thought to be unduly favoured. A man named Chû, then at the head of a slight local insurrection, taking advantage of the opportunity, set up his own standard, and soon found himself commanding a considerable army, with which he marched towards Pekin. After crossing the Yellow River, he engaged and totally defeated the Imperial army. Upon this the Emperor fled beyond the frontier, and the Tartar rule came to an end, A.D. 1368; the Chinese again becoming governed by a native sovereign. Chû originally held a subordinate position as an attendant or servant in a Buddhist monastery. He left this post to take part in a petty revolt, in which he gradually obtained the lead, and thus eventually became the first emperor of the Ming dynasty under the title of Tai-tsu.

Tai-tsu fixed his court at Nankin, and reigned for thirty years. Although sprung from so mean an origin, he appears not only to have governed well, but was also the framer of several highly important and beneficial laws. About the year 1410 Yung-lo, the third emperor, removed the court to Pekin.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, China suffered terribly from frequent earthquakes and famines. The people underwent misery and privations to an extent almost inconceivable. In those provinces watered by the broad streams of the Hoang-ho and Yang-zte-kiang, the floods sweeping over the plains were the cause of ruin, and consequent starvation, to hundreds of thousands. The history of this period is little else than a continual record of these desolations. The incursions of the Tartars upon the northern and north-western provinces rendered the condition of the empire still more wretched. At the close of the latter century the power of the Government had become so weak that it required all their strength to simply repel them. During the reign of Tsung-ching, seventeenth and last emperor of the dynasty of Ming, China became the theatre of constant seditions and revolts, principally arising from the disorder consequent upon these troubles. In 1637 to such a height had this state of affairs arrived, that no less than eight rebel armies were in existence, all independent of each other. These afterwards were merged into two great divisions: one of which, under the command of a leader of the name of Li, marched to the north, and obtained possession of Pekin. The emperor, rather than trust himself in the hands of these rebels, committed suicide. A considerable force of Imperialist troops were at this time employed in protecting the north-east frontier against the irruptions of the Manchus. Their general, Wu-san-kwei, upon hearing what had occurred, refused to acknowledge the authority of Li, and denied his right to usurp the throne; the latter

then proceeded with his army to compel submission. Wu-san-kwei, deeming his own troops insufficient, called the Manchus to his aid, and the combined forces obliged Li to make a rapid retreat upon the capital; which he soon vacated and fled to the westward, where he relapsed into his original obscurity. Pekin opened its gates to the Manchus, who then declared themselves rulers of the empire; the chief who had led them into China died about that time, and his son, Shun-chi, was declared emperor, and was the first of the present Tsing dynasty.

Thus, after the lapse of a period of four hundred years the Eastern Tartars again imposed their yoke upon the northern provinces.

The south maintained its independence for many years. In Kwang-tung and Kwang-si the Tartars, who were most bitterly hated by the inhabitants, suffered several severe defeats; and it was not until 1652 that these provinces submitted. Large bodies of men were also in arms against the invaders in other parts of the country; and, but for petty dissensions and want of accord on the part of the Chinese, it is probable that the Manchus would have been forced to retire into their proper territory. Upon the accession of Kang-hi, the second emperor, A.D. 1662, the whole empire was under complete subjection, with the exception of the sea-board and the islands off the coast, which for some years remained under the control of the Chinese fleet. Before his death, Shun-chi carried into execution a plan which is still in force; he stationed in every walled city a small garrison of Tartar troops, who were constantly

drilled and kept ready for service. This was in addition to the ordinary Chinese garrison. The main body, upon which the emperors relied for support in the event of rebellion, was stationed at Pekin.

In 1674, Wu-san-kwei, the old Chinese general, who, by permitting the Tartars to cross the frontier, had been unintentionally instrumental in raising the reigning dynasty to the throne, declared against the emperor; and all the southern and south-western provinces instantly revolted, and for nine years successfully resisted the power of the government. Kwang-tung and Kwang-si, as usual, took a leading part in this rebellion. Wu-san-kwei died shortly after the outbreak. After a long struggle, rendered hopeless by the total absence of any kind of combined action, the rebels were compelled to submit. This was the last insurrection of sufficient importance to shake the authority of the Manchus. Secret societies were formed, whose members pledged themselves to assist in subverting the government; but none of these, not excepting the celebrated Triad Association, have had any influence in carrying out their views. A clause appended by the Manchu emperor to the old code of penal laws of the Mings, recognizes the existence of these societies; one is alluded to as "a body of disorderly persons who commit robberies under the title of Tien-te-we, or Association of Heaven and Earth." The members of a brotherhood in the province of Fokien, said to be initiated by blood, are also noticed. Kang-hi, who, judging from the accounts of the Jesuit missionaries, must have been one of the greatest monarchs that ever governed a country, at his death

left the empire in such a well-organised state that his successors found no difficulty in maintaining peace ; and from then until the beginning of the nineteenth century (when local pirates began to infest the coasts) the country remained comparatively free from troubles, save such as were caused by the petty riots that usually occurred after an inundation or a famine. In consequence of this long season of peace, the population became so excessive, that the produce of the land was barely adequate to meet their wants.

It now becomes requisite to glance at the condition of the people about the period when the Taiping rebellion began to spread, and for this purpose I think it will be sufficient to embrace the events of the preceding twenty years. In a letter written in 1833 by one of the Roman Catholic missionaries from Kiang-si, it is stated that, so great was the general destitution in the province, the people were selling their wives and children ; and many were living on the bark of trees.¹ In the following year an earthquake in Honan destroyed ninety-five villages, and at the same time the inhabitants of the adjoining province of Hoo-peh were dying by thousands from famine. In 1838 the Pekin Gazettes mention several revolts in Sz-chuen, and some troubles caused by the Miao-tse on the borders of Kwang-si.²

During the years 1839-40-41, the whole province of Sz-chuen, the largest in the empire, became the theatre of misery and anarchy ; the famine was so severe that thousands were reduced to subsist upon a peculiar kind of earth which was found in certain districts. This

¹ 'Annales de la Propagation de la Foi,' Lyon.

² Ibid.

earth was made into the shape of rolls ; a few grains of rice being thrown in, the rolls were then baked and eaten. A plague then ensued by which means millions of the starving population were swept away. The government, in order to quell the riots which naturally resulted from all this distress, deemed it necessary to resort to most extreme and unjustifiable punishments. M. Bertrand, in his letter¹ detailing all these horrors, states that in some instances offenders, after undergoing severe punishments, were burnt alive. In the province of Yunnan there was also constant disorder, but this was principally caused by the roving bands of opium-smugglers, who, forming themselves into numerous and powerful armed bodies, utterly defied the authority of the magistrates. Without entering into further details, it is evident what was the condition of the greater part of China at this time (1840). The war with Great Britain, which began in the following year, did not tend to improve matters. The circumstances which led to this war, had their origin in the changes brought about by the expiry of the East India Company's Charter. Our *trade* relations with China were always comparatively satisfactory, provided that no other element was introduced into them, which was the case during the long succession of years that witnessed the commercial reign of the East India Company ; but, in the year 1834, their Charter ceased, and the British merchants and other residents became represented by a commissioner appointed by the Home Government, and from this time there ensued a series of misunderstand-

¹ Letter from M. Bertrand, vol. xvi.

ings and annoyances, partly caused by the opium traffic, but principally through the non-recognition, on the part of the Chinese, of the political position held by the commissioner. At last the state of affairs had become so totally unsatisfactory, and the tone of the provincial authorities at Canton had reached to such a height of arrogance, that it was considered advisable by the British Government to send a powerful force to bring the Chinese to a due comprehension of our power, and to place our commerce upon a permanent basis.

The result of this war was most disastrous to the Tartar power. The Bogue forts, below Canton, were destroyed in the early part of the operations. Ting-hai, the capital of Chusan, was taken and the island occupied. In October 1841, Chin-hae, an important fortress, commanding the entrance of the river, on which Ningpo was situated, was captured, and subsequently the city of Ningpo itself was held by our troops. In the following May Chapoo, another strongly fortified position situated in the inlet known as Hang-chow Bay, was taken and a considerable garrison routed with great ease. The defences at Woosung, at the mouth of the river leading to Shanghae, fell in June. Chin-keang, then a powerful fortified city on the south bank of the Yang-zte-kiang was captured in July, after which our fleet and land-forces immediately proceeded to Nankin. The Chinese government, then seeing the hopeless nature of the struggle, proposed to come to terms, and a treaty was signed in September 1842. The treaty gave us permission to trade freely at the five ports of Shanghae, Ningpo, Foo-chow, Amoy, and Canton,

ceded the island of Hongkong, and indemnified us for the expenses of the war with a sum equalling twenty-one millions of dollars.

Nothing could have so much opened the eyes of the Chinese to the weakness of their Manchu rulers as this war. The fortresses that they had deemed impregnable and the Tartar garrisons that were looked upon as all but invincible, were swept away in a campaign of a few months. Looking away from the sea-board, they witnessed the most glaring infractions of the law in all the southern provinces, where the bands of opium-smugglers were marching through the towns and carrying on their 'illegal trade with the most complete impunity, thereby proving the weakness and want of ability of the magistrates. The collection of the sum required to pay off the indemnity, added considerably to the difficulties with which the government had to contend, and created great dissatisfaction among the people. The whole history of the period that elapsed between the cessation of foreign hostilities and the outbreak of the rebellion is little else than a continual series of local insurrections, bursting out in all directions. The coast was infested by pirates, who not only caused great injury to the coasting trade, but frequently landed and sacked the villages lying adjacent to the sea. In the two Kwang provinces, armed bodies of men moved from town to town, and committed large robberies in open day in defiance of all authority. In Yunnan, the Mahometan population (numbering above a million), who at all times were noted for being discontented and restless,

took advantage of the weakness of the Government, and in many ways assisted in fostering the general anarchy ; and lastly in 1848-50, the Pekin Gazettes were full of reports from the provincial governors acquainting the emperor with the disorganized state of the country, and complaining of the inadequacy of their troops to quell the interminable revolts.

CHAPTER II.

Schools — Competitive Examinations — Literary Degrees — Government — Army and Navy — Revenue.

ALL parents, even those belonging to the poorest of the labouring class, deem the placing of their sons at school a matter of the first importance, and for this purpose I have known agricultural labourers and boatmen save as much as possible out of their small earnings from the day of their marriage, and look forward with hope to the time when the boy can be sent away to pick up the slight amount of learning so requisite for his future success in life. Although by the laws of China all posts are open to those who can pass the test of the competitive examinations, none but men whose means suffice to place them above the necessity of manual labour ever dream of educating their children with this view. The expenses attending the necessary studies, together with the chances of failure, completely deter the working population from acting upon such an idea; and thus it is generally considered by them sufficient for all common purposes that their boys should be able to read and write the moderate number of characters that represent the things and expressions of ordinary and daily usage. Arithmetic is also studied to the extent requisite to enable the student to compute the simple proportions of numbers by the means of

the counting-board, commonly known by the name of "swanpan."

The time required for a boy to obtain this elementary education varies according to the number of characters learnt, and the age when instruction begins; there is no rule followed as regards this point, as it is so entirely dependent upon the profession that he is intended to adopt, or upon the circumstances of the father's position. Usually a boy is sent to school at a very early age—six or seven, and there he probably studies until twelve. I have noticed that this is the case whenever he is going to be apprenticed to some trade, such as a shoemaker or tailor. Lads who are expected to follow in the steps of their fathers as boatmen, fishermen, agriculturists, &c., are sent somewhat later, and remain at school a less time. Two or three years between the ages of ten and fourteen is the period generally chosen by these classes, and is found to be ample for all their purposes.¹

¹ The total number of characters in the Chinese language is estimated by various writers to be above twenty-five thousand and under seventy thousand, the truth lying somewhere between these extremes. The labour required to obtain a knowledge of even one-half would be immense. A mastery over two thousand is generally found to suffice for the requirements of every-day life. Ten thousand are said to enable a man to read through with a proper comprehension the entire classics. Most of our sinalogues content themselves with a thorough acquaintance with four or five thousand, and even the Chinese scholars who are retained by them as teachers are not found able, except in rare instances, to impart many more.

The time occupied in learning over a certain number of characters is, in proportion to their value, exceedingly great, and in the schools the plan of teaching seems to add to this fault. Children are taught the sounds before the meaning, and thus it will be frequently found, upon offering even a most elementary book to a working man, that he will

The expenses incurred for tuition of this order are wonderfully moderate. In small village schools, and in those in the agricultural districts, the teacher receives a sum equal to about half a dollar per month; in a few instances I have known it to be less, but that is the average; for this the pupil is taught throughout the year, as there are no holidays, except on the rare occasions of the few public feasts and two or three weeks at the period of the new year's day. The sum given above is, however, only an approximation, because the income of a schoolmaster is entirely dependent upon the number of boys that attend his school. This, of course, varies considerably; but as the limits are on the one hand bounded by the inability to subsist upon so small a pittance as would be the result of an attendance of less than eight or ten, and on the other hand by the impossibility of teaching more than five-and-twenty or thirty, it follows that the average number amounts to twenty.¹ Some part of the income is often paid in kind; thus, in the village where the Taeping chief was born

glance his eye over the pages and only be able here and there to pick out a word, with the meaning of whose character he is acquainted.

In the American missionary schools in the north I have seen a system in force which met with decided success. The young converts are not taught their own characters at all, but are made conversant with ours, whose twenty-six letters are much sooner mastered. Taking for an example, a chapter out of St. John's Gospel, a copy of this is written in the common Roman character, but the sounds correspond with the Chinese rendering of the words. By this means children are taught in a few months what would otherwise demand incessant study for years.

¹ As each boy has, in his turn, to repeat the lesson he has committed to memory, it is evident that one teacher would not find time during study hours to hear more than a certain number, and this number is usually fixed by common consent to be between twenty and thirty.

and bred, it was the custom for each boy to supply his teacher annually with fifty pounds of rice, three hundred cash (about one shilling), rather more than a pound weight of lamp-oil, lard, salt, and tea, together with a sum of from one and a half to four dollars, according to the age and ability of the boy. There are some instances of schools being supported by private patronage, and the sum paid for tuition is almost nominal, but these are not numerous, and consequently do not deserve, with regard to their influence upon the general school system, more than a passing notice.

Whenever (as is frequently the case) a schoolmaster undertakes to teach certain things in a specified time, an arrangement is made between him and the friends of the boy, and a certain sum of money is fixed upon, which is to cover all expenses. Sometimes sixty or seventy dollars are given, and for this the boy is boarded as well as taught. If the master also provides lodging and books, he often gets as much as a hundred dollars. It is not at all unusual to find this plan adopted in the south, but it is not generally popular, and is only practised in those instances where parents are unable, on account of the nature of their professions, or their distance from the school, to follow the more approved method of day-schools.

In the departmental and district towns, teachers are supposed to be more highly educated, and the schools better organized than in the country villages, and the expense of tuition is but very slightly increased. Tradesmen and thriving artisans send their children to these at an early age. In addition to the rudimentary

studies the teachers are expected to make their pupils in some slight degree acquainted with Chinese History, the Four Books, Poetry, and Composition. After having passed through this course of instruction until thirteen or fifteen years old, the boy is probably (if intended for trade) sent to some counting-house to obtain the necessary knowledge of arithmetic. At all schools the hours of study are the same, and range from six A.M. until five P.M., an hour or two being allowed between nine and eleven A.M., for breakfast.¹ The room is always most simply furnished, and never contains more than just the necessary quantity of hard and high-backed chairs and plain wooden tables. The masters are generally men who have been unsuccessful in obtaining their early degrees at the competitive examinations, and, being poor, are forced to become teachers. Sometimes youths are regularly instructed for this object, but they are exceptions to the common rule.

It is customary for people of the middle and higher classes not to send their sons to any school, but to hire a private tutor, who receives an annual salary varying from two to four hundred dollars. Many rich land-owners and government officials have a regular tutor, who has no other duty than to attend to the children of the particular family in which he is settled; but a plan very usually adopted is that of three or four families combining their means together, and thus hiring a tutor to attend upon all. In these cases it is always expected that the pupils will be so educated

¹ The Chinese of all classes invariably take their principal meal or dinner about five P.M., or a little later.

as to compete with success at the examinations, and obtain the required degrees. Besides the ordinary schools, there are in most of the important cities several colleges where a more advanced course of study is pursued. Those at Canton are indifferent, and thinly attended ; at Tientsin, in the north, the college happens to be one of the principal buildings. I found the rooms to be comparatively commodious and airy, and the students were said to number between three and four hundred.

It is very difficult to come to any reliable conclusion with respect to the proportion of the population able to read out of the four hundred millions (including women and children) composing the Empire. Dr. Parker, at his hospital at Ningpo, examined some thousands of his patients as they passed through his hands, and in his report states that only five per cent. of the adult males were able to read. He subjoins a list of their occupations, and from this it appears that they were all of the lowest orders—chiefly coolies, day-labourers, or poor mechanics. In the class immediately above these, such as tradesmen, farmers, artisans, &c., the case is very different. At Ningpo a missionary gives as the result of his inquiries twenty per cent.; and in the suburbs of Canton, a cursory examination led Mr. Williams (author of 'The Middle Kingdom') to believe that nearly all could read ; in the more thinly populated adjoining districts he gives the proportion equal to four or five tenths. From inquiries made to the extent that the limited opportunities at my disposal would allow, I am of opinion that of the labouring class the

proportion given by Dr. Parker is as a general rule stated much too low, and that in the thriving districts bordering upon the mouths of the great rivers probably one-fifth would be found to read moderately; and with the boat population the proportion is still higher, for these are, as regards intelligence and aptitude, always above the class with which they rank.

I shall now proceed to notice the all-important regulations affecting the competition for literary honours.

In order to obtain the first degree, three examinations have to be undergone; the preliminary trial takes place in the district town, and a stringent rule makes it necessary that every student should be a native of the district in which he is examined.¹ The candidates are always very numerous, and, judging from the numbers who fail, the examination must be severe. In the year 1832, out of four thousand who competed in two districts adjoining Canton, it is stated that only thirteen in one, and fourteen in the other, were successful.² In the district of Hwa, at the time of Hung-siu-tsuen's residence, the proportion of fortunate competitors averaged fifteen out of five hundred.³ The next examination is held at the departmental city, and, as only those who have passed at the previous trial are allowed to compete at this one, the number of candidates becomes much reduced. Taking seven districts as an average of what usually constitutes a department,

¹ Each of the eighteen provinces is divided into departments, and these are again subdivided into districts.

² 'Middle Kingdom.'

³ Statement of Hung-jin.

and granting fifteen to be the common proportion of men sent up by each of them, it results that not more than one hundred and five candidates can appear before the departmental examiners. Another sifting then occurs, those who have the good fortune to succeed have their names placarded, and are said "to have a name in the department;" at the previous examination, they had obtained "a name in the village." Their names are now sent in for the third trial, which is far more serious than the former, and takes place under the supervision of the Imperial examiner, who for this purpose comes to each departmental city twice triennially. It is on this occasion that the first or bachelor's degree is obtained; the examiner awards it to a certain number of the successful candidates in proportion to the population of the respective districts.¹

There are many privileges attached to this degree: one of the most important is that which protects the holder from undergoing corporal punishment. Many men never think of competing for the higher degrees; the position of a "bachelor" is deemed sufficiently honourable for all those who simply wish to remain quiet at home, and at the same time obtain the distinction and immunities that the degree affords.

The examination for the next, the licentiate's degree,

¹ The number of departments in the eighteen provinces of China proper are estimated to be 182, and the number of districts 1285. Thus each province would average ten departments, and each department seven districts. Taking each province separately, it will be found that this average is either under or over the truth. In Kwang-tung there are eighty districts, and in Chih-le above one hundred; but in Kwang-si there are only forty-seven, and in Yunnan even less.

is held once in every three years, at the provincial capital, and occurs in the eighth moon, which answers to about our September. The numbers who present themselves before the examiners are very considerable. At Nankin, previous to its capture by the Taepings, they have been known sometimes to approach twenty thousand, and were furnished by the sixteen departments of Kiang-nan (now divided into two smaller provinces).

At Canton in 1828 four thousand eight hundred names were sent in, and since then the average has exceeded six thousand. The proportion of successful men is remarkably small; at Nankin, out of twenty thousand competing bachelors, the degree of licentiate was only awarded to less than two hundred. At Canton the average seldom exceeds one hundred.

In the 'Chinese Repository' a very interesting account is given of the number and the respective ages of those who obtained their second degree at one of the later triennial examinations in that city.

It appears from this that seventy-three degrees were given on that occasion, and the ages of the successful competitors were as follows:—

Under twenty years	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Between twenty and twenty-five	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
,, twenty-five and thirty	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
,, thirty and thirty-five	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
,, thirty-five and forty	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
,, forty and forty-five	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
,, forty-five and fifty	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Over fifty	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	73

In the Nankin return for 1851 the youngest who obtained the licentiate's degree was only fourteen years old, the next in seniority was fifteen, and six more were under twenty; thirteen were above forty.

In accounting for the large number who present themselves as candidates, it must be recollected that many of them have been unsuccessful at the previous examinations. This also explains the great disparities in age. Men, until rendered hopeless by constant failure, will continue competing for years, and thus the lists not only contain the names of those who are "freshmen," but also the long arrears of past rejections.

To estimate the proportion to whom this degree is given triennially in the whole of China proper, let the southern province of Kwang-tung and the central provinces of Kiang-su and Ngan-hwui be taken for examples. The first named sends up about six thousand candidates, and the two latter combined twenty thousand. Allowing ninety to be the fair ratio of successful men in the former case and two hundred in the latter, it follows that the total number who are fortunate enough to be classed as licentiates in the eighteen provinces may be stated at seventeen hundred and forty.

This result probably exceeds the truth, as the provinces selected for calculation are said to be above the average with respect to the intellectual condition of the populations.

The halls in which the examinations take place seem to a casual observer very ill adapted for their purposes. In the well-known one at Canton, the cells, in which the students are confined during the successive days de-

manded for the preparation of their essays, are built not only with a total disregard to all comfort, but their size does not enable the occupant to lie down at full length. I omitted to measure their exact proportions, but should not judge their inside base to be above four feet square. The explanation of this faulty arrangement must have some relation to the want of ground space. The system of examination necessitates individual separation, and, consequently, the cells are very numerous, and in this particular instance must at least equal six thousand. If they were enlarged, the whole buildings would occupy an immense area, and this would have to be abstracted from the available space within the city walls, which is invariably so confined and crowded that such a step would meet with great, and perhaps just, opposition.

The examination for the third or doctor's degree is held at Pekin, to which city licentiates have to go in order to compete. The number of successful candidates is said to average between two and three hundred.

NOTE.—The following account of the system of competitive examination is taken from the 'Shanghae Almanack,' and particularly refers to the examination held at Nankin in 1851. I adopt the quotation of Mr. Meadows in his article on 'Chinese Morality and Polity,' adding, where necessary, a few explanatory notes.

"The examination for the degree of Keu-jin, or Licentiate, takes place at the principal city of each province once in three years, commencing on the eighth day of the eighth month. Extraordinary examinations are granted by the Emperor, on his ascending the throne, as in the present instance (Hienfung had lately succeeded the former Emperor). These are called Gau-kaou, 'examinations by special grace.' Kiang-nan (the old name for the then combined provinces of Kiang-su and Nganhwui) has sixteen departments, and the degree of Siu-tsac, or Bachelor, being conferred in each of them annually, the number of candidates at the higher examination held at Nankin is large. The average number is twenty thousand. Of these, on the average, only two hundred are successful (a limit being set to the number of degrees which the exa-

The last degree, "Han-lin," is also conferred at Pekin, and the examination is triennial; the few who

miners can give). In the report of the examination of 1851, we observe that there are 144 names of first-class candidates. A second class is appended of 22 candidates inferior in merit, but allowed, for reasons satisfactory to the examiners, to take the degree. In the first class there are thirteen upwards of forty years of age, and in the second class five. The youngest is fourteen years of age, and stands eighty-ninth in order. The next youngest is fifteen, and there are six more under twenty, all in the first class.

"The mandarins, named as being engaged either in examining or other duties, are sixty-five in number. In addition to them there are many subordinate official people. The two chief examiners are specially sent from Pekin. When the candidates enter the examination hall they are searched for books or scraps of writing, that might assist them in writing their essays; and the strictest precautions are taken to prevent any communication between them while in the examination hall. Three sets of themes are given, each occupying two days and a night, and until that time is expired no one is allowed to leave his allotted apartment (which is barely large enough to sleep in at night); what they need for food and rest they take with them. When the essays are written they are scrutinised by officers appointed for that duty, to know if they conform to the regulations. They must not exceed 700 characters, nor must there be any character written over the ruled red lines (of the examination paper which all have to use); no erasure or correction of any kind is allowed. Essays of former examinations must not be repeated; and any obvious fault in composition observed by the officers who superintend this department would prevent the essay from being placed in the hands of the higher examiners. These latter then select the best essays to the number of two or three hundred, and subject them to the judgment of the two chief examiners, who finally decide which are the best, and arrange them in the order of merit. In granting offices the Emperor follows the order of names in this and the higher examinations. On the first two days the themes are taken from the Four Books ('Sayings and Writings of Confucius, Mencius, &c., and their commentators), with a line of poetry. On the next from the five older Pre-Confucian sacred books, one from each. And, lastly, five papers of miscellaneous questions are given. To answer these questions, if the papers before us be taken as an average example, a most extensive reading in general literature must be expected from the candidates in addition to their study of the Sacred Books.

"The first of these papers on miscellaneous subjects takes for its range the commentators on the Sacred Books, *e.g.*: 'Choo-tsze in commenting

obtain it become members of the Han-lin college, and receive fixed salaries.

on the Shoo-king, made use of four authors, who sometimes say too much, at other times too little—sometimes their explanations are forced, at other times too ornamental. What have you to observe on them?' 'In the Han dynasty there were three commentators on the Yih-king, whose explanations and divisions into chapters and sentences were all different. Can you give any account of them?' The paper concludes with saying: 'Under our present sacred dynasty, literature and learning are in a most flourishing state: you candidates have been studying for several years: let each of you make use of what he knows, and reply to these questions.'

"The second paper has for its subject Histories, inviting a criticism from the candidate on the historical works of each dynasty in succession, from Sze-ma, 'the Herodotus of China,' downwards to the Ming emperors. It is obvious that the examination can be no child's play, when such comprehensive questions as these form a part of it. We again select an example or two. 'Sze-ma, in making his history, took the sacred books and ancient records, and arranged the facts they detailed. Some have accused him of unduly exalting Taoists and thinking too highly of wealth and power. Pau-koo, a writer of the Han dynasty, is clear and comprehensive, but on Astronomy and the Five Elements he has written more than enough. Can you give examples and proofs of these statements?' 'Chin-show had admirable abilities for historical writing. In his Three Kingdoms he has depreciated Choo-ko-leang and made very light of E and E, two other celebrated characters. What is it that he says of them?'

"The third paper questions the candidates on the ancient and modern divisions of the empire. They are required to state the authorities who record the earliest division into nine provinces, the changes that followed, and the discrepancies between different authors in their accounts of them. Then the changes that occurred under more recent dynasties, in the number, designations, and mode of government of the provinces asked for. It is then added that the size of the empire having increased much beyond what it was in former times, diligent study ought to be bestowed on geography, and the candidates are invited accordingly not to conceal their knowledge, but state all they can.

"The next paper is on books. The candidates are requested to relate where the existing accounts of certain lost books of high antiquity are found, and what emperors have made efforts to preserve books and form libraries. It is asked—'The Suy dynasty (A.D. 581-617) collected books to the number of 370,000; these were reduced by selection to

The second degree entitles its holder to expect some office under Government; the third degree insures that office being important: thus if the competitive system were properly carried out, all those who are placed in official positions would be of a high standard of intellect, and would be taken from the public at large.

The sale of these literary degrees, especially the first and second, has, during the present century, been of frequent practice, and this infraction of the law and the people's rights has, more than all other measures, tended to make the government unpopular. In the early proclamation of the Taepings this subject is generally noticed whenever it was thought desirable to

37,000; where was the library in which they were kept, and who performed the work of selection?' Questions are also asked on what catalogues of books have been made, and the methods of classifying them that have been employed. It is then pleasantly added—'Kiang-nan [the candidate's province] has always been eminent for its men of learning and refinement; will you not vindicate your claim to the same character by giving a full answer to these questions?'

"The last paper is on the history of the water-courses and flood-gates in the eastern parts of this province. It begins with the Emperor Ta-yu's hydraulic achievements, and asks for an account of the early names of this reign. It then inquires how it is that the Woo-sung river [the river upon which Shanghae is situated] is so beneficial to the neighbouring departments by affording an outlet to the waters of the Great Lake at Soo-chow. At the close it is added—'Our Emperor is always seeking to promote the people's good. You, who are inhabitants of this province, ought to be fully informed on the subject of its water communications. Now show your knowledge, that there may be proof of your fitness to be presented to the Emperor.'

"The answers to these miscellaneous questions are of course not written in the regular essay form in which the compositions founded on themes from the Sacred Books are written, their subjects being unsuited to it. On the earlier days of this examination eight essays are written, all in exact conformity with the established plan of such compositions in length and arrangement."

gain the sympathy of the inhabitants of the districts through which they passed.

The principal divisions of Government offices now demand a brief notice.

Immediately under the Emperor, and first in order of precedence, are the Privy Council. After these come the six Tribunals or Boards. The first is called the Board of Civil Office, and regulates all points connected with the civil department, nominates or degrades the magistrates and other officials.

The second is the Board of Finance; the third is the Board of Rites. This board superintends all rites and ceremonies, and has attached to it the lesser boards of mathematics, feasts, sacrifices, &c.

Fourth. The Board of War.—The armament of fortresses, the security of the cities, and the nominations for military employments are under the direction of this board, and it is also responsible for the commissariat in all its branches.

Fifth. Board of Justice.

Sixth. Board of Public Works.—This has charge of all public buildings, canals, roads, &c.

In addition to these there is a court of censors, whose duty is to revise the acts of the boards, and to report to the emperor all cases of misconduct on the part of the officials holding the various appointments throughout the empire. The principal officers in each province are the governor and the heads of the departments of finance, crime, and education; these reside in the capital city. At the head of every departmental town is an officer, whose rank and position correspond with

that of a préfet in France; under him are a number of paid subordinates of all classes; and in each of the numerous district cities is resident the district magistrate, who is responsible for the good government of the people, and to whom are referred all matters requiring a legal decision. Attached to and under the orders of this official are the leading men in the respective villages that compose the district, and who are commonly called "headmen."

These are elected in a proper form at a general village meeting, and their duty consists in superintending the police organisation (ordinarily very wretched), and generally attending to all subjects of local importance. To them the villagers appeal for the purpose of settling all petty quarrels or disputes, and in all disturbances of a graver nature they form the connecting link between them and the higher authorities. The district magistrate looks to the headmen as, to a considerable extent, answerable for all village misdeeds, and they are expected to appear before him to explain or report any infractions of the law. In many instances when difficulties arise, instead of adopting this extreme measure, the elders of the surrounding villages meet together to decide upon the most advisable course of action to follow, and their decision is usually considered final, and meets with unanimous compliance.

The provincial administration of China presents few points of such remarkable nature as the peculiar position and authority held by these men, and affords one of the many striking proofs of the tendency of the Chinese character to reverence old age, and be guided by its

opinions. The existence of such a class is invaluable for the purpose of simplifying any difficulties that may arise between the country people and foreigners. In most cases the headmen have in early life obtained the bachelor's degree, and thus, with the power given them by authority, combine mental superiority over the labouring classes under their charge.¹

To prevent favouritism and other evils, care is always taken by the government that none shall hold official appointments in their native districts, and the governors and principal officers must have obtained their degrees in other provinces than those in which they are placed. All the names of persons holding appointments are published in the Imperial Almanac. In the year 1844 there were twelve thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight; and in 1852, twenty thousand three hundred and twenty-seven. In the former case the proportion of Tartars to Chinese was about one in six; and in the latter, one in five. Du Halde states the total number of officials, during a prosperous period, to be estimated at above thirteen thousand. I bring forward these data

¹ The father of the Taeping chief was "headman" in his village. The following description of him is given in the work of Mr. Hamberg:—

"Siu-tsuen's father was a venerable old man, with a long beard, honest and straightforward in his dealings, and was appointed by the clan to take charge of the ancestral fields, the produce of which is the property of the whole clan; the revenue derived from it being reserved for extraordinary occurrences when the common interest is concerned. He was also appointed headman or elder of his native village, in which capacity he had not only to settle disputes among the inhabitants of his own village, but to arrange the terms of any agreement made with the surrounding villages."—*Hung-jin's Narrative*. The village of Hwa, which is here alluded to, was principally peopled by one family or clan, and Siu-tsuen's father was one of the chief members of it.

in order to prove that, provided the government act justly in the distribution of the offices in their gift, every one who obtains his second or licentiate's degree may consider himself justified in expecting office within a very short period. I have already shown that the number who obtain this degree *triennially* is, on an outside estimation, seventeen hundred and forty. The names that appear in the Almanac were increased by above seven thousand in the eight years that elapsed between 1844 and 1852. Supposing, at a very moderate calculation, that the nominations under the patronage of the government equal fifteen thousand, and granting the average tenure of office to be twenty-five years, they would have six hundred vacancies *annually*. Thus, if *all* the licentiates were candidates for office (which would be highly improbable) they would yet fall short of the number of appointments open for them.

To estimate the power of the government at the time of the outbreak of the rebellion, attention must be drawn, in the first place, to the military force at its disposal, and secondly to the revenue by which this force was maintained.

The army is composed of two totally distinct elements, the Tartars and the Chinese. The former are enrolled separately, under the title of the Forces of the Eight Standards, or Banners, and to them the emperor mainly trusts for the support of his power. Their numbers may be approximately stated at two hundred thousand men, of whom nearly one-half are stationed at and near Pekin; the remainder are distributed in all

the chief walled cities of the provinces, and are intended to supplement, or, if necessary, keep in check, the resident native garrisons.

In the fortified towns captured by the British in 1842-43, the Tartar garrisons were found to average between two and three thousand men, and the Chinese numbered at least three times that amount; but although thus numerically stronger, the latter were, as regards military efficiency, infinitely inferior to their better organized and less imperfectly armed comrades. The total force of the provincial or purely Chinese army in 1851 was calculated by Mr. Wade,¹ from official and other trustworthy documents, to be six hundred thousand strong. Mr. Meadows, in a later publication, gives the following detailed result of his inquiries on this point:—

“Garrison infantry, 320,927; mobile infantry, 194,815; cavalry, 87,094; total, exclusive of officers, 602,836.”

Of these not above one-tenth are regularly kept on active service. The organization of this infantry, in many respects, assimilates very much to that of the French National Guards; the men composing the garrison force, when not required for duty, follow their various trades within the walls, and it is only at rare intervals that they are disturbed from their citizen existence; and when the service, upon which they have been called out, is ended, they return their quaint, old-fashioned arms and accoutrements into store, and relapse into their daily round of peaceful occupations.

¹ Now holding the appointment of Chinese secretary to our embassy at Pekin.

The people appointed to officer these troops have to undergo a competitive examination in archery, strength in lifting weights, riding, &c. This, similarly with that for literary honours, takes place triennially at the provincial capital. From the official register it is found that the number of officers of all ranks, from the commandants down to ensigns, is between seven and eight thousand, which gives an average of seventy-five men to each officer.

Granting the statements given above to be perfectly reliable, the total paid force under the orders of Government is proved to be above eight hundred thousand men;¹ these, spread over the eighteen provinces, would give forty-five thousand to each. In calculating, however, the available troops for field operations, at least one-half must be put aside and classed as "garrison infantry." Thus, allowing for casualties and sickness,

¹ I subjoin the estimates of the following well-known authors:—

L'Abbé Grosier	Troops	800,000; horses	565,000.
Le Père Amiot	"	privates	823,287; officers
L'Abbé Huc	"	"	7,417.
			560,000.

For the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' the writer of the article on China calculates the infantry at—"Privates, 822,000; officers, 7,562."

NOTE.—A large proportion of the Chinese troops who unsuccessfully defended the Taku forts in 1860, were labourers and others from the adjoining districts, who were hastily called in, armed, and clad for the occasion. In one of the forts below Tientsin I found a paper in an officer's quarters detailing the number of volunteers under his command, and the pay and rations allowed to them; it also gave the estimated number of troops of all classes who were expected to fight, and from this it appeared that about two-thirds were composed of these undrilled rabble.

The paid troops supposed by the Government to be employed in defending and maintaining order in the commercial city of Shanghae, some years before our first Chinese war, and the consequent concession of land to Europeans outside its walls, consisted of seven hundred foot and fifty horse, together with four cruisers and two row-boats. Amongst the

it is evident that there would not be more than twenty thousand in each province that could be depended upon for active work, such as would be required if it was necessary to pursue a rebel army, recapture a city, or quell some distant revolt. This number might be considered ample for such purposes, if China, in her roads or geographical divisions, bore any approximate relation to other countries. But it must be recollected that the area of China proper is equal to one million three hundred thousand square miles, and consequently the provinces average seventy-two thousand two hundred and twenty-two; of course their separate areas vary considerably, Sz-chuen being by far the largest, and Che'-kiang the smallest; but as the number of soldiers would probably be proportional, it results that twenty thousand men must always have the charge of seventy-two thousand square miles, an extent of territory that, in Europe,¹

military stores and accoutrements that were ordered to be always kept ready for use, were the following articles:—"Five hundred and ninety iron helmets, eighty-six iron-ribbed leather caps, forty-eight soldiers' coats studded with brass buttons, one hundred and twenty-eight soldiers' coats adorned with snakes, one hundred and forty soldiers' coats with silken badges, three hundred and sixty soldiers' coats with badges adorned with rampant tigers, fifty-five soldiers' coats with badges on each of which is inscribed the word 'bravery,' two hundred and sixty swords, one hundred and fifty bows, four thousand seven hundred and fifty arrows, three hundred and sixty fowling-pieces, nine spears, three hundred and sixty hatchets, fifty-five shields with swords to correspond, fifteen guns with gun-carriages, eighty jingalls, ten powder-cases, and as many for shot and bullets, flags in abundance, with drums, gongs, rattles, horns, trumpets, tents, screens, matches, four hundred iron shot, two thousand three hundred and forty-five smaller ditto, four thousand five hundred and seventy bullets, four thousand one hundred and forty-four pounds of smaller bullets, and five thousand pounds of powder."—Vide *Chinese Miscellany*.

¹ The area of England, exclusive of Wales, equals fifty thousand three hundred and eighty-seven square miles.

would be thought to constitute a very respectable kingdom. The principal difficulty in checking insurrections among the inhabitants is not, however, so much caused by the *extent* of country, as by the absence of proper military roads. In the south, even the principal highways are little better than footpaths, and in the rice-cultivating districts, many of the villages have no other means of communication than the narrow banks of earth that form the boundaries of the intervening fields, and which do not generally afford sufficient space to allow two persons to walk abreast. During the rainy season these paths are all but impassable, and even at other times they are so intersected by the numerous irrigating streams that the chances are the ground traversed by a stranger in trying to reach a certain point, would be double its actual distance. No kind of country could be more completely unfitted for military evolutions, or for the transport of artillery or commissariat stores. The extreme northern provinces are, in this respect, vastly superior to the southern; the roads in Shantung and Chih-le are creditably kept, and are sufficiently wide to allow the use of carts and draught-horses. The road by which our troops, during the late operations, marched to Tientsin, was found to be good enough for all practical purposes, and enabled cavalry and field-guns to be moved without difficulty.

An inquiry into the strength of the Imperial Government would be manifestly incomplete if the navy was not taken into account, especially as it has been of such good service in several of the late actions up the Yang-*ze*-kiang; and yet it is seldom noticed, and from want

of reliable data, it is not easy to arrive at just conclusions respecting its force. In constitution and regulations this branch is very similar to what is commonly called "a standing navy." In addition to the number of officers and men *always* kept afloat, there are large contingents quartered on shore, who are supposed to be ready to embark in the event of special emergencies. The Abbé Huc states, evidently upon insufficient grounds, that the entire force does not exceed thirty thousand men. This number must be considerably below the truth. At the naval action near Fatshan in 1856, the crowds of well-manned war-junks that were brought out to repel our attack were alone sufficient evidence of the error of this computation. Judging from the naval establishment at the Treaty Ports and in the adjacent rivers, I am of opinion that the number of officers and men actually afloat fully equals thirty thousand; and, supposing that the contingent is kept up to a proper strength, the total of all classes might be fairly estimated to be not less than sixty or seventy thousand.

The monthly pay of the privates of the provincial army, when actually employed, is one and a half taels, or about ten shillings; when not on active service they receive a reduced scale of pay, which amounts to nearly nine-tenths of a tael (a little under six shillings).¹

The men composing the force that was assembled together in 1851 from the provinces of Kwang-tung, Hoo-nan, and Kwei-chow to quell the rebellion, were paid daily seven-hundredths of a tael, or rather more than

¹ A tael of silver is about equal in value to six shillings and twopence.

five-pence. Besides this, they were each given eighty-three hundredths of a pint of rice.¹

When volunteers were called for (a measure that was rendered imperative through the rebel successes), every volunteer was promised ten taels bounty-money, and received a daily pay amounting to eight-pence half-penny, together with the same quantity of rice as was distributed to the regular troops.

Officers in the cavalry, not in command, are paid an average of six taels per month, though only half is given in money; the remainder consisting in an equal value in kind, such as rice or other grain, &c. Infantry officers receive four taels, everything included. Naval officers commanding the Government war-junks are given sufficient rice, &c., to support themselves and their families, and receive in addition a monthly allowance of three taels of silver.

The expenditure for the army alone was shown by Mr. Wade, in an interesting article in the 'Chinese Repository' (1851), to be thirty million eight hundred and seventy-four thousand and forty-five taels, or nearly ten millions sterling. Of this sum there was awarded—

For the Board of War	37,450 taels.
Army of the Eight Banners (Tartars) ..	15,963,450 "
Green Standard, or Chinese Army ..	14,662,650 "

The remaining small sum was devoted to extra allowances and stipends. By this statement it can be at once seen how much greater is the proportional expense of the Tartar troops compared with the more numerous Chinese.

In the year 1847, the *estimated* revenue of the em-

¹ Report of Ching-tu to the Emperor (1849).

pire, minus such deductions as were allowed for the purpose of meeting local charges, was a sum equivalent to eighteen and a half millions sterling.¹ The expenditure for the same year, including what was set aside for the emperor's private use and court expenses, was eighteen millions. From this it would appear that the revenue was half a million in excess of the expenditure. But, in consequence of the famines in the province of Honan, all the taxes in money or grain that should have been received from it were either remitted or employed in succouring the starving population. The taxes on land and salt, also, fell short of the estimated amount, and the result was that the returns, instead of showing a surplus, present a deficit exceeding two millions sterling.

The population of China proper at the present time is probably not much less than four hundred millions, and in 1847 it must have equalled, at a most moderate calculation, three hundred and seventy-five millions.² These, spread over the one million three hundred thousand square miles contained in the total area, will give an average of two hundred and eighty-eight inhabitants to each square mile. A reference to the populations of

¹ Computed from official documents by the late Dr. Bridgeman.

² The population in 1393 = 60,545,811 ('Chinese Repository').

" 1736 = 125,041,245 (Grosier).

" 1792 = 333,000,000 (Morrison).

" 1812 = 362,000,000 ('Chinese Repository').

A late census gives as its result 400,000,000.

According to the Journal of the Statistical Society for Dec. 1861, the population of England and Wales was in 1811, 10,454,529, and in 1861 20,061,725; from this it is evident that in the small interval of fifty years the population has very nearly doubled itself. This simple fact must at once dispel all wonder or question with regard to the rapid increase of the Chinese.

Europe will prove that this is not a high proportion; and on examining the amount of revenue or taxation, together with the number of troops, it will be seen that China is less taxed and less armed than any other country equally civilised and of equal political importance.

As some of the details of the Chinese revenue and expenditure may be interesting to many readers, I append the following items, which are taken from an article in the 'China Mail,' written, I have reason to believe, by Dr. Bridgeman, in 1848.

ESTIMATED REVENUE.

ESTIMATED REVENUE.						Taels of Silver.
Land-tax .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	28,208,695			
Grain, rice, &c., received in kind, valued at	..	9,438,670				
Salt duty .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	4,704,382			
Transit duties .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	4,199,335			
Foreign trade duties .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	3,000,000			
Tax derived from mines .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	2,021,105			
Tribute of silk, equivalent to .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	307,590			
Sundries .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	2,729,607			
Rent from land of the Eight Standards ..	..	463,043			
Tax on tea plantations .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	108,481			
Surplus percentage, paid in sums received in Public Treasury .. .. .. .. .. ..	..	4,316,684			
		Total	59,496,992			

The expenditure return is too long to be given in full, and I shall only draw attention to a few important and remarkable items :—

	Taels.
Pay to civilians, police, and military officers	7,087,198
Officers of Supreme Government at Pekin	668,337
Post establishment, and relays for public functionaries	2,014,984
For dykes, public buildings, &c.	2,360,000
Stipends to scholars, and expenditure at the examinations	293,806
For benevolent purposes, donations to the poor and aged	333,572
Gratuities to distinguished men, pensions, &c.	401,669

IMPERIAL ESTABLISHMENT.

Allowances made to children, aged, infirm, and poor among the Manchus	991,845
Religious establishments at the Lama tem- ples, sacrifices at the Imperial tombs, &c.	344,574

CHAPTER III.

Missions.¹

THE geographical labours performed in China by the Jesuits and other missionaries of the Roman Catholic faith will ever command the gratitude and excite the wonder of all geographers. Travellers who visit foreign countries with the purpose of ascertaining and fixing unknown points of latitude and longitude well know, even with all the modern discoveries and appliances that they have to aid them, how difficult it is to obtain accurate results. Portable chronometers and aneroid barometers, boiling-point thermometers, sextants and theodolites, sympiesometers and micrometers, compasses and artificial horizons, are, notwithstanding all possible care, frequently found to fail; and yet one hundred and fifty years ago a few wandering European priests traversed the enormous state of China proper, and laid down on their maps the positions of cities, the direction of rivers, and the height of mountains with a correctness of detail and a general accuracy of outline that are absolutely marvellous. To this day all our maps are based upon their

¹ The actions of the European missionaries have been of such consequence in bringing about the present rebellion, that I have deemed it advisable to devote this chapter to the consideration of the past and present state of the foreign missions, chiefly for the purpose of endeavouring to ascertain what has been the effect of their religious and scientific teaching upon the Chinese nation.

observations; and in the few instances in which our modern surveyors have had opportunities to examine carefully certain points, especially on the borders of the Yang-zte-kiang, their errors have been found to be so slight as to be barely worthy of notice, except for the stricter purposes of geographical inquiry.

To these missionaries the Chinese are not only principally indebted for a knowledge of the extent of their own country, but also for much of their present improved state of astronomical science. Late in the seventeenth century, the wisest monarch that has yet governed the empire¹ passed much of his time in studying, under the direction of the Fathers Gerbillon, Bouvet, and Thomas, arithmetic, Euclid, and some of the higher branches of mathematics. A century earlier, the Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci, a pupil of the celebrated Clavius, and a man of remarkable intellect, found his way, after severe privations, to Pekin, and there for many years spread his knowledge and his religion.

At the close of the last century, the most famous man in the Board of Mathematics was M. Raux, a Lazarist missionary, one of the noble and devoted order of St. Vincent de Paul. The well-known Père Verbiest not only took a leading position at the Astronomical Board during the reign of Kang-hi, but added to his fame by writing several important mathematical works in the Chinese language. He also undertook to teach the process of casting cannon, and was personally most successful in producing numerous pieces of considerable calibre.

¹ Kang-hi.

Even the act by which the Roman Catholic missionaries drew upon themselves and their converts the terrible persecution in the year 1805, and which threatened the existence of Chinese Christianity, is traceable to the laudable desire to impart to their brethren in Europe some reliable information respecting the provincial divisions of the empire. But the whole history of the endeavours to spread the Christian faith in China and the immediately adjacent countries presents a singular instance of the unwearied devotion of its propagators; and there are but few more instructive works than the volumes of letters in which their efforts are recorded.¹

In the year 1625 some labouring masons, who were employed in digging under the ruins of a few old houses situated near the walls of Singan, the capital of the north-western province of Shensi, discovered a large slab of marble, upon which was written a full account of the earliest introduction of Christianity. The inscription bore the date of A.D. 781, and referred to the arrival and subsequent labours of the Nestorians. According to this tablet, it appears that a man named Olopun, a traveller from Syria, was the first Christian that planted his foot in China (A.D. 636). For seven hundred years the Nestorians spared no efforts in attempting to proselytize the people, and, had it not been for the then powerful opposition of the Buddhists,

¹ The persecution, which lasted for several years, was caused by the discovery of a map that the Père Adéodat was forwarding to Europe, and which was supposed by the suspicious Chinese authorities to have been drawn up for the purpose of showing to the Western Powers the assailable points of the country.

would probably have been comparatively successful. In the ninth century they possessed many churches, and had a considerable number of converts. At present, however, no trace of either exists; and, but for the chance discovery of the tablet, and a few allusions made to them in the letters of the early Catholic bishops, it is doubtful whether they or their works would now have been known.

The mendicant order of St. Francis had the honour of being the first to supply brethren for the purpose of spreading Roman Catholicism in China. John de Monte Corvino, a Franciscan, was, by Clement V., in 1307, appointed Bishop of Pekin (or, as it was then called, Cambalu). In 1333 Nicolas de Bentra, also a Franciscan, succeeded him. Under the tolerant rule of Kubla-khan and his successors, their subjects were allowed perfect immunity with regard to religious opinions; and throughout their dominions were to be found Nestorian and Roman Catholic Christians, together with Buddhists, Jews, and the fast-spreading Mahometans. Corvino, a few years after his installation, boasted of having already obtained several thousand converts, and built numerous churches. This zealous man did not choose to rest content with even this result, but, during his residence at Pekin, mastered the Tartar language, and translated into it the Psalms and the whole of the New Testament. To the dissensions between the Franciscans and the Nestorians must be attributed the want of success that attended the development of Christianity, which at this period was becoming very prevalent in the north-west provinces,

and, with judicious teachers, would have in all probability superseded the popular belief in Buddhism.

During the troubles consequent upon the expulsion of the Mongols and the accession of the Ming dynasty, the Roman pontiffs ceased to send out either envoys or missionaries, and for two hundred years the Chinese converts were thrown upon their own resources. It resulted that at the end of that period they had all become absorbed into the great mass of Buddhists; and when the Jesuits first landed upon the shores of China, hardly a sign remained to attest the past existence of Catholicism. The bull granting the institution of the powerful "Order of Jesus" was issued by Pope Paul III. on the 27th September, 1540; and in 1582, forty-two years afterwards, Matteo Ricci, the pioneer of the Jesuit missions, arrived at Canton.

François Xavier, who had previously made himself famous by his missionary travels over the islands in the Indian and Japanese seas, had failed in his endeavours to reach China, having died at the island of Sancian, a few miles from, and within sight of, the main land of the province of Kwang-tung.¹

It was not until the year 1601 that Ricci was enabled to reach Pekin. During the interval he resided in several of the provincial cities, and became intimately acquainted with the language and customs of the people, and to him the Chinese are indebted for a translation of several books of Euclid. At Pekin he was joined by some more Jesuits, and at the time of his death, A.D. 1610, considerable progress had been made towards the diffusion of their faith.

¹ A.D. 1552.

Twenty-one years after this event, the mendicant order of St. Dominic, which had been in existence since 1216 under the denomination of the Frères Précheurs, sent out several of its members to assist the Jesuits, and shortly afterwards the Franciscans followed their example. The number of missionaries now became very considerable, and they began to penetrate into the heart of the country, and to settle and work in the agricultural districts of the western and southern provinces.

During the reign of the first emperor of the present dynasty, Adam Schaal, a German Jesuit, attained to such high reputation, that he was placed at the head of the Board of Mathematics—a post which for the previous two hundred years had been invariably held by a Mahometan. At the time of the regency, which followed upon the death of this emperor, and lasted for the six years that elapsed before his successor Kang-hi was old enough to reign, the missions met with much persecution, and, with but few exceptions, the priests were ordered to leave the provinces, and retire to Canton or the Portuguese settlement at Macao. Many of the churches were destroyed, and a considerable number of converts were imprisoned, and a few decapitated. Schaal was also thrown into prison, and soon afterwards died.

This state of affairs was completely altered when Kang-hi took the reins of government, and during the whole of his long rule Roman Catholicism received the utmost favour. The Jesuit Father Ferdinand Verbiest,¹

¹ At his funeral the following letter was read, composed by the emperor. It was translated and published in Le Compte's 'Memoirs,' and deserves quotation :—

with whom he was on terms of strong friendship, was mainly instrumental in bringing about this result.

From the close of the seventeenth century until Kang-hi's death in 1723, there were incessant disputes and discord between the members of the different missions; but as the emperor would not admit of any tenets save those promulgated by Ricci, the Jesuits remained always in the ascendant.

In order to put a stop to these vexatious troubles, the Popes sent out Apostolic Vicars, who, invested with the highest powers, were expected to unite the dissentients. The first of these was an Italian of the order of St. Francis, M. D' Argolis¹—this was the second time that that order had the honour to provide heads for the missions in China (it will be recollected that Corvino was a Franciscan); other apostolic vicars were also subsequently appointed, one of whom was a native convert who took the name of De Basilée. The Roman Church had at this period reached the zenith of its success, and has never since approached its then most

"We seriously consider within ourselves that Father Ferdinand Verbiest has of his own good will left Europe to come into our dominions, and has spent the greater part of his life in our service; we must say this for him, that during all the time that he took care of the mathematics his predictions never failed, but always agreed with the motions of the heavens. Besides, far from neglecting our orders, he has ever approved himself exact, diligent, faithful, unalterable, and constant in his labour, till he had finished his work. As soon as we heard of his sickness we sent him our physician, and when we knew that a dead sleep had taken him away from us our heart was wounded with a lively grief.

"We give 'two hundred golden crowns' and some pieces of silk as a contribution towards the charges of his funeral, and it is our pleasure that the declaration bear witness of the sincere affection we bore him."

¹ The Bishop of Heliopolis (a Jesuit) preceded him, but died immediately after landing in Southern China.

flourishing and powerful condition. Converts were numbered by hundreds of thousands, and churches and chapels were erected in all directions throughout the empire. The general survey of the country was now undertaken under the auspices of the emperor—the surveyors being chosen principally from the Jesuits. This stupendous work was begun on the 4th of July, 1708, and, so rapidly was it performed, that on the 1st of January, 1717, the complete map of the empire was drawn up under the direction of the Father Jartoux.¹ Considering that only nine priests were employed for the purpose, and that the plan adopted was that of triangulation, it is evident that they must have been not only most indefatigable workers, but also skilful and sure in their surveys; the measurement of nearly two millions of square miles could not otherwise have been executed in the above remarkably short period.²

In 1723 Kang-hi died, and the emperor Young-tching succeeded him, and soon began to show his intense aversion to Christianity and its propagators. The edict granting the toleration of the Roman Catholic faith, which had been obtained by the Jesuits from Kang-hi, was now cancelled, and another was issued in 1724, which prohibited, under the severest penalties, its promulgation, and threatened with imprisonment all who were found following its doctrines. This latter edict was the result of a desire on the part of the Chinese government to avoid internal revolts.

¹ A considerable portion of Manchuria and Mongolia was included in the survey.

² The names of these surveyors and an extract from the account of the Père Régis will be found in an Appendix.

The troubles already caused in Japan, through the conduct of the Jesuits, were alone sufficiently warning, and the interminable disputes among the foreign missionaries under their own rule, together with the marked intention displayed by them to grasp at political power, added to the necessity for the adoption of some policy that should arrest their progress. Stringent orders were issued to the magistrates to destroy all the churches; and the missionaries, except a few who were kept at Pekin for scientific purposes, were banished to Macao and received instructions never again to attempt to mix with the Chinese or travel in the interior. For a few years they bowed to the storm, and then, braving all laws, began gradually to creep into the provinces under all kinds of disguises, in order to visit their dispersed little congregations of converts, who were always found ready to receive and shelter them. Consequently both frequently suffered for their temerity, and the mission history of this period abounds with records of persecutions and martyrdoms. Since then the fortunes of the China missions have been very fluctuating; sometimes, during a long lull, they were allowed to make some slight progress, and the presence of the priests in the interior would be tacitly connived at; but at intervals the government would, through the reports from the provincial governors, be made aware of this, and then would follow persecutions more or less severe, according to the temper of the magistrates. On one of these occasions, Bishop Sanz and five Dominicans lost their lives in Fokien, A.D. 1747. In 1767 and 1784 orders were issued to search everywhere for

concealed foreigners or native Christians, and many of them were seized and imprisoned. Notwithstanding, however, all these discouragements, the Roman Catholic priests never ceased to visit their converts whenever it was practicable, and, with this view, risked every danger. The discovery of Adéodat's map in 1805 was the cause of much suffering among them, and led to the banishment from Pekin of even most of those missionaries who had constantly been kept there to assist at the astronomical and mathematical Boards.

The last European who was condemned to death for spreading his religion was M. Clet, A.D. 1820. A few years previously Mgr. Dufresne of the mission in Sz-chuen, and M. Triora in Hoo-peh, had met with a similar fate. Since the accession of the Emperor Taou-kwang, in 1821, the missions have been allowed to exist in comparative peace, although subject to many annoyances through the animosity of the local authorities.

The Order of Jesus was suppressed, after an existence of two hundred and thirty-three years, by Clement XIV., A.D. 1773. The letters conveying this information reached its members at Pekin late in the following year. A Lazarist visiting Pekin in 1835 saw upon the walls of the old refectory a farewell inscription, commemorating the reception of the unwelcome news. After the dissolution of the Jesuits, the Pope confided the care of the missions in China to the Congregation of St. Lazare. This society, instituted by St. Vincent de Paul, and especially designed to instruct the poor and propagate their faith in distant lands, by requiring its

members to undergo several years' study in order to qualify themselves for being sent abroad, was eminently adapted to follow their Jesuit predecessors, and soon after the arrival of the Lazarist missionaries, one of them, M. Raux, was on account of his talents appointed to a high post at the mathematical Board. Two of the members of this congregation, MM. Huc and Gabet, have lately become well known to the European public through their travels in Tartary and Tibet.

In 1827, when the Roman Catholic missions were sensibly on the decline, a society was formed at Lyon for the purpose of arresting the downward movement, under the title of "L'Association de la Propagation de la Foi;" they invited people from all countries to join and become associates. Each subscription was limited to one halfpenny per week, and for this the subscriber became entitled to share in the exceptional indulgences granted to the association by the Pope. It followed that the number of members became so great, and the funds at the disposal of the society so ample, that in a very few years they were enabled not only to assist most materially in upholding the missions then existing, but also to send out, under their auspices, numerous others to nearly all parts of the world. Additional funds and missionaries were sent to China, and in the adjoining states of Tonquin and Cochin-China new missions were formed and richly supported. Eighteen years after the formation of the society, their receipts exceeded three millions of francs, and for the last ten years they have averaged over four millions. Out of this fund the sums awarded for the missions in China

Proper, amount to between four and five hundred thousand francs annually. The Lazarists, in a communication to the association at Lyon, written in the year 1830, stated that they would undertake the charge of seven of the principal provinces, and at that time they said they had obtained eighty thousand converts. Their letter, published in the Annals of the association, gives an account of the condition of their missions over the whole world ; and judging from their statements, which may be presumed to be correct, it appears that they have more missionary establishments and priests than the Jesuits have at any time possessed, and exceed those of all the remaining orders or societies combined.

In 1840 the total number of Chinese converts was estimated to be three hundred and three thousand, and amongst these were dispersed eight bishops and fifty-seven European missionaries, of whom twenty-four belonged to the Order of St. Lazare. At the period of the outbreak of the Taeping rebellion, the converts had increased by twelve thousand, and there were eighty-four foreign, in addition to one hundred and thirty-five native, priests ; also, in many of the provinces, schools and chapels had been built.

Although the restoration of the Order of Jesus by Pius VII. occurred as early as 1814, the Jesuits did not gain sufficient strength to enable them to send out missionaries to their old ground, the scene of their many triumphs and disasters, until 1847. In that year they undertook the charge of the provinces of Ngan-hwui and Kiang-su ; many of the letters written by them at this period prove how elated they were at the prospect

of again mixing amongst their numerous converts. As soon as they arrived in China no time was lost in rapidly spreading their influence, and under the guidance of their late eminent bishop, Mgr. Maresca, they in a few years obtained considerable weight and power. At Shanghae they have built a large and capacious cathedral, attached to which are flourishing and well-organized schools for children,¹ and at the adjacent village of Si-ka-wei they possess and manage the most extensive foreign scholastic establishment in the empire.

The Jesuits, owing to their fast-increasing numbers, have lately been enabled to extend their field of operations, and, in addition to the provinces above mentioned, they now include the northern and eastern districts of Chih-le.

In a report lately published by the association, is given an exhaustive account of the state of the Roman Catholic missions in China in the year 1858. It enumerates the provinces under the charge of each separate mission, and states the total of priests, foreign and native, employed; together with the supposed number of Chinese Christians. From this it appears that the French society of foreign missions (Missions Etrangères) are given the spiritual charge of Manchuria, Corea, and Tibet, and the provinces of Kwei-chow, Kwang-tung, Kwang-si, Yunnan, and western and meridional Sz-chuen; also the islands of Hainan and Hongkong.

¹ Three years after the Order of Jesus had come to the determination to send a mission to China, it possessed in that country not less than one bishop, twenty-six fathers, four native teachers, and five coadjutors; their cathedral was rapidly progressing towards completion, and their schools were already well attended.

To the Lazarists is confided the direction of Mongolia and the provinces of Honan, Kiang-si, Che'-kiang and Western Chih-le.

The Jesuits retain the charge of Ngan-hwui and Kiang-su, under the title of the Vicariat of Nankin and Eastern Chih-le.

The island of Formosa, and the opposite province of Fokien, are placed in the hands of the Spanish Dominicans, and the remaining Mendicant orders are scattered over Shantung, Chen-si, Shan-si, Hoo-nan, and Hoo-peh.

In addition to the above there is now an Italian mission at Hongkong. The total number of converts are estimated to exceed four hundred thousand, and the number of boys under tuition is very considerable. The Roman Catholics of all orders have always attached great importance to the education of native priests, and to this end they have several colleges almost entirely devoted for that purpose; one of the principal of these is at Naples, and there are others at Penang, Macao, and Si-wan (Mongolia). But with regard to the education of children, the Jesuits have always taken the lead, and in this respect are pre-eminently successful, whether at home or abroad. They devote more of their time to this branch of their work than to any other, and probably find, according to the principle that as the twig is bent so will the tree incline, that the result well repays them for their labour.

When I was at Shanghae in the years 1859-60, I had several opportunities, through the kindness of the Fathers Lemaistre and Ravarri, of personally exa-

mining their schools and noting the system of education. Upon my first introduction to the school-rooms, which form a part of the buildings attached to the cathedral,¹ I found the children at their lessons, and was astonished to see such a well-dressed, bright-looking set of boys, in all respects far superior to the average of Chinese lads met with elsewhere. Having shortly before observed the children at the Protestant schools in Ningpo, I was not prepared to find such a marked and favourable contrast, and was at a loss to account for it until made acquainted with the very different method of tuition and selection.

The Jesuits make it a rule, seldom departed from, only to educate the sons of their own Christian converts, and the advantage of this plan is evident. The boys when they return to their homes find the religion and feelings of their relations in perfect harmony with their own, and consequently do not relapse into the common belief in demoniacal influences and the daily performance of Buddhistic ceremonies. Another advantage is that, as the converts are comparatively numerous, healthy and promising boys can be selected from their families, likely to become serviceable and do justice to their teaching. In many points the method of study that is pursued is made to assimilate

¹ The cathedral, commenced in 1850, has been completed and open for several years. Built near the river, and in the midst of the suburbs of the walled city, it stands surrounded by a teeming population, over whose miserable dwellings it towers conspicuously. Although of the plainest and most unpretending architecture, it is unquestionably the most remarkable building in this part of China, and is capable of containing a congregation of twelve or fifteen hundred persons.

with that of the ordinary native schools ; the boys are taught the Chinese classics, particularly that branch of them which includes the tenets of Confucius. In addition to this, a considerable portion of time is devoted to the study of arithmetic, and special attention is paid to whatever relates to the usages of trade. If any are found to possess a natural talent for music, one of the fathers undertakes to teach it up to a certain point, and to facilitate the pupil's progress the common Chinese scale is strictly adhered to. It is only on Sunday that a regular course of religious instruction is given. During the working days this important branch of education is confined to the recital of a morning and evening prayer, which each boy is supposed to have committed to memory. The reason why the Jesuits give so much attention to the teaching of the classics refers to the competitive examinations for public office. They wish that their pupils may become qualified to compete successfully, and thus obtain some appointment where their influence or power would have a beneficial effect in assisting the progress of Roman Catholicism.

It must, however, rarely happen that this desire can meet with fulfilment. The families of the pupils are, in most instances, far too straitened in means, and of too low an order of social position, either to spare their sons for that purpose, or to expect such justice on the part of the distributors of official posts as alone could warrant such a step. The congregations that attend the principal services at the cathedral are composed of the poorest of the labouring class, and mainly consist of women, children, and worn-out old men. It was

always evident that these poor people were utterly ignorant of the real meaning of the service that was being performed, and only mechanically complied with the prescribed rites; yet I never observed any want of devotion, certainly no absence of attention; and this is somewhat remarkable, because the Chinese Buddhists, during the ordinary ceremonies of their faith, always evince the most thorough apathy and unconcern. The Roman Catholic form of worship, as conducted by the missions in China, has so many points of resemblance with that of Buddhism, that it is not at all surprising that converts are so easily made. It is only strange that they should not be far more numerous. The contempt in which both religions are held by the government and the literati must in part account for this circumstance; but perhaps the true explanation must be looked for in the extraordinary indifference of the Chinese of all classes upon all subjects connected with religion.

The Roman Catholic missionaries, upon their arrival in China, immediately adopt the costume of the people amongst whom they have to work, and, as far as is consistent with their faith, conform to their manners and customs. It is perfectly understood by them that they are expected to pass and end their lives in their new country,—that all European ties must be discarded, and their future existence devoted to the one great object of spreading their faith; to this end every personal comfort, all worldly ambition, and bodily health must be irrevocably sacrificed.

The record of the sufferings undergone during the

last three centuries by those priests, who, in opposition to all law, persisted in penetrating into the interior, animated by the hope of keeping their converts true to their faith, is perhaps one of the most interesting works ever written ; for it contains the histories of many men of blameless life and high intellectual attainments, pursuing, what they erroneously deemed a great and good purpose, with such determination of will, patience, and self-denial as must always command the most profound respect.

It is frequently made the subject of reproach to our Protestant missionaries that they do not follow the example of their Roman Catholic brethren, and travel or settle in the interior, and there endeavour to obtain converts ; but that, instead of so doing, they pass their time in the trading treaty-ports, amongst a population consequently of the most untrustworthy character, and where they are overshadowed by the flags of their consuls, and protected by the presence of a naval or military force. The circumstances in which the respective missions are placed are too dissimilar to admit of the application of the same rule to both. The Romanists, when they visit the provinces, proceed at once to some known and trusted body of fellow Christians, who receive them into their houses, supply all their wants, and assist them in their missionary labours ; also in times of danger they shelter them from the search of the magistrates, and, as far as lies in their power, ensure their safety. The Protestants, whose missions date comparatively from a very recent period, possess none of these advantages, and therefore cannot

act in a similar manner. Now, however, that China is becoming more open to foreigners, better opportunities will be given to them, and there seems no reason to doubt that the perils will then be equally shared.

The first Protestant missionary in China, Mr. Robert Morrison, landed in that country in September, 1807; and the first Chinese convert, Tsai-Ako, a native of Kwang-tung, professed his adherence to the new faith and was baptized in July, 1814. Mr. Morrison was sent out under the auspices of the London Mission, and, shortly after his arrival, proceeded to Canton, where he studied continuously the Chinese language; and, such was his progress, he was enabled in the year 1810 to translate and print for distribution the whole of the Acts of the Apostles; and in November, 1819, he completed the translation of the Bible, in which work he was aided by a fellow missionary, Mr. Milne. It was not, however, until after the conclusion of the first China war that the Protestant missions began to possess any influence. The permission then given to Europeans to reside and trade at the Five Treaty Ports enabled the religious societies of all nations to send out missionaries with some prospect of success. Previous to this event little had been performed of any real or permanent importance. The College at Malacca was instituted in 1818, for the purpose of educating Chinese children and bringing them up in the Protestant faith, and although well supported was not so successful as had been expected, and after an existence of twenty-six years was discontinued. The energetic and well-known missionary, Mr. Gutzlaff, undertook, for some years, several coasting voyages on

board of the native junks, where, dressed as a Chinaman, he endeavoured to explain to the crews their religious errors; and, at the towns situated on the sea-board, distributed thousands of Bibles and tracts; but, as far as could be ascertained, without the slightest result.

Subsequently to 1842 English and American missions were established at Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghae, and have been steadily progressing, though, perhaps, not so rapidly as could be desired. There are, however, institutions connected with them which will always give cause for just pride to the Protestants who originated, and those who now uphold them. The medical mission hospitals have unquestionably been the means of doing more good and diffusing greater happiness among the labouring Chinese than ever has resulted from the actions of the Roman Catholics during the whole of their long occupation.

The benefits performed by them are such as are not readily forgotten, and are patent to everybody. The hospital returns from the different ports, during the last fifteen years, prove that the number of patients that have been relieved can be counted by hundreds of thousands, most of whom belonged to the poorest classes. Several letters addressed by many of these after their recovery to the medical directors sufficiently evidence that gratitude is not a quality wanting in the Chinese character. The existence of these hospitals does not, however, seem, either directly or indirectly, to have increased the number of converts, and this unsatisfactory result has led some of the mission societies

to question the advisableness of devoting, any longer, their funds towards their maintenance. Still, so long as they are deemed necessary towards complementing the present backward state of the Chinese medical knowledge, it is to be hoped that their continuance will not be menaced through the want of support, whether public or private. The first foreign hospital, of any importance, was instituted at Canton in 1835, under the direction of Dr. Parker, an American missionary, and was chiefly devoted to the treatment of ophthalmia, a disorder frightfully prevalent among the poor in all Chinese cities, and especially at Canton. The outbreak of hostilities in 1841 necessitated its discontinuance, and it was not again re-established ; for, at the conclusion of the war, the energies of the missions became centred upon the new ports. At Shanghae Dr. William Lockhart opened a hospital so successfully that he was enabled to state, early in 1845, that eleven thousand patients had already been relieved ; and from a late report published by him it appears that, during his supervision, the total number of patients that have been attended to between the years 1843 and 1857 exceed one hundred and fifty thousand. At Ningpo the hospital under Dr. Parker's¹ management has an average annual attendance of above thirteen thousand ; and the reports from those at Canton, Hong-kong, and Macao, are equally satisfactory. Thus, granting these returns to be perfectly reliable, it follows that the number of suffering Chinese relieved, and, in many instances cured, since the establishment of the Protestant missions, fully equal three-quarters of a million.

¹ Scotch Medical Mission.

Such a momentous and gratifying result needs no comment.

There are now about twenty different societies that send out missionaries to China ; amongst these the London Mission is pre-eminent both in organization and importance. Under its auspices such men as Morrison, Milne, Collie, Medhurst, Lockhart, Legge, and others have, apart from their special duties, been of the greatest service in widely extending the knowledge of Chinese literature among western nations. The Americans are also well represented ; one of their missionaries, the late Dr. Bridgeman, was the originator and editor of the most valuable work of reference upon Chinese institutions and customs that has ever been published ;¹ and to another, Mr. Wells Williams, Europeans are indebted for one of the best histories yet written of China and its inhabitants.²

The total number of missionaries employed, of all denominations, may be roughly estimated to be about eighty, of whom more than one-half are Americans. In every treaty-port each mission has its own special converts and its own chapels. At Hongkong there is a college under the superintendence of the Bishop of Victoria, principally maintained for the purpose of raising a native ministry ; but as yet it has not met with such success as is wished for by its supporters. There are also, at the northern ports, numerous small day-schools, in most instances attached to the American chapels, and which are very fairly attended. It, however, cannot be denied that the results of the teaching

¹ 'The Chinese Repository.'

² 'The Middle Kingdom.'

adopted in the mission schools are most thoroughly unsatisfactory, and it is only in rare cases that the pupils do not relapse eventually into the common creed of their unconverted families. The difficulties that surround the question respecting the best method of propagating the Protestant faith in China are such as must always acquit of blame those who are answerable for success or failure. Circumstanced as the missions are, it would not be easy to devise any other plan for training young converts than that which is now followed, and yet it is only too evident that the present system must inevitably fail in its ultimate development.

None but the extremely poor ever send their children to the foreign schools, and even to obtain these it is frequently found necessary to provide them with a small amount of rice or a few coins, in order that, by being spared the necessity of feeding them, the parents may be induced to consent to dispense with their services. Even granting that the boys, when trained, remained constant to their new faith, they would still be too despised and unimportant to make such an impression among their companions as would lead to the extension of conversions.

A dispassionate inquiry into the state and progress of Christianity among the Chinese must lead to the conviction that, in proportion to the labour and funds that have for so many years been devoted for its furtherance, the result is almost inappreciable.

But, although under this point of view, the Protestant Mission Societies of Europe and America may

be of opinion that their endeavours have not been rewarded with a corresponding success, there remains another which should cause them to feel much responsibility and anxiety, mixed perhaps with a little pride. The most important revolution that has ever taken place in China, and which will influence the future religious condition of the inhabitants of that immense empire to an extent, and in a manner, such as at present cannot be clearly foreseen, owes its existence to the presence and actions of their missionaries.

CHAPTER IV.

Early life of Hung-siu-tsuen.

To Mr. Hamberg is due the credit of having, in his little compilation,¹ placed before the world all the reliable information that exists upon the early life and career of the rebel chief Hung-siu-tsuen. His narrative comprises the translation of a paper given to him by Hung-jin, a relative of Hung-siu-tsuen, and the substance of some conversations held with the former in 1852. I shall, in a great measure, base the following pages upon this little work, whose general truthfulness admits of no question. On some slight points of dates subsequent events have proved that errors have crept in Hung-jin's narrative; but in other respects all our later information has tended to prove its trustworthiness.²

Whatever may be the opinions held with regard to the Taepings, their creeds, and their actions, there can be no doubt but their leader is sincere in his own belief. The only way of accounting for his actions, from the time when he first became subject to visions up to the present day, is by acknowledging him to be true to his own convictions—however deplorable those

¹ Entitled 'The Chinese Rebel Chief.'

² Mr. Hamberg, who was by birth a Swede, became a member of the Evangelical Missionary Society at Basle. This society sent him over to China in 1847. A great deal of his missionary work was performed in the Kwang-tung province. He died at Hongkong in 1854.

convictions and their results may be. As the reader proceeds with his history he will see the necessity of taking this point of view.

Hung-siu-tsuen's native village is situated in the province of Kwang-tung, about thirty miles from the city of Canton. Its population numbers about four hundred people, nearly all of whom belong to the Hung family. In this, as in most villages in China, the occupants belong to one clan. Hung's father was headman—a position, as I have already shown, of great trust. He was, however, in very humble circumstances, and the family obtained their livelihood by cultivating a few rice-fields, and rearing pigs and poultry. The neighbours were equally poor, and had likewise to pass their lives in continual toil in order to obtain sufficient for a bare subsistence. The village contains three rows of houses, one behind the other, with narrow lanes connecting them. Before the half-dozen huts or houses composing the front row is a pool of muddy water—used for manuring purposes, and which is a reservoir for all the refuse. On the left, by the side of the pool, stands the school-house. On the west side of the third row at the back of the village is the "humble dwelling of Hung's parents."

Here, in the year 1813, Hung-siu-tsuen was born—the third son and fourth child. It appears that from the very beginning he showed himself to be of a studious nature, and evinced more than average abilities. He was sent to school when seven years old: glowing accounts are given of his rapid progress in his studies, and his remarkable aptitude for committing to memory the

Chinese classics. As, however, he eventually failed so signally in his attempts to obtain his bachelor's degree —a great deal must be put down to the partiality of his friend Hung-jin. Still it is evident that in point of intellect he stood first in his own village.

“ His aged father, in talking with his friends, was particularly fond of dwelling on the subject of the talents of his youngest son. His face brightened whenever he heard any one speak in his son's praise ; and this commendation of his son was inducement enough for him to invite the speaker to the family hall to partake of tea, or a bowl of rice, and gratify the father by continuing this his favourite topic of discourse.”

The poverty of Siu-tsuen's family was in great measure the cause of his want of literary success. Although by every means in their power, and with the aid of the slight assistance that could be rendered by friends, they endeavoured to improve his chances of successful competition by sending him to more distant and better schools ; yet at last they were forced to take him from his studies that he might assist in the provision for their daily wants, and to this end, when arrived at the age of sixteen, the most important period of his student life, he was obliged to pass his time in field labour, or in leading the oxen to graze.

This occupation did not agree with the bent of Siu-tsuen's mind, and eventually, the village people gave him the appointment of teacher in the school. This gave him means for continuing his studies, and the remuneration for his work, small as it was, enabled him to be above absolute want.

Hung-siu-tsuen himself chose Siu-tsuen as his literary name, by this means marking his individuality in the family name Hung. Siu-tsuen means "Elegant and Perfect." In the examinations held in the district city, he took a high place, but he was never able to get his bachelor's degree, for which purpose he had to attend the examinations at Canton, which city, from this circumstance, must have been the chief city of his department as well as that of the province. About the year 1833, he visited Canton, in order to be present at the public competitive trial. This was subsequent to previous failures. Here he met with a man, who from the description must have been a Protestant missionary. On the following day he met two men, one of whom had in his possession a parcel of books, the whole of which he gave to Hung-siu-tsuen; the work consisted of nine small volumes, and was entitled "Good Words exhorting the Age." The donor proved to be a native convert who was employed in distributing tracts. The author of these tracts was a man named Leang-Afah, a convert of Dr. Milne's at the college at Malacca. Leang subsequently returned to China (his native country), and there Dr. Morrison, finding that he was anxious to become a distributor of the Gospel, ordained him for that purpose. Dr. Morrison states that in 1832 Leang-Afah had printed nine tracts, of about fifty pages each, composed by himself, and interspersed with passages of sacred Scripture. The title of the whole was "Kuen-shi-leang-yen" (Good Words exhorting the Age). "These books contain a good number of whole chapters of the Bible, according to the translation of Dr. Mor-

rison, many essays on important subjects from single texts, and sundry *miscellaneous statements* founded on Scripture.”¹

I have but little doubt that to these “*miscellaneous statements*” and to mistranslations, many of the Taeping tenets might be traced.

Upon Hung-siu-tsuen’s return home he took these tracts with him, and, not deeming them of much importance, he simply glanced at their contents and put them aside. In 1837 he again went up for examination at Canton and again failed. Broken down in health and spirits, he returned home to his village, and was, through illness, confined for some time to his bed. At this time he was twenty-three years of age, and could have had no idea of in any way becoming great in station, or of subverting the authority of the existing government. The visions which at this period, whilst in his bed, he believed to present themselves to him, must be attributed to the diseased state of his mind, and, so far as they bear upon his subsequent career, must be taken as being to him realities, and not used as a blind for the purpose of carrying out his plans.

In one of his visions, he imagined himself to be carried away in a sedan-chair by a number of men playing musical instruments, and, after visiting bright and luminous places, and having all his impurities washed away, he entered, in company with a number of virtuous, aged, and venerable men, into a large hall the beauty and splendour of which were beyond description. A man, venerable from his years and dressed in

¹ Mr. Hamberg.

a black robe, was sitting in an imposing attitude, in the highest place. As soon as he observed Siu-tsuen, he began to shed tears and said : "All human beings in the world are produced and sustained by me ; they eat my food and wear my clothing, but not a single one among them has a heart to remember and venerate me ; what is, however, still worse, they take my gifts and therewith worship demons ; they rebel against me and arouse my anger. Do thou not imitate them ! " Thereupon he gave Siu-tsuen a sword, commanding him to exterminate the demons, but to spare his brothers and sisters ; a seal by which he would overcome evil spirits ; and a yellow fruit, which Siu-tsuen found sweet to the taste. He then gives him charge to do the work of bringing round the perverse ; and, taking him out, told him to look and behold the perverseness of the people upon earth.

Siu-tsuen looked and saw such a degree of depravity and vice that his eyes could not endure the sight nor his mouth express their deeds. He then awoke from his trance, but being still partially under its influence, he put on his clothes, left his bedroom, went into the presence of his father, and making a low bow, said : "The venerable old man above has commanded that all men shall turn to me, and all treasures flow to me."

"When his father saw him come out, and heard him speak in this manner, he did not know what to think, feeling at once joy and fear. The sickness and visions of Siu-tsuen continued about forty days, and in these visions he often saw a man of middle age, whom he called his Elder Brother, who instructed him how to act,

accompanied him in his wanderings to the uttermost regions in search of evil spirits, and assisted him in slaying and exterminating them." Siu-tsuen during his sickness, when his mind was wandering, often used to run about his room leaping and fighting like a soldier engaged in battle. His constant cry was "Tsan-jan, tsan-jan, tsan-ah, tsan-ah!" Slay the demons! &c., &c.

"His father felt very anxious about the state of his mind, and ascribed this their present misfortune to the fault of the geomancer¹ in selecting an unlucky spot of ground for the burial of their forefathers. He therefore invited some magicians in order that by their secret art, they might drive away the evil spirits; but Siu-tsuen said, 'How could these imps dare to oppose me? I must slay them! I must slay them! Many, many, cannot resist me.'"

The imagination of Siu-tsuen ran riot in all directions: the demons he believed himself to be pursuing took the forms of birds or beasts according to their own wills. His seal was always powerful enough to overcome them when other means failed.

"During his exhortations he often burst into tears, saying, 'You have no hearts to venerate the ancient father, but you are on good terms with the impish fiends.'

"Siu-tsuen's two brothers constantly kept his door

¹ Geomancers are the people whose business it is to select a lucky place for the interment of a deceased person. Before the burial takes place the geomancer, with his instruments, directs the digging of the grave, and is supposed so to arrange matters that the spirit will be pleased with its new home. The prospect that the grave commands, and its angle from the Pole, also its proximity to water, are all points for consideration.

shut, and watched him to prevent him from running out of the house. After he had fatigued himself by fighting, jumping about, singing, and exhorting, he lay down again upon his bed. When he was asleep, many persons were accustomed to come and look at him, and he was soon known in the whole district as 'the madman.' He often said that he was duly appointed Emperor of China, and was highly gratified when any one called him by that name." Siu-tsuen's relatives tried in vain to cure his disease by means of physicians. "One day his father noticed in a crack of the door-post a slip of paper, on which were written the following words in vermilion: 'The noble principles of the Heavenly King, the Sovereign King Tsuen.' He took the paper and showed it to the other members of the family, who, however, could not understand the meaning of the characters."

From this time Siu-tsuen gradually regained his health. "Many of his friends and relations now visited him, desirous to hear from his own mouth what he had experienced during his disease, and Siu-tsuen related to them without reserve all that he could remember of his extraordinary visions. His friends and relatives only replied, that the whole was very strange indeed, without thinking at the time that there was any reality in the matter."¹

It must be recollected that the substance of these visions was narrated by Hung-jin fifteen years after

¹ During his illness, Siu-tsuen also composed several odes, generally relating to the power that he supposed himself to possess, to punish evil-doers and reward the virtuous.

their occurrence, and therefore allowance must be made for error. Still the story is so simply told, and with such self-evident absence of intention, that it may be taken as giving a close approximation to the truth. At the time of the visions, those who heard Siu-tsuen relate them seem to have considered them as the utterances of a madman, or at least of one whose reason was temporarily impaired, and therefore it is not probable that they would have taken very much notice of them, or borne them long in their memory. It was when Siu-tsuen burst out into his subsequent career of conquest that these sayings must have been in some measure recalled to mind and discussed in village gossip, and as may be readily conceived, those portions which seemed most to bear upon the proclamations and actions of Siu-tsuen, would have been those that were eagerly brought forward by the fortunate hearers. When Hung-jin told his story to Mr. Hamberg, the insurgents had not reached Nankin, nor had there been any information about their movements after they had proceeded northwards from the Kwang-si province. Mr. Hamberg also bore a high character for caution and truthfulness, and it must have been under the full conviction of the credibility of his informant that he permitted himself to place such entire faith in the account given to him.

As soon as he had regained his health Siu-tsuen was for several years engaged as teacher at a school some miles away from his native village. He is stated at this time to have been severe as a schoolmaster, and in many ways to have become much changed, being more

reserved, and in all respects more manly, than before his illness. He also again attended the public examinations at Canton without success.

In 1843, whilst engaged as a teacher by a family of the name of Li, in a school about ten miles from his own village, a relation of his of the name of Li happened to look over his books, and amongst them found the tracts already spoken of, "Good Words exhorting the Age." He asked Siu-tsuen their contents. Siu-tsuen said he did not exactly know, and that he had brought them from Canton some time previous. Li borrowed the books, took them home with him, and read them. Upon returning the tracts he told Siu-tsuen that they were very extraordinary writings, and differed considerably from Chinese books. Upon this, Siu-tsuen set to work and carefully read them, and was astonished to find that they supplied a key to his own visions.

"He now understood the venerable old man who sat upon the highest place, and whom all men ought to worship, to be God, the Heavenly Father; and the man of middle age, who had instructed him, and assisted him in exterminating the demons, to be Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Siu-tsuen felt as if awaking from a long dream. He rejoiced to have found in reality a way to heaven, and sure hope of everlasting life and happiness. Learning from the books the necessity of being baptised, Siu-tsuen and Li, according to the manner described in the books, and as far as they understood the rite, now administered baptism to themselves."

After this they discarded their idols, and removed the tablet of Confucius that was placed in the school-room.

From this time forward Siu-tsuen followed the path that seems to be always that of earnest enthusiasts. In his desire to spread his views and to overthrow the existing state of belief, he sacrificed all worldly advantages, and, losing all his appointments, became almost a beggar.

In this same year, 1843, when on a visit to a friend named Phang, so wild was his demeanour and so strange were his utterances that his friend thought that he had fallen back into his previous state of temporary lunacy, and ordered a trustworthy man to see him home in safety. Upon his return home, Siu-tsuen made two converts, one named Hung-jin, and the other Fung-yun-san, a school-teacher. This latter became eventually a man of great importance, and was one of the chief promoters of the outbreak. Siu-tsuen and his friends, when studying Leang-Afah's Tracts, became more and more convinced that they were sent purposely to him to confirm the truth of his former visions; and consequently he looked upon both as equally true, the one evidencing the truth of the other. It appears that from many causes, partly through absence of proper commentaries, and partly through some confusion in terms, a great many of the doctrines in the Tracts were to a certain extent unintelligible to Siu-tsuen, and consequently he placed his own construction on their meaning, using his visions as a guide.

The first instance that openly displayed a determina-

tion to break away from recognised customs, occurred in 1844. In the early part of the spring of this year, the feast known by the name of Feast of Lanterns took place in the native village of Siu-tsuen. He and his convert, Hung-jin, were requested to write some odes on this occasion, praising the merits of the idols. This they declined doing, although by that course they incurred the displeasure of their friends. In consequence of the removal of the tablet of Confucius from the school-room, and the general renunciation of the religion of the people, Siu-tsuen lost his place as teacher. Soon after this, Siu-tsuen, accompanied by Fung-yun-san and two other friends, departed from their own district with the intention of visiting the independent tribes of mountaineers, "Miau-tsze," resident on the borders of the adjoining province of Kwang-si. The two friends shortly left Siu-tsuen and Yun-san, and returned to their village. The latter still wandered on until they reached their destination. Here they fell in with a schoolmaster, who, for some days, entertained them. Finding themselves unacquainted with the peculiar dialect of the Miau-tsze, they left that part of the country, and proceeded to visit some relations in Kwang-si. After considerable toil they reached the house of Wang, a cousin of Siu-tsuen, who hospitably received them. They remained here for some months, and during that time made above a hundred converts. Siu-tsuen now thought of returning to Hwa (his own district), and told Fung-yun-san and two converts of the Hung family to precede him there. This was carried into effect by the two converts, but Fung-yun-

san determined to remain in Kwang-si, and preach there. In the neighbourhood of one of the villages he met some labouring men, whom he joined and endeavoured to convert to his views. Their employer, hearing him spoken of as a talented man, engaged him as teacher in a school. Yun-san remained here several years making numerous converts ; these soon began to congregate together for religious purposes, and became known as "the Congregation of the Worshippers of God." This society became the main element in the subsequent troubles, and was frequently referred to in the memorials and reports of the government officials.

Hung-siu-tsuen carried out his intentions, and arrived at Hwa-hien at the close of 1844. Here he discovered that Fung-yun-san had not made his appearance, and he was left unaware of his whereabouts or circumstances, and had to bear the reproaches of Fung-yun-san's family for not having brought him back with him.

Siu-tsuen remained at home during 1845 and 1846, and again became a teacher of a school. Hung-jin, the narrator, does not explain how he obtained this appointment ; for it appears that he still continued in his efforts to make converts, and also forbade his pupils, when in the school-room, to follow their usual custom of venerating Confucius. At this time he is stated to have begun to show his hatred to the Manchu power, and on one occasion said—"God has divided the kingdoms of the world, and made the ocean to be a boundary for them, just as a father divides his estates among his sons ; everyone of whom ought to reverence

the will of his father, and quietly manage his own property. Why should these Manchus now forcibly enter China, and rob their brothers of their estate?"

He also composed several odes and discourses on religious subjects, many of which have since been incorporated in his "Declarations." Then, as since, he seems to have been prolific with his pen.

Late in 1846 information was received at Hwa-hien, through a man lately returned from Canton, that a foreign missionary was preaching in that city. On hearing this, Siu-tsuen and his friend Hung-jin determined to visit him, but being engaged at the time teaching in the schools they were obliged to postpone that visit till the following year. This missionary turned out to be Mr. Roberts, whose name has become so well-known lately through his connection with the rebel party at Nankin. The Rev. Issachar J. Roberts, a member of one of the American missions, arrived in China in 1837, and shortly afterwards proceeded to Canton, in which city his subsequent labours were principally performed. Judging from his reports, and from his letters at different periods, there can be no doubt but that he proved himself to be a thoroughly conscientious and earnest missionary. In the earlier part of the outbreak, when he found that he had been instrumental in, to some degree, forming the mind of the principal leader, and also when that leader after a series of successes addressed a letter to him, not only in a friendly style, but as a pupil writing gratefully to a trusted teacher, his better judgment seems to have failed him. A letter written by him at this period

(1852), to the 'Missionary Gleaner,' is filled with the wildest ideas imaginable, both as to the religion and the actions of the rebels. The language in which he conveys his ideas, however, is a strong proof of his sincerity. The minds of all religious and thinking people were at this time bent upon the marvellous opening that this rebellion seemed to offer for the regeneration of China. Then the painful and, to Christian minds, almost blasphemous pretensions of the rebel chiefs were unknown. The general impression was that the rebellion, under the guidance of the over-ruling Providence, was the means by which the Christian religion was to become the belief of the four hundred millions composing the empire. The destruction of idols, the setting apart of one day in the week for prayer, the acknowledgment of a Supreme Lord, and the implicit obedience to the tenets of the Ten Commandments,—these, and other equally gratifying reports filled the hearts of our missionaries with deep and trusting hope. All the works written about the rebellion during these few years take strongly their side; and the conflicting opinions which, until very lately, have been held by Europeans with regard to these Taepings may in a great measure be traced to the wide difference between the reports made of them during the early stage of the insurrection, and after their creed was found to differ so considerably from what their supporters had imagined it to be.

Mr. Roberts, in order to carry out his missionary purposes, temporarily adopted the plan followed by Roman Catholics—viz., that of wearing the Chinese

costume; a slight medical knowledge also was of service to him in his work. He had with him some native assistants, one of whom, having heard about Siu-tsuen and his visions from a man of his district, wrote to him and invited him to Canton. In the letter he said that "we, the missionary and the brethren, will rejoice if you would come hither." On the receipt of this invitation, Siu-tsuen and Hung-jin went to Canton and were received by Mr. Roberts. Some years after this, when it was reported that Hung-siu-tsuen had spent some months at the mission, but had been refused baptism, Mr. Roberts, who up to this time was perfectly unaware of the nature of the two Chinese that had been under his religious guidance, wrote a letter to the 'Gleaner,'¹ (1852), of which I quote a few lines. He writes:—"Some time in 1846, or the year following, two Chinese gentlemen came to my house in Canton, professing a desire to be taught the Christian religion. One of them soon returned home, but the other continued with us two months or more, during which time he studied the Scriptures and received instruction, whilst he maintained a blameless deportment. This one seems to have been Hung-siu-tsuen, the chief of the insurrection. . . . He presented a paper written by himself, giving a minute account of having received the book of 'Good Words exhorting the Age,' of his having been taken sick, during which time he imagined that he saw a vision, the details of which he gave, and which he said confirmed him in the belief of what he read in the book. . . . In giving the account of his vision,

¹ 'Chinese and General Missionary Gleaner.'

he related some things which I confess I was at a loss, and still am, to know where he got them without a more extensive knowledge of the Scriptures. He requested to be baptised, but he left for Kwang-si before we were fully satisfied of his fitness, but what had become of him I knew not until now."

Mr. Roberts, from the slight recollection he appears to have had of Siu-tsuen, describes him as a "man five feet four or five inches in height, of ordinary appearance, well-built, round-faced, about middle age, rather handsome and gentlemanly in manners." This description does not very well agree with that of Hung-jin, who describes him as "rather tall, oval face, high nose, large and bright eyes, and of extraordinary bodily strength." To this are added wonderful powers of mind and an imposing demeanour. The latter account is evidently over-partial.

The remarkable coincidence at this point of Mr. Roberts' experience and Hung-jin's narrative, is one of the many strong proofs of the latter's truthfulness.

Siu-tsuen and his friend, upon their arrival at Canton, were received by the other Chinese converts in a friendly manner. After a month's stay they for a few days returned home, where Hung-jin remained. Siu-tsuen went back to Canton to prosecute his studies, but through the jealousy of two of Mr. Roberts' assistants he did not remain long. These assistants feared that if Siu-tsuen became baptised, his superior talents would eventually place him above them, and that they would lose their position. To prevent this they advised him to apply to Mr. Roberts for a certain sum as a means

of support. This kind of demand is a plan so frequently adopted by pretended Chinese converts that Protestant missionaries usually look upon it with extreme suspicion and dislike. Siu-tsuen, unaware of this, acted upon his friend's advice, and the result was that Mr. Roberts was greatly displeased, and his applicant's baptism became indefinitely postponed.

Being too poor to remain in Canton without some means of subsistence, and seeing no hope of early baptism, Siu-tsuen, in the middle of June, 1847, left a second time for his cousin's house in the Kwang-si province. His journey was, throughout, one of great hardship. In one of the early stages he was robbed of the very little that he possessed, and he became indebted to chance charity for money enough to reach his destination. Upon his arrival at Wang's (his cousin) house, he inquired if anything had been heard about his friend Fung-yun-san, and then learnt that he was engaged at a village near at hand, and that many people had been induced to join in the new creed taught by him. Siu-tsuen soon joined them. The Society of God-worshippers rapidly increased in numbers; and at this time (1847) it is stated that in the Kwei district alone there were above two thousand. The new doctrines now began rapidly to spread over the adjoining districts, and many men of influence, including some who had obtained literary degrees, joined the congregation. Their forms of worship were at this time somewhat vague; and the main feature seems to have been the abolishment of all idols. A description of baptism was introduced; and those who were admitted to this rite received forms of prayer

to be used morning and evening. These forms have since been printed at Nankin in the Book of Religious Precepts with slight alterations. At certain social ceremonies, such as marriage, the festival of new year, &c., animals were offered up as a sacrifice, and were afterwards eaten by those present. This is one of the numerous instances where Siu-tsuen combined with his doctrines the old superstitious customs of the people. Not content with quietly meeting together for their religious purposes, the God-worshippers,¹ led by the

¹ I subjoin Mr. Hamberg's account of the early observances of the God-worshippers :—"At the commencement, Siu-tsuen had only vague notions concerning the true manner of religious service. When he had taken away his own idols, he placed the written name of God in their stead, and even used incense-sticks and gold paper as a part of the service. But in a few months, finding that this was wrong, he abolished it. His stepmother declared, however, that it was a great pity that he had taken away the name of God from the wall, for during that time they had been able to add a few fields to their estate, which she considered as a special blessing and sign of Divine favour. When the congregation in Kwang-si assembled together for religious worship, male and female worshippers had their seats separated from each other. It was customary to praise God by the singing of a hymn, an address was delivered on either the mercy of God or the merits of Christ, and the people were exhorted to repent of their sins, to abstain from idolatry, and to serve God with sincerity of heart. When any professed to believe in the doctrine, and expressed a desire to be admitted members of the congregation, the rite of baptism was performed in the following manner, without reference to any longer or shorter term of preparation or previous instruction. Two burning lamps and three cups of tea were placed on a table, probably to suit the sensual apprehension of the Chinese. A written confession of sins, containing the names of the different candidates for baptism, was repeated by them, and afterwards burnt, by which procedure the presenting of the confession to God was symbolized. The question was then asked if they promised 'not to worship evil spirits, nor to practise evil things, but to keep the heavenly commandments?' After this confession and promise they knelt down, and from a large basin of clear water a cupful was poured over the head of every one with the words—'Purification from all former sins, putting off the old, and regeneration.' Upon rising again they used to drink of the tea, and generally each con-

example set to them by their leaders, commenced destroying the idols, and interfering with the worship of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. A rich graduate named Wang, sent a memorial to the magistrate of one of the districts, informing him that these brethren were destroying temples and idols under false pretences of upholding their God, whereas in reality they were rebelling against the authorities. Upon this, two of the leaders, Fung-yun-san and Lu-luh, were seized and committed to prison. Hung-siu-tsuen upon this left for Canton with the intention of petitioning the governor of the two Kwang provinces for their release. The temporary absence of the governor prevented this idea being carried into execution. This was early in 1848. Siu-tsuen upon the failure of his plan set out upon his return to Kwang-si. During his absence, the God-worshippers had, by memorials and bribes, obtained the discharge of Fung-yun-san; but the magistrate, to prevent a recurrence of these troubles, sent him into his own district in Kwang-tung, and there gave him his liberty, after he had given proper securities against his returning. The other prisoner, Lu-luh, had died while in confinement. Siu-tsuen, upon his arrival,

vert washed his chest and the region of his heart with water, to signify the inner cleansing of their hearts. It was also customary to perform private ablutions in the rivers, accompanied by confession of sins, and prayer for forgiveness. Those who had been baptised now received the different forms of prayer to be used morning and evening, or before meals. . . . On the celebration of festivals, as for instance at a marriage, a burial, or at the new year, animals were offered in sacrifice, and afterwards consumed by those present at the ceremony. . . . When they engaged in prayer they used to kneel down all in one direction, toward the side of the house whence the light entered, and closing their eyes, one spoke the prayer in the name of the whole assembly."

was informed of what had occurred; and he immediately proceeded to Hwa-hien to rejoin Fung-yun-san. Here, in the tenth month of 1848, they met, and remained at home until the middle of the following year.

Nothing tends more to prove how entirely all rebellious thoughts were absent from the minds of the two friends than the manner in which they passed their time during this interval of seven months. Siu-tsuen was in the habit of assisting his elder brothers in leading the buffaloes to the hills to graze. Fung-yun-san's village was only a mile and a half distant; and as he was similarly employed, they frequently contrived to meet and discuss religious topics. Other friends soon joined them. To these Siu-tsuen used occasionally to read portions of the Old and New Testaments. "Many of the young boys, who led their oxen to the common pasture, gathered round him and Yun-san, and listened with interest to their instructions."¹

Naturally enough, frequent allusion were made to the far-off brethren in Kwang-si, and at last Siu-tsuen and his friend, being desirous of again revisiting them, a collection of money was made in the district to defray the expenses of the journey; and in the fifth month of the year 1849 they, for the last time, departed from their villages. In thus leaving, they little thought that they were destined never to return.

During their leaders' absence the congregation in the Kwei district had been experiencing some very remarkable instances of ecstatic fits; these and other occur-

¹ Narrative.

rences had brought disorder and dissension amongs them. It sometimes happened that while they were kneeling down engaged in prayer, one or other of those present was seized with a sudden fit, so that he fell down to the ground, and his whole body was covered with perspiration. In such a state of ecstacy he frequently uttered words of exhortation, &c. These words were often unintelligible. The more remarkable of these sayings had been noted down in a book by some of the worshippers, and when Hung-siu-tsuen arrived amongst them, this book was presented to him for his inspection and opinion. The man upon whom these fits had most frequently fallen, and whose utterances were the most remarkable, was Yang-siu-tshin, the same that became a few years later so well known under the title of the Eastern king. From this time forward Yang appears to have been, in this respect, the most favoured individual of the whole sect, and his frequent "celestial experiences" at last led to one of the most extraordinary events in the history of the rebellion (Nankin, 1854). The Narrative states that "Yang was originally a very poor man, but he joined the congregation with much earnestness and sincerity. Whilst there he suddenly lost his power of speech for a period of two months, to the astonishment of the brethren, who considered this to be an evil omen; but afterwards he recovered the use of his tongue, and, more frequently than any other, was subject to fits of ecstacy, in which he spoke in the name of God the Father, and in a solemn and awe-inspiring manner reproved others' sins, often pointing out individuals, and exposing their evil

actions." His words seem to have made a deep impression amongst the congregation.

In addition to these "possessions" Yang was said to have the gift of curing sickness by intercession. "From the description it would almost seem as if Yang had willingly submitted and prayed to have the sickness of the patient transferred to himself, and that he for a short while had borne his sufferings, whereby he redeemed the disease of the patient, and was afterwards himself released from the consequences of his own intercession."¹ Hung-siu-tsuen did not confirm with his authority all the utterances made at these revivals, but declared that the words of those moved were partly true and partly false, and that some were from the devil and some were from God.

Early in the following year (1850) Siu-tsuen sent to Hwa-hien letters calling upon all his family and relations to leave their home and join him in Kwang-si. About this time considerable misery was caused by pestilence, and failures in the crops. Siu-tsuen's family joined him, and his adherents greatly increased in number.

Siu-tsuen was now thirty-seven years of age, and by Hung-jin's account had become much changed since his youth. He was austere and reserved in his manners, strict in his moral behaviour, and severe upon the shortcomings of his followers, all of whom fully acknowledged his superiority, and submitted to the discipline he enforced.

It is not the least strange circumstance of this rebel-

¹ Mr. Hamberg.

lion, whilst in its religious stage, that the most important events occurred when Hung-siu-tsuen was absent. At the time of the formation of the Society of God-worshippers, he was quietly doing his work as a school-teacher in his own district in the adjoining province. Fung-yun-san was the originator and head of this movement, and it proves how much Hung-siu-tsuen was superior to the mass of the society, that when, years afterwards, he discovered their existence, he should have been at once looked up to as their natural leader. When the next and most important events took place, both himself and Fung-yun-san were away. These were the revivals. Upon these imaginary possessions are based all the early proclamations and religious edicts of the Taepings; and in reading these it must always be borne in mind that, in many of the cases where it would seem that the "Heavenly Father," "Elder Brother," &c., &c., mean directly the person who writes or speaks,—in reality what is meant is, that the writer is or has been temporarily possessed by the spirit of either of these, and whilst under such influence considers himself to be their mouthpiece. Yang, the Eastern king, who was the most important medium of this description from the time he joined the society until his death at Nankin, was constantly imagining himself under "revival" influences. It is difficult to come to any conclusion regarding his sincerity; but from the circumstances of his low origin, and his subsequent history, it is unlikely that he was consciously an impostor. Hung-siu-tsuen himself placed implicit credit upon these revelations, as also did the other chiefs. Yang

always presumed himself to be under the immediate direction of the Heavenly Father. Another "God-worshipper" named Siau-chau-kwui spoke in the name of Jesus (the Elder Brother); and in the proclamations detailing the descent upon earth of one or the other of these, Yang and Siau retain their respective positions. It was in the years 1848-49 that these spiritual manifestations first took place, and a reference to some of the Taeping decrees will show the manner in which they are alluded to. Thus the first proclamation¹ issued says that—

"In the 3rd month of the year 1848, our Heavenly Father, the great God and supreme Lord, came down into the world and displayed innumerable miracles and powers, accompanied by evident proofs.

"In the 9th month of the same year our Celestial Elder Brother, the Saviour Jesus, came down into the world, and also displayed innumerable miracles and powers, accompanied by evident proofs."

Again—

"On the 14th day of the 3rd moon (19th April, 1851), in the village of Tung-keang, the Heavenly Father addressed the multitude, saying, 'Oh, my children! do you know your Heavenly Father and your Celestial Elder Brother?' to which they all replied, 'We know our Heavenly Father and Celestial Elder Brother.' The Heavenly Father then said, 'Do you know your lord (the chief of the insurrection)?' to which they replied, 'We know him full well.' The Heavenly Father said, 'I have sent your lord down into the world to become the celestial king; every word he utters is a celestial command; you must be obedient; you must truly assist your lord and regard your king; you must not dare to act disorderly, nor be disrespectful.'"

"On the 18th day of the 3rd moon (April 23rd, 1851), in the village of Tung-keang, the Celestial Elder Brother, the Saviour Jesus, addressed the multitude, saying, 'Oh, my younger brethren, you must keep the celestial commands, and obey the orders that are

¹ Translated by Dr. Medhurst.

given to you, and be at peace among yourselves. . . . You ought to cultivate what is good, and purify your conduct; you should not go into the villages to seize people's goods. When you go into the ranks to fight you must not retreat; when you have money you must make it public, and not consider it as belonging to one or another. You must with united heart and strength together conquer the hills and rivers. You should find out the way to heaven, and walk in it; although at present the work be toilsome and distressing, yet by and by you will be promoted to high offices." . . .

"On the 18th day of the 7th month, (August 18th, 1851), at the village of Muh, Jesus, the Celestial Elder Brother, scolded the people very much for having secreted things to themselves, and for not having devoted them to the public good, in order to show fidelity to the cause."

In the above proclamations numerous other descents of the Heavenly Father and the Elder Brother are mentioned, all of them having some bearing upon the events in progress between the date last given and the time when the Taepings moved north. The extracts given are, however, sufficient for the purpose of showing the peculiar nature of these possessions.

Whenever the Heavenly Father is spoken of as addressing the multitude, it means that Yang chose to address them either whilst under the immediate influence of the Heavenly Father, or else from a recollection of what had been imparted to him some short time previous. In a similar manner Siau expounded to his hearers the doctrines and orders given to him whilst under the influence of the spirit of Jesus the Elder Brother. This fact has been much overlooked by people who talk indignantly about the "blasphemous productions of the insurgents." It is unfortunate that the Taeping proclamations recording these "posse-

sions" should be worded in a manner so outraging to ears that have been accustomed to reverence deeply those names which are there so lightly spoken of; but I think this feeling might be, in some degree, softened when the real meaning and intent of the proclamation is understood. If instead of saying that the "Heavenly Father spoke," or "Jesus the Elder Brother scolded the people," the wording had been altered in this way,— "Yang under the influence of the Supreme Spirit spoke," or "Siau whilst believing himself possessed by the spirit of Jesus scolded the people,"—the Taepings would have escaped much of the abuse that has been heaped upon them.

To many minds the late revivals in Ireland seemed to result in nothing but idiotic and blasphemous utterings; but others deemed them evidences of the presence of the Spirit of God influencing these poor people for some great and good end. It is not requisite for the present purpose to show what parallelism existed between the two revivals; but there is one point common to both which deserves notice, and this is—that in both cases the congregations were poor working people, and their minds and bodies were acted upon in a manner almost incomprehensible by the same kind of influence.

In a rebellion of this religious nature these outpourings were a highly important element in the securing of ultimate success. The classes from which the rebels were recruited were all of the lowest order, and the slightest consideration of the subject shows the necessity of their being so. More highly educated minds would

have rejected with scorn the pretended revelations of such poor and illiterate persons as Yang and Siau, given in language which not only was the common "patois" of the province, but was, in addition, replete with provincial vulgarisms ; and yet upon these revelations depended the existence of the movement. Unquestioning faith seems to have been placed in them by their hearers, and when, as was the case on several occasions, it became necessary to stimulate them to greater exertions or greater self-denial, Yang and Siau appear to have had most opportune communions with the "Father and Elder Brother," which, when issued as commands, had the desired effect of impelling their adherents to adopt the course pointed out to them. After the rebellion had to a certain extent become successful, these revelations naturally became less necessary ; and, after the installation of the leader at Nankin, the too often repeated "possessions" of Yang became somewhat injudicious, and led to considerable troubles that resulted in his destruction.

Before entering upon the political history of the rebellion, it is necessary to take a slight review of the position and probable opinions of Hung-siu-tsuen previous to the time when he found himself and his followers placed in sudden and unexpected collision with the authorities. One especial quality of his mind stands out before all others, and this is perseverance. The son of a poor labouring man, and forced by circumstances to assist for some time in daily manual toil, he yet never lost sight of his great aim in life, viz., that of obtaining his bachelor's degree. His failure in this

respect tends to prove, that whatever he may have been thought of by his illiterate friends in the village, his talents must have been comparatively mediocre. However, undeterred by want of success, he over and over again found his way to Canton with unabated energy of purpose. His district was thirty miles away, and the roads in that part of the country are in every way most unsuited for travel ; the time spent under examination was also one of extreme hardship ; and the poverty of himself and his family must have in a great measure added to the difficulties which beset him. The subsequent journeys into Kwang-si, over most difficult and mountainous country infested by robbers ; his mission amongst the Miau-tze ; his frequent journeyings backwards and forwards between his own district and the district of Kwei, a distance of between two and three hundred miles ;—all prove how great an item in the formation of his mind was perseverance. There are no means by which any notion can be formed of the influence that the presence of the English in the Canton waters and the war of 1841-43 had upon his mind. When up at Canton for his examinations, he must have frequently heard the “foreigners” spoken of, and he must have seen how inadequate were the means of the Tartar government to cope with their power. Apart from this, he must have learnt something about them from the tracts of Leang-Afah, for one of them contains Afah’s autobiography, in which frequent mention is made of Drs. Milne and Morrison ; and again, when at Mr. Roberts’ chapel in 1846-47, he must have seen the troubles caused by the difficulty of raising the sum re-

quired for the indemnification for the previous war. The most important of all the influences which at one time or another may have swayed Siu-tsuen's mind must, however, be deemed the possession of Afah's tracts. Afah, in giving his account of his distribution in 1833, writes : " Leang-Afah respectfully writes to all those who love and believe in Jesus, wishing them happiness. For three or four years I have been in the habit of circulating the Scripture lessons,¹ which have been joyfully received by many. This year the triennial examination was held in Canton, and I desired to distribute books among the candidates. On the 26th August, therefore, accompanied by Woo-chang, Chow-Asan, and Leang-Asan, I distributed more than five thousand volumes, which were gladly received without the least disturbance."

The letter goes on to say that the police-officers, discovering one of the distributors with a number of the tracts under his arm, arrested him. The affair ended in the flight of Afah from Canton with the loss of all his books. Dr. Medhurst, in commenting upon the work of 'Good Words exhorting the Age,' regrets that through defects in early education Afah's style is so diffuse, and his sentences so ill-constructed. "He seems to have had no knowledge of the proper use and position of Chinese particles, and to have taken not the slightest care to construct his sentences in an idiomatic manner. To a well-educated Chinese his productions cannot be acceptable ; on every page, and almost in every line, some-

¹ The 'Scripture Lessons' is a general description of the work otherwise called 'Good Words exhorting the Age.'—Dr. Morrison, 1834.

thing occurs offensive to good taste and philological propriety."

A great portion of the tracts consists of extracts from the Bible, copied exactly from Morrison's translation, which version is thus alluded to by the committee of the Bible Society in 1844:—"There seems no room to question the admirable fidelity of the translation of Drs. Morrison and Milne; but since this great work was finished, the knowledge of the difficult language of China has been much matured, and Dr. Morrison himself contemplated a revision. So strongly is the necessity for a revision felt by the missionaries now in the field, that they *decline to take any very active part in the work of distribution*, till this previous object has been accomplished."

NOTE.—With respect to religious toleration and foreign affairs generally, an interesting conversation took place in 1851 between the late Emperor Hien-fung and Ki-shuh-tsau, ex-judge of Kwang-tung. It occurred at an audience granted to the latter on returning to Pekin after completing his term of service. A memorandum containing the account of what passed on that occasion was found among Yeh's papers at Canton, and was translated by Mr. Wade. I quote that part relating to the troubles caused by the propagation of the Christian religion. (The questions are put by the Emperor.)

Q. Are the French quiet in Kwang-tung?

A. The French continue to give no trouble in Kwang-tung, but it is said that, with the exception of trade, what they most prize is the teaching of their doctrine.

Q. What people practise their doctrine in general? Are there "ku-jui" and "siu-tsai" (licentiates and graduates) amongst them?

A. It is the common (*lit.* the little people) who have no sense. All that they hear of the question is, that by the practice of virtue they may look for happiness, and so the chances are that they are mystified by them. Licentiates and graduates, inasmuch as they have rather more reading and acquaintance with philosophy, which makes them respect themselves, are of course not to be so deluded. Your servant has never heard that such persons had embraced their doctrine.

Q. Have

The above quotations are quite enough to show in how many ways Hung-siu-tsuen may have been misled

Q. Have there been any prosecutions for the profession of the doctrine in Kwang-tung as well (as in Kwang-si)?

A. Your servant has heard that some time ago there were some. There had been none from the time of his arrival last year until the fourth moon of the present, when Yeh wrote to him, confidentially, to the effect that in the district of Ying-teh, Li-San-Wan was reported to be playing the Chi-jin Ta-wang (great king of the red men), [the rebels, so called from their wearing red turbans], and that in his behalf certain recreant graduates, already degraded with vagabonds and others, had privily leagued themselves with yamen followers and soldiers, most of whom were professing the doctrine; and he desired your servant to send a subordinate to make secret investigation. Your servant did send a subordinate, who went through the district from village to village in disguise, making inquiries for a month and more, but without any positive evidence of the fact. In the fifth moon your servant handed over his office to Tsui-tung, who again sent to make inquiry in every part of the Ung-yuen and Kiuh-kiang districts. When your servant left Canton the officer sent had not returned, and he cannot say what steps were subsequently taken.

Q. Is not the doctrine of the Lord of Heaven [Tien-chu-kiau, the style by which Christianity as taught by the Romanist missionaries is known — *Translator*], also preached in Shan-si?

A. It is. When your servant was a licentiate, and superintending instruction in the district of Hung-tung, in Ping-yang Fu, the outlaw Tsan-shun and others murdered the authorities in the city of Chau, and took the city itself. Hung-tung being but thirty li from Chau, we were on the alert night and day, and one day a confidential despatch was received from the prefect of Ping-yang, stating that in the street of the Shang-kia, in the city of Hung-tung, persons were propagating the doctrine, proselytising, preaching observances, and reciting canonical books; and desiring that, as they were very probably in league with the bad characters of Chau, they should be secretly arrested. On this the district magistrate, in co-operation with the military, seized a Chih-li man, surnamed Wang, who was preaching the doctrine there, and on whose person was found a crucifix, and some books of the doctrine of the Lord of Heaven, all in European characters (*lit.* characters of the Western Seas). After this, all persons teaching or professing the doctrine were proceeded against according to law.

Q. And what did their books say?

A. Your servant saw that, besides others, there were some books copied in our Chinese character, which were all about Jesus. Jesus was the

by the tracts that fell into his hands.¹ Looking back upon all the events that have taken place, how much it is to be regretted that these were the only writings upon which he had to base his belief! under proper teaching, and with trustworthy books to guide him, this man might have been the lever with which the present nation of China would have been moved to the faith of the Protestant Church.

Up to the year 1850, with the exception of a few expressions of hatred to the ruling power, it does not appear that Hung-siu-tsuen was anything more than a religious enthusiast whose mind had soured by want of success in his literary career. That he had certain qualities of a governing nature is evident from the com-

person who was nailed on the cross. They purported to exhort people to be virtuous, to keep the heart good, and to do good actions. But there is great unanimity (or community of opinion) amongst the professors of the doctrine; and though, under ordinary circumstances, while people of no intelligence do no more than observe fasts in the hope of obtaining happiness, it can do no great harm,—if, in the course of time, a single remarkable person should appear (amongst its professors), he would be almost certain to create trouble by inflaming and deluding (the public).

¹ Afah's work of 'Good Words exhorting the Age' consists of nine volumes of about fifty pages each:—

Vol. I. is entitled 'A true account of the salvation of mankind.'

Vol. II. " 'Follow the true and reject the false.'

Vol. III. is a collection of various tracts, amongst which is one on 'Redemption.'

Vol. IV. is entitled 'Miscellaneous explanations of Holy Scripture.'

Vol. V. " 'Miscellaneous statements founded on Scripture.'

Vol. VI. " 'A perfect acquaintance with the true doctrine.' (In this volume is contained Afah's autobiography.)

Vol. VII. " 'On obtaining happiness, whether in peace or peril.'

Vol. VIII. " 'Excellent sayings from the true Scriptures.'

Vol. IX. " 'Important selections from the ancient Scriptures.'—*Medhurst.*

mand that he had obtained over the minds of his fanatical adherents. These qualities were destined to be employed for graver purposes. The approaching “risings” and troubles in the districts surrounding Kwei-hien, and the consequent involvement of himself and his followers, rapidly called them into action.

CHAPTER V.

Outbreak of the Rebellion — Triad Society.

THE Pekin Gazettes between the years 1848 and 1852 are almost entirely filled with accounts of disturbances in the south and south-western provinces. Kwang-tung and Kwang-si seem to have been the theatre of one constant series of petty feuds and local insurrections. In Kwang-si especially armed bodies of men marched from village to village, pillaging the people's houses and robbing the public granaries in defiance of all authority. The Government in vain did their best to suppress them: when by force of troops one district was restored to peace, another would break out into riot.

Some of these outbreaks were deemed of sufficient importance to be called "rebellions;" others are simply termed "risings of local banditti." The emperor and his court were astonished at the inability of their troops to put down these tumults. A memorial from one of the generals of the Manchu forces tries to account for it by the disorganization caused by the want of success in the late war with England. He says¹ that—

"The troops do not attend to orders, regard retreat on the eve of battle as old custom, and the abandonment of places they should hold as an ordinary affair. . . . He had heard of this state of things without daring to give it full credence; now, however, having joined

¹ Quoted from the quotation of Mr. Meadows, 'Chinese and their Rebellions.'

the forces in the field, he has personally witnessed it, and sees therein cause for deep anxiety."

"The number of robbers and criminal associations in Kwang-tung and Kwang-si is very great, and they assemble without the least hesitation to create disturbances, all which arises from that class having seen through the circumstances of the army at the time barbarian affairs were being transacted. Formerly they feared the troops as tigers, of late they look on them as sheep. Further, of the several tens of thousands of armed irregulars who were disbanded at the settlement of the barbarian business, very few returned to their original occupations,—most became robbers."

This letter gives a very impartial account of the cause of the disturbances, as viewed from the mind of a Tartar general, and unquestionably he is right in attributing to the British war some degree of blame for indirectly fostering them. But that war was only one of the many sources to which the rebellion may be traced. A letter from Monseigneur Chauveau, written from Yunnan, in which province he was at the head of the Roman Catholic mission, attributes as a cause the roving bands of opium smugglers; and, when speaking of the Taeping rebellion, which may be considered as the culminating point of all, he states that upon inquiries among the people in the district, he discovered that it was caused in the following manner. Some opium merchants who were travelling in a large band of five or six hundred persons, from Yunnan to Canton, found upon their arrival in Kwang-si that they were in want of money in order to enable them to proceed on their journey. Having found out that two rich brothers of the family of Tschang were living in the neighbourhood, they requested the brothers to lend them sufficient for their purposes. The Tschangs

fearing if they refused that disturbances would arise, and that they might be plundered, gave them six hundred taels (two hundred pounds). The magistrates hearing of this had the Tschangs arrested, and being proved guilty of having assisted the smugglers, they were imprisoned for breaking the law. The explanation of the circumstances in which they were placed proved of no avail towards obtaining their liberty. This injustice immediately gave rise to an outbreak. The "Society of Heaven and Earth" gave assistance to the movement, until matters proceeded so far that the district broke out in open revolt.¹

It is strange that more information has not been given by the Roman Catholic missionaries, on points connected with the political history of the Taeping rebellion. Placed as they are in the heart of the provinces, surrounded by numerous native converts, and from their familiarity with the language, capable of hearing all the daily gossip of the people, it might naturally have been presumed that by their means we should have had an immense fund of reliable communications, upon which inquirers might base their conclusions; and yet, so completely the reverse is the case, that out of the whole mass of letters from China, which form a large proportion of the series of volumes published by the "Society for the Propagation of the Faith," the letter mentioned above, from Monseigneur Chauveau, is the only one in which any real

¹ 'Propagation de la Foi.' In his letter Mgr. Chauveau, evidently by mistake, identified the Society of Heaven and Earth with that of the God-worshippers.

information is given on subjects connected with the rebellion. Casual mention is made in some of the letters written from the Kiang-si and Hou-kwang provinces about the Taepings, at the time when the disturbance and misery caused by their approach was so apparent that, in detailing the spread of the faith, it was impossible to overlook the influence that they exercised upon the spiritual condition of the converts; but even in these no opinion is hazarded.

It is generally believed that the men chosen by the mission societies in Catholic countries to spread the "faith," are selected from those who, besides their devotion to religion, are presumed to have sufficient intellect to use their influence (if required) for purposes demanding some degree of political foresight and diplomacy. Yet, judging them from the letters they write to their superiors, they in this respect fall far short of our Protestant missionaries, most of whom are certainly not chosen for any ulterior views of the latter kind.

I suspect that in many instances Protestants are too apt to over-estimate the intellectual character of the men sent out, whether by the Society of Jesus or by other missions. I certainly have met in China with one or two cases where I could not but acknowledge the talent of these men; but, on the other hand, I became acquainted with some who evidently fell far short of mediocrity, and proved themselves beyond doubt to have sprung from the labouring classes.

Whatever, however, may be the reason, the fact remains that throughout the late and present troubles

in China, we have no statement worthy of notice, bearing upon those points from that very quarter from whence they most might have been expected. Perhaps the most important official paper ever published about the early history of the Taepings, is one written to the Imperial Government by Chau-Tien-sioh, the military governor of Kwang-si, in 1851. It gives an account of the actions of the "God-worshippers," and is another strong proof of the truth of Hung-jin's narrative. Although written in perfect ignorance of the latter, it yet coincides with it in every respect, even almost in the point of dates.

The statement was written in May, at a time when the imperial army was in considerable distress, both from want of funds and by the harassing nature of their duties. The viceroy of Kwang-si had a short time previously delivered up his seals of office to Chau. In his report to the emperor of this circumstance,¹ he says: "I, your majesty's servant, have had charge of the army for several months without being able to exterminate the rebels, and now, being suddenly brought into a sickly region, I have been attacked with a deadly disease. My not being able to quell the rebellion shows my want of fidelity; my not being able to support my aged mother shows my want of filial piety; after that I, your servant, am dead, I have ordered my son Kae to bury me in common clothes as an indication of my fault." A few days after this letter was written he died. Chau-Tien-sioh, in reporting this, mentions that he himself was attacked with a severe bleeding at the nose.

¹ Pekin Gazette, translated by Dr. Medhurst.

The application made in his memorial, for the degradation of certain officers implicated in the disturbances in the Kwei district, met with the emperor's approval.

This memorial, which I now quote, is given as translated in the 'Chinese Repository' of July, 1851.

"Chau Tientsioh, specially appointed to superintend the military operations in Kwángsi, with the powers of Governor-General, kneels and memorialises, showing how he has degraded a prefect, district magistrates, justices, and secretaries, who have sided with or overlooked the seditious acts in their jurisdiction, requesting the imperial will upon these degradations and arrests, that strict severity may be visited on them, and humbly begging his Majesty to bestow his glance upon it.

"I was staying at the time in Wú-siun, the better to repress the seditious bands, when Wang Tsohsin, a graduate of Wusieun, then, living in Kweiping district, came to my encampment and informed me of the compact formerly sworn to and the club formed by Fung Yun-shan with Tsang Yuhchin and Lú Luh.

"It was in 1849 when this Wáng seized Fung and Lú and some books belonging to the club, and handed them all over to the head of the township of Kiángkau, who forwarded them to the Kweiping-hien for examination. Lú Luh died in confinement; but Tsang Yuhchin heavily bribed the justice of the township, so that he, with the gentry of the place, falsely represented the case to the district magistrate, and his underlings surreptitiously set Fung at liberty. Fung then went to the authorities of the district and department, and falsely accused the graduate Wáng of having wrongfully charged him. On hearing this I instantly sent a special order to bring all the papers connected with this case that I might closely examine them.

"It appears that Fung is from the district of Hwá in Kwángtung, and came to Kweiping-hien in Kwángsi in 1844; he lived in Lú Luh's house, teaching youth in 1845; and during the next two years in the house of Tsang Yuhchin in the same occupation. In December, 1847, this graduate Wáng, aided by the constables and headmen, arrested Fung on the 28th of December, because that he and Tsang had been propagating magical arts to seduce the people, and forming bands and cabals to destroy altars and images in the temples, and handed him over to the head elder, Tsang Tsúhwáng;

but his accomplice, Tsang Asun, and others, rescued him by force. Wáng and his friends then informed the justice of Kiángkau of all these particulars, and gave him the documents of the league; but Fung, on his part, also accused Wáng of planning to extort money under false pretences, and implicate him in crime, and requested the magistrate to examine him. He also, at the same time, brought the affair to the notice of Wang Lieh, the district magistrate, who, on his part, judged that the graduate was making a great bluster out of nothing in his paper, and accordingly replied, 'When the parties are brought up I will examine and judge the case equitably.' The township justice, named Wang Ki, thereupon brought Fung and Lú Luh to the Kweiping-hien office, where they were both questioned and detained in the lock-up, in which place Lú Luh sickened and died. Wang Lieh at this time vacated his office, and Tsang chú became acting *Chihien*. Fung now once more petitioned Kú Yuen-kai, prefect of Sinchau, stating the false accusations and wiles of Wáng Sintsoh; a reply was given, 'Let the parties be brought up for examination.' But the district magistrate had already examined Fung, and acquitted him of being a seditious person, and of all illegality, and sent him back to his own place in Hwá-hien in Kwángtung, with request that he might be detained there. These facts are in the records of the case.

"On examining the whole matter it seemed to me that these circumstances did not altogether agree with the paper given in by the graduate Wáng. I examined Kú, the prefect, and Wáng Lieh, who had before been the district magistrate, to learn why they had not extirpated seditious, and supported loyal persons, a duty which they could not shift on others; and also when this villain Fung was forming cabals during a number of years, and swearing persons into it within a few miles of the city in the house of Lú Luh and Tsang Yuhchin, why they had heard nothing of it? When the graduate Wáng had informed them of it, what hindered them from going to the village and personally examining, so as to be perfectly sure whether the altars and temples with their images had been destroyed or not, and whether the vagabonds possessed heretical books, in which Jesus, a false god (síe shin) of the Europeans, was spoken of, and had themselves seditiously worshipped and honoured him? And whether, too, Fung had himself written or taught these books in a guileful way, and had planned sedition in so doing, could, with every other of his acts, have been ascertained. Why did this prefect and magistrate act so, like statues as they were, unable to distinguish between black and white? Not to speak

further of their vacillating conduct, the manner in which their official secretaries issued the replies was like that of fools.

"I find that the rule of the officers in this whole province of Kwángsi has been very negligent; indeed, I have seldom heard or seen a place where matters have come to such a pass. It has thence resulted that this Fung Yunshán, in his perverse heart, has not had the least fear of them, but privately returning to the province has stirred up the rustic people, some of whom have suddenly come out in their seditious conduct, and we know not how many have secretly joined them. The people have experienced this calamitous misfortune; the service and outlay for the troops have been greatly increased, and all owing to these officers having so given in to this disobedience; they have injured the people and impeded the government; their crimes are unpardonable."

No mention is made in this statement of Hung-siu-tsuen, nor does the Pekin Gazette notice his existence until late in 1851. The troops to which Chau alludes, were not only those attached to the Kwang-si province, but were mainly composed of the forces that had assembled from the adjoining provinces of Hoo-nan, Kwei-chou, and Kwang-tung; in addition to these, large levies of volunteers swelled the army. All the men that could be spared from the provinces just named, were sent to assist in suppressing the rebellions, and yet their number is mentioned as not exceeding six thousand men. The expenses incurred by the government on this occasion seem enormous when the small number of men engaged is taken into consideration. In the first four months of the Emperor Hien Yung's reign, 1851, five hundred thousand taels were expended, and three hundred thousand more demanded. The viceroy at one time requested permission to use the whole of that portion of the revenue of Kwang-si, which was being forwarded to the imperial treasury (a sum

equalling one hundred and thirty thousand taels). The numerous mountain-passes in the Kwang-si province were of great assistance to the success of the respective bodies of insurgents, who by their means kept up a species of "guerilla" war upon the troops who advanced through them on their way to join the main body of the army. The accompanying official report of the provincial censorate of Kwang-si gives a melancholy view of the state of affairs at the close of the year 1850.

"A letter from the censorate, province of Kwang-si, memorialises the emperor concerning the riots: From the 4th moon of last year (April-May), 1849, to the 5th of this, the bandit chiefs, Chang-kia-siang and Yung-lau-kin, have been pillaging different portions of Nán-ning-fu and Lin-chan-fu in the eastern circuit of Kwang-si, and the whole country to Taú-kiang, in the department of Kwei-lin (the provincial city) has been atrociously dealt with by them. The districts they have plundered in this department are some score in number, and they are at the head of several hundred men, amongst whom are the robbers from Kwang-tung and Hu-nán; they wrap their heads in red handkerchiefs, and the pennons and standards they set up have on them 'Ti-tien-hing-tau,' 'We are doing justice in the cause of heaven,' and similar mottoes. They carry off everything of all sorts, guns, furniture, arms in general, horses, &c.; and wherever they come they fire the villages, plunder them of their property, violate the women, and murder the well-disposed."¹

The letter proceeds to say that from other reports, it seems that—

"Sundry robber chiefs have each assembled some thousand villains, with whom they are attacking and pillaging every place; that they have possession of all the communications, both by land and by water; that the troops of government are routed whenever they

¹ Letter translated in the 'Overland China Mail,' Dec. 29, 1850. Forwarded with the Pekin Gazette, but not printed.

fall in with them ; and that the people, not knowing which way to save their lives, are flying in confused multitudes."

In justice to the Taepings it is now necessary to give *their* account of the insurrections, and the part which they played in them, and to this end Mr. Hamberg's account, based upon Hung-jin's narrative, must again be the authority trusted.

"The almost inaccessible mountains of the Kwang-si province have long served as a place of resort for outlaws and banditti, who, from their hiding-places, went forth to plunder unsuspecting travellers and commit depredations on the neighbouring villages. During the last few years, the number of these outlaws has been increasing. They formed regular bands of robbers, and were so bold that they began openly to attack hamlets, larger villages, and market-towns. The soldiers, sent by the government officials, to seize and disperse the banditti, often had hard work to perform. Yet, in most instances, they were successful, though the bands of robbers, when dispersed in one place, gathered again in another. Most of these robbers were men from Kwang-tung and the bordering provinces, who are by the aborigines of Kwang-si called Khih-kias (strangers or settlers), because they had immigrated and settled in Kwang-si among the Punti or original inhabitants. Khih-kia or Hak-ka villages are very numerous in Kwang-si, though in general not so large and opulent as those of the Punti. A feeling of enmity had long existed between the two classes, and every new incident served but to augment their hatred. At that time a very rich Hak-ka, named Wun, had taken as his con-

cubine a girl who had been promised in marriage to a Punti man; and, having agreed to settle the matter with her parents, by paying a large sum of money, he peremptorily refused to give her up to the Punti claimant. At the office of the district magistrate, numerous petitions and accusations were daily lodged against the Hak-ka population, so that mandarins were unable to settle all their disputes. It seems even probable that the mandarins wished to escape the trouble; and, if the report be true, they advised the Punti population themselves to enforce their rights against the Hak-kas. The result was, that soon after, between the Puntis and Hak-has of the Kwei district, a civil war commenced, in which a number of villages gradually became involved. The fighting began on the 28th of the eighth month (September, 1850), and during the first few days the Hak-kas had the advantage."

"Gradually, however, the Puntis grew bolder and more experienced, and, as their number was considerably larger than that of their opponents, they defeated the Hak-kas and burnt their houses, so that the latter had no resting-place to which they could resort. In their distress they sought refuge among the "Worshippers of God," who at that time lived dispersed in several districts, in congregations counting from one hundred to three hundred individuals. They willingly submitted to any form of worship in order to escape from their enemies, and receive the necessary supplies of which they were destitute."¹

¹ On the mainland adjoining the south-eastern sea-board of Kwang-tung the German missionaries have several stations, and as they combine with their religious instruction medical aid, they do much good

Up to this period the “Worshippers of God” had not stood in any connection whatever with the robbers or outlaws of the province. None but religious motives were attributed to them when they assembled together; and the soldiers, when proceeding in quest of robbers, never dreamed of interfering with them. Now, however, things became changed. The congregation of God-worshippers became a centre to which all the ill-doers of the district gravitated. Outcasts from the villages, dispersed bands of rioters and robbers, large flocks of people of all ages with their children and personal property, came in numbers to join them. Matters could no longer go on as before, and a rupture and collision with the magistrates became inevitable. At this period Hung-siu-tsuen is stated to have foreseen all this; “his predictions had been fulfilled, he had formed his plans, was prepared to take the consequences, and only awaited the proper moment to take a decided step.” Hung-jin, in this portion of his narrative, allows his feelings to carry him away, and gives Siu-tsuen a marvellous amount of prescience. In an ode, which the latter is said to have composed, Siu-tsuen implies that he is placed in a position analogous to that of Chû the founder of the Ming dynasty; and this is certainly true, as far as early position in life and future

among the poor population of the numerous villages and hamlets. They report that the Puntis and Hak-kas in these districts are in constant warfare with each other. On some occasions, when there is a grand fight, the forces on either side have been known to number nearly a thousand persons, armed with old gingalls, spears, or stones. The magistrates are totally unable to suppress these feuds. Fortunately, the fighting is of that description which does not cause much loss of life. These engagements frequently last three or four days.

aim are concerned. Chû was successful in overturning the Tartar government of *his* day: it remains to be seen whether his emulator will be equally so.

The graduate Wang, who seems to have been the determined enemy of the God-worshippers, now again used his influence to injure them; and although he is abused for his conduct, it appears to be what would have been that of most men similarly circumstanced. One of the Worshippers, Wang-ngi, "had, by his rash and imprudent conduct in destroying idols belonging to other people, brought down upon himself the resentment of the populace, and was accused before the magistrate. This official, however, refused to take up the matter, and dismissed the parties. When the young Wang-ngi came out into the street he commenced a quarrel with the two plaintiffs, and in an insolent manner demanded a large sum of money from them without which the matter would not be settled. Just at this moment the graduate Wang happened to pass, and inquired what was the matter. The two plaintiffs explained to him that the magistrate would not take up their cause and commit Wang-ngi. Then the graduate Wang replied, 'I will take care that this fellow is put into prison,' and ordered Wang-ngi again to be brought to the office of the magistrate. He then wrote an accusation, which, being accompanied by considerable bribes, had this effect—that Wang-ngi was put into prison, and gradually killed by want and ill-treatment."

The first instance in which the God-worshippers became involved in a conflict with the people is a proof

how much they had become identified with the Hak-kas. Some persons belonging to a large Punti village had seized and led away a buffalo, the property of one of the congregation. This led to reprisals, and the latter on their side seized some cows belonging to the Puntis. Before matters could be brought to a satisfactory arrangement some of the Punti men fired upon the Hak-kas. The Hak-kas, upon this, attacked the Puntis, and drove them back to their own village. From this time the God-worshippers, or Hak-kas (for in the account they are so placed together that they cannot be dealt with apart) were in constant trouble with the Punti people. They became gradually involved in the disturbances, and were not only accused of interfering with the religious worship of others, and destroying the idols, but also of fostering rebellious designs against the government.

The leaders, Hung-siu-tsuen and Fung-yun-san, deemed it necessary for their safety to keep out of the way of the power of the magistrates, and, to this end, they left the congregation and concealed themselves in the house of a friend, which was situated among the mountains and was difficult of access. The magistrates, on getting notice of their place of retirement, sent a body of soldiers to guard a pass which led to the house. As Hung-siu-tsuen and Fung-yun-san had a few followers with them, the soldiers contented themselves with covering the pass with sharp wooden stakes in order to prevent their escape. At this critical moment, when the fate of the leaders seemed more than doubtful, Yang is said to have suddenly fallen into a state of

ecstasy, in which he revealed to the brethren in an adjoining village the danger of their chiefs. They immediately called together a strong force, and proceeded to the rescue. The soldiers were beaten, the stakes drawn, and Hung-siu-tsuen and Fung-yun-san were liberated in triumph.

“Siu-tsuen now sent messages to all the congregations in the different districts to assemble in one place. Already, for some time previous to this, the God-worshippers had felt the necessity of uniting together for common defence against their enemies ; they had begun to convert their property of fields and houses into money, and to deliver the proceeds thereof into the general treasury, from which all shared alike, every one receiving his food and clothing from this fund. The circumstance that they shared all in common greatly added to their numbers, and made them ready to abandon their homes at a moment’s warning. That moment had now arrived. Anxious about their own safety and that of their families, they flocked to the banner of Hung-siu-tsuen, whom they believed appointed by heaven to be their chief. Old and young, rich and poor, men of influence and education, graduates of the first and second degrees, with their families and adherents, all gathered around the chiefs. Wei-ching alone brought with him about one thousand individuals of his clan. Siu-tsuen took possession of the opulent market-town, where resided the above-mentioned graduate Wang, whose rich stores of provisions and pawn-shops filled with clothes quite suited the wants of the distressed Hak-kas. This town was sur-

rounded by a broad river, protecting it from sudden attacks. Here Siu-tsuen encamped, fortifying the place, and before the soldiers had arrived his position was already too strong for them to disturb."

The only portion of the above quotation that is questionable is that which says that men of influence and graduates of the first and second degrees joined the God-worshippers. It has been proved by Europeans who have at various intervals been residing at Nankin since its capture, that, with the exception of a few of the leaders, the whole body of Taepings are composed of illiterate men. Besides which it is highly unlikely that men of the stamp that Hung-jin (or Mr. Hamberg for him) speaks of, would ever place themselves under the direction of a number of enthusiastic fanatics, all of whom were men of the lowest extraction, and, with the exception of the two principal leaders, were totally unacquainted with the Chinese Mandarin language, speaking nothing but the dialect of their own province.

The occupation of this market-town, as it was the first time that a regular stand was made against the troops and that the power of the magistrates was defied, may be considered as the commencement of the Taiping rebellion. The date is difficult to fix: but, judging from contemporary Gazettes, and some of the dates given in Mr. Hamberg's book, it must have been some time in November or December, 1850, or early in January, 1851. The Taiping rebellion may then be said to have begun at the close of the year 1850,—a period when the difficulties of the government were much increased by the troubles always (in China) consequent upon the

decease of one emperor and the accession of the successor.

In the several articles devoted to the subject of the then little known and less understood rebellion, which appeared in the English papers published in China between 1849 and 1853, a great deal of space is given up to ingenious articles by writers who wished to show that the rebellion was an offshoot of the well-known Triad Society. It has since been proved that the Taepings have nothing to say to the Triads, who, however, at one time, early in the movement, temporarily joined it. The history of this affair is given in the 'Narrative,' and the incidents related took place when the Taepings were still little better than the other roving bands in the province, as it was then some months previous to the capture of the prefectural city of Yung-gnan, which act at once placed them in a marked and important position.

During the time that Hung-siu-tsuen was encamped at the village of Tai-tsun, "eight rebel chiefs belonging to the San-hoh-hwui, or Triad Society, intimated to Siu-tsuen their wish to join his army with their respective bands. Siu-tsuen granted their request, but under condition that they would conform to the worship of the true God. The eight chiefs declared themselves willing to do so, and sent their tribute of oxen, pigs, rice, &c. Siu-tsuen now dispatched sixteen of the brethren belonging to the congregation, two to each chief, in order to impart to them and their followers some knowledge of the true religion before they had taken the definitive step of joining him. When this prepara-

tory instruction had been received, the chiefs dismissed the tutors with a liberal sum of money as a reward for their trouble, and soon after they with all their followers joined the army of Hung-siu-tsuen. Fifteen of the teachers who had been sent out to the chiefs, now, in accordance with the laws of the congregation, gave the money which they had received into the common treasury; but one of them kept the money for himself without saying a word. This same individual had several times before, by his misconduct, made himself amenable to punishment, and had been spared only in consideration of his eloquence in preaching. He had in the first instance not fully abstained from the use of opium, but to procure the drug had sold some rattan bucklers belonging to the army; another time, being excited with wine, he had injured some of the brethren. As soon as his concealment of the money was proved, Siu-tsuen and the man's own relatives who were present in the army decided to have him punished according to the full rigour of the law, and ordered him to be decapitated as a warning to all. When the chiefs of the Triad Society saw that one of those who had just before been dispatched as a teacher to them, was now killed for a comparatively small offence, they felt very uncomfortable, and said:—"Your laws seem to be rather too strict; we shall perhaps find it difficult to keep them; and upon any small transgression you would perhaps kill us also."

After this, seven of the Triad chiefs departed with their followers, and eventually surrendered themselves to the Imperialists, and fought in their ranks against the

insurgents. One of the chiefs remained with Hung-siu-tsuen. This was a man named Lo-thai-kang. After the capture of Yung-gnan, and when titles were distributed amongst the leaders, Lo was nominated to a high post.

Hung-siu-tsuen is stated to have expressed his opinion about the Triad Society in about the following language:—

“Though I never entered the Triad Society, I have often heard it said that their object is to subvert the Tsing, and restore the Ming dynasty. Such an expression was very proper in the time of Kang-hi, when this society was first formed; but now after the lapse of two hundred years, we may still speak of subverting the Tsing, but we cannot properly speak of restoring the Ming. At all events, when our native mountains and rivers are recovered, a new dynasty must be established. How could we at present arouse the energies of men by speaking of restoring the Ming dynasty? There are several evil practices connected with the Triad Society which I detest. If any new member enter the society, he must worship the devil, and utter thirty-six oaths; a sword is placed upon his neck, and he is forced to contribute money for the use of the society. Their real object has now become very mean and unworthy. If we preach the true doctrine, and rely upon the powerful help of God, a few of us will equal a multitude of others. I do not even think that Sun-pin, Woo-ki, Kung-ming, and others famous in history for their military skill and tactics, are deserving much estimation: how much less these bands of the Triad Society!”

Hung-siu-tsuen afterwards ordered his followers not to receive among their number any Triad men, "but such as were willing to abandon their former practices, and to receive instruction in the true doctrine."

In examining the different causes which led to the rebellion, the influence of the Triad Society must not be overlooked. The war with England, the traffic in opium, the troubles created by the Miau-tze, the frequent famines, and lastly the feuds between the clans in the Kwei district have already been noticed as individually helping towards the final crash; but perhaps to the Triads, more than all these collectively, is this result to be attributed. A memorial¹ from Tsang Wang-yan, written from Kwang-tung in 1855, and addressed to his imperial majesty the late emperor Hien-fung, in enumerating all the troubles and miseries that had taken place in that province of late years, mentions, above all, those occasioned by the Triads. In this memorial he says that the San-hoh-hwui (Triad Society) existed before the reign of the previous emperor Tan-kwang, but was secret and little known. In 1831 the censor Fung-Tsah-hiun reported that he had ascertained that in five provinces this society had seals, flags, and registers, &c. In 1843 a thousand or more Triads fought together at the village of Yun-ki, in the district of Shun-teh. Several hundreds were wounded, but the affair was hushed up. In the autumn of 1844, they were endeavouring in all directions to induce the people to join their society. In this part of the letter a long account is given of their mysteries of initiation.

¹ Translated in 'Overland China Mail,' 1855.

In the winter of 1844, large bodies of Triads entered some houses in the city of Heang-chan armed with swords, and extorted money from the inhabitants. After this the province became a scene of rapine and highway robbery. Numerous gangs were seized and punished with but little effect. In 1847-48 "members of unlawful societies mustered in thousands in many districts, and began pitching tents, barring the public roads, and committing robberies." The memorial concludes by pointing out that these robbers, emboldened by success, soon deemed themselves sufficiently strong to invest cities.

This memorial is a sufficient proof of how important an element the Triad Society was in fostering the outbreaks in the Kwang-tung and Kwang-si provinces; but with regard to the Taepings their influence may be totally disregarded. It has above been shown how prejudiced the Taeping chief was against them, and it does not appear that at any subsequent period they have ever been admitted (as Triads) among his followers.

The market-town in which the "God-worshippers" made their first stand was soon evacuated by them, and they proceeded to take possession of a large village called Tai-tsun, where Hung-siu-tsuen found abundant provisions for his followers. Meanwhile the imperialists vented their rage on the deserted town, burnt the shops, and plundered whatever they could find. Under the supposition that they were abettors of the Worshippers many of the inhabitants were killed. These cruelties greatly incensed the populace, and many of them joined the rebel force.

Hung-jin's narrative closes at this point of the Taeping operations, and the only authorities from which any detail of their subsequent proceedings can be gathered are the daily Pekin Gazettes, the imperialists' memorials, and the chance allusions in the Taeping proclamations. The information thus obtained must necessarily be somewhat one-sided, still it is sufficiently trustworthy for the purpose of tracing the progress of the rebellion.

CHAPTER VI.

Progress of the Rebellion—Capture of Yung-gnan—Taeping Proclamations—Evacuation of Yung-gnan—Decapitation of one of the Chiefs.

HUNG-SIU-TSUEN and the other leaders made the best use of their time, whilst occupying the villages they captured, in organizing their troops and establishing a high degree of discipline. A letter, quoted at length by Mr. Meadows, written by Chau-Tien-soh, the governor of Kwang-si, to the governor of the province of Hoo-peh, shows how great was the estimation in which Chau held the tactics and order of his opponents. After mentioning some of the previous military operations, he writes: “On the 19th of March and on the 6th of April two battles were fought, but on both occasions the rebels experienced no great loss, owing to the cowardice of our troops. On the 11th of April the rebels attempted to seize the ferry at Keu-heen-hien, with the intention of proceeding northward with their combined force. Fortunately the chief commanders of the irregulars recently sent hither fought vigorously.” The letter proceeds to enumerate the reports sent in from several of the districts of Kwang-si; from these it appears that the rebels were in swarms everywhere; two districts were entirely in their hands, and one of the imperial armies had been defeated. “As to these rebels, they have five great leaders—Hung-siu-tsuen is the first, Fung-yun-san is

the next, Yang-seu-tsing is the next, and Hoo-yih-seen and Tsung-sau-seu are the next Both (Hung-siu-tsuen and Fung-yun-san) are skilled in the use of troops. Hung-siu-tsuen is a man of dangerous character, who practises the ancient military arts. At first he conceals his strength, then he puts it forth a little, then in a greater degree, and lastly comes on in great force. He constantly has two victories for one defeat, for he practises the tactics of Sun-pin. The other day I obtained a rebel book describing the organization of one army ; it is the Sze-ma system of the Chow dynasty. A division has its general of division ; a regiment has its colonel. An army consists of 13,270 men, being the strength of an ancient army with the addition of upwards of a hundred men.

“ Their forces are divided into nine armies, in accordance with the system of nine degrees in the tribute of Yu. In this book is specifically described the first army, that of the Grand Generalissimo Hung ; and it states at the end, that all the other nine armies are to be arranged and organized in like manner. This book has been sent to the cabinet council. The rebels increase more and more ; our troops—the more they fight the more they fear. The rebels generally are powerful and fierce, and they cannot by any means be likened to a disorderly crowd, their regulations and laws being rigorous and clear.”

This letter was written in April, 1851. The Taiping rebellion commenced at the close of 1850. Thus, in the small period of four months, it might be presumed that the Taepings had been formed into a regular army,

with proper discipline and strict regulations; and that their leaders had also mastered the military tactics of Sun-pin, one of the most famous of the ancient Chinese generals. In addition to this, a considerable work had been written by them, in which armies on a grand scale were subdivided, officered, and regulated, after a system analogous to a peculiar division found in one of the ancient classics.

It will at once be granted that it would be simply impossible that the above result could be arrived at by *four months'* practice and study; and yet the statement of Chau proves that this was the state of affairs at the time he wrote. It follows that the Taeping chiefs must have foreseen the probable turn of events, and prepared themselves to meet the emergency, when it came, by diligently examining and mastering the works extant upon military science. Referring a few pages back, it will be seen that Hung-siu-tsuen, when expressing his opinion of the Triad Society, says that "he does not even think that Sun-pin, Woo-khi, Kung-ming, and others famous in history for their military skill and tactics, are deserving much estimation." This remark was made by him some considerable time previous to the visit paid him by the Triad chiefs, and shows that he must have carefully studied the military works spoken of. In the whole course of Hung-jin's narrative no mention is made of this side of Hung-siu-tsuen's character. It is evident that the meetings of the God-worshippers in 1847-49 were simply for the purpose of practising their religious rites; for, had the case been otherwise, the magistrates, by means of their spies,

would have soon discovered the deception. The rapidity with which the men were formed into efficient troops, therefore, reflects great credit upon some of the leaders. I say *some*, because the confession of one of the chiefs taken by the imperialists after the evacuation by the Taepings of the city of Yung-gnan, throws some light upon this point, although the whole subject is to a great extent enveloped in mystery.

From April until August, 1851, the Gazettes are filled with accounts of the defeats of the insurgents in various parts of the province. The Taepings appear to have followed the system that they have adopted throughout their career, namely, that of changing their quarters from town to town whenever the place occupied became inadequate to supply their wants. It was not until August that they obtained a position that at once placed them above all the other bands of insurgents that infested the province. The Pekin Gazette states: "On the first day of the eighth moon (27th August, 1851) the principal rebel chief, Hung-siu-tsuen, and his followers suddenly entered the city of Yung-gnan, in the eastern part of Kwang-si, when they plundered the treasury, killed the officers, broke open the prisons, and possessed themselves of the granaries. The district magistrate, Woo-keang, and the lieutenant-colonel, A-urh-tsing-a, together with various subordinate officers with their families, were put to death, to the number of several score; while the rebels seized upon the city as their place of defence."¹ This is the first time that the Gazette mentions the name of Hung-siu-tsuen.

¹ Translated by Dr. Medhurst.

The proclamations now issued by the Taeping chiefs prove that at this period Hung-siu-tsuen had assumed the title of Heavenly Prince or King (Tien Wang), and to prevent confusion, I shall now usually speak of him under the latter title. A few days before the capture of Yung-gnan, he issued an edict about the removal of the camp. He says:—

“ Let all the soldiers and officers awake from their lethargy. According to the statement now handed in there seems to be no salt: let the camp therefore be removed. According to the same statement it also appears that there are many sick and wounded: let the greater care therefore be taken to preserve the feeble. Should you fail to preserve one among our brethren and sisters, you will disgrace our Heavenly Father and Celestial Elder Brother. Now when the camp sets forward, let all the legions and cohorts be strict and exact in keeping the ranks, and in combining every effort and every energy. Let me earnestly entreat you reverently to obey the celestial commands, and do not any more offend. The general in command of the advanced guard, our sister’s husband Seaou-chaou-kwei, and the general in command of the left wing, our brother Shih-tah-kae, should together take the superintendence of the chief inspector’s department. The first and second brigadiers of the advanced guard, with the first and second brigadiers of the left wing, must lead the van. Let the general in command of the centre of the army, our brother Yang-siu-tsing, take the superintendence of the chief director’s department; the first and second brigadiers of the central division, together with twenty of the select body-guard, are to guard the centre. The general in command of the right wing, our brother Wei-ching, and the general in command of the rear guard, our brother Fung-yun-san, should together lead on the first and second brigadiers of the right wing, and the first and second brigadiers of the army of reserve to guard the rear. Whenever the camps advance, or pitch their tents, let every legion and cohort be regularly joined so as to be able to come to each other’s assistance. You must every one of you exert your energies in sustaining and protecting the old and young, both male and female, together with the sick and wounded, so as to preserve them from every harm.”¹

¹ Translated by Dr. Medhurst.

This proclamation is interesting from its being the last that was issued, whilst the Taepings were in the “local insurgents” phase of their existence, after the capture of Yung-gnan. The chiefs occupied the government buildings (Yamuns); a description of court was formed, rewards and titles were given, and the subsequent proclamations became much more pompous. This city was reported at Canton to have been taken in an extraordinary manner. “The insurgents advanced quickly to the walls, which are not very high, and by throwing an immense quantity of lighted fire-crackers into the town, the continued explosion of which brought confusion among the soldiers within and caused them to retreat, they easily succeeded in scaling the walls and entering the city.” The Tartar government considered the loss of Yung-gnan as the most important event that had yet taken place, and a large force under a noted general (Woo-lan-tae), was sent to invest it. The Tien-Wang made a triumphal entry into Yung-gnan, where he was proclaimed first emperor of the new dynasty of Tae-ping (Great Peace).¹ During September and October, 1851, he occupied himself with issuing regulations affecting the conduct of his followers, and in distributing rewards to those who had come prominently into notice in the previous actions. On the last day of November he issued the proclamation giving the titles of kings to the chief leaders; in this he enjoins all officers and soldiers to follow his doctrine:—

¹ The title assumed was Tien-teh—Taeping—Wang (Heavenly Virtue—Great Peace—King).

“ Namely, this :—Our Heavenly Father, the great God and supreme Lord, is one true Spirit (God) : besides our Heavenly Father the great God and supreme Lord, there is no spirit (god). The great God our Heavenly Father and supreme Lord is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent—the supreme over all. There is not an individual who is not produced and nourished by him. He is Shang (Supreme). He is the Te (Ruler). Besides the great God our Heavenly Father and supreme Lord there is no one who can be called Shang, and no one who can be called Te.

“ Therefore from henceforth all you soldiers and officers may designate us as your lord, and that is all ; you must not call me Supreme, lest you should encroach upon the designation of our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father is our Holy Father, and our Celestial Elder Brother is our Holy Lord the Saviour of the world. Hence our Heavenly Father and Celestial Elder Brother alone are holy ; and from henceforth all you soldiers and officers may designate us as your lord, and that is all ; but you must not call me holy, lest you encroach upon the designation of our Heavenly Father and Celestial Elder Brother. The great God our Heavenly Father and supreme Lord is our Spiritual Father, our Ghostly Father. Formerly we had ordered you to designate the first and second ministers of state, together with the generals-in-chief of the van and rear of the army, royal fathers, which was a temporary indulgence in conformity with the corrupt customs of the present world ; but according to the true doctrine this was a slight encroachment on the prerogative of our Heavenly Father, for our Heavenly Father is alone entitled to the designation of Father. We have now appointed the chief minister of state and general-in-chief to be designated the Eastern king, having charge of all the states in the eastern region : we have also appointed the second minister of state and assistant general-in-chief to be designated the Western king, having charge of all the states in the western region : we have further appointed the general of the advanced guard to be designated the Southern king, having charge of all the states in the southern region : and we have likewise appointed the general of the rear guard to be designated the Northern king, having charge of all the states in the northern region : we have furthermore appointed our brother Shih-tah-kae to be assistant-king, to aid in sustaining our celestial court. All the kings above referred to are to be under the superintendence of the Eastern king. We have also issued a pro-

clamation designating our queen as the lady of all ladies (empress), and our concubines as royal ladies. Respect this."¹

The men selected to fill these kingly posts were Fung-yun-san, who became the Southern king; Yang-siu-tshin, the Eastern king; Siau-chau-kwui, the Western king; Wei-ching, the Northern king.

Yang and Siau are the two who, it will be recollect, were subject to ecstatic fits, the former revealing the will of the Heavenly Father, the latter that of Jesus the Elder Brother. Wei-ching was a man of some influence in the Kwei district, who with a large number of his clan had joined the society of God-worshippers about the year 1848. Fung-yun-san is the already frequently mentioned originator of that society, and the intimate friend of the chief. Shih-tah-kae, who is named Assistant king, was the elder brother of the Tien-Wang, and had joined him with the rest of the family early in 1850. In that part of the proclamation which refers to the doctrines that are to be attended to by his people, the Tien-Wang seems carefully to define his own position, and so far there is no fault to find with him, looking at the circumstances in which he was placed. But in some of the subsequent edicts he departs from the very praiseworthy rules here laid down. The last paragraph proves that he draws a marked line between the possession of concubines and the commission of adultery; for, in a preceding edict, punishment was awarded for the latter crime. It is so completely a

¹ Dr. Medhurst's translation. The capital letters denote that the persons spoken of are placed in the proclamations certain degrees higher than those preceded by small letters.

custom in China for those who can afford it, to have inferior wives in addition to the one recognised as lawful, that it could hardly be expected that the Tien-Wang would not conform to the rule. It is also quite probable that he did not find any positive prohibition of polygamy in those tracts upon which he founded his belief.

The proclamations issued during the occupation of Yung-gnan, offer future rewards in addition to temporal. One, dated September 24, says—

“We, on this occasion, most sincerely impress upon you this assurance, that those who at the present time do not covet life or fear death will afterwards ascend to heaven, where they will enjoy eternal life and immortality; but those of you who covet life will not get life, and those of you who dread death will meet with death. Moreover, those who at the present time do not covet ease or fear misery shall afterwards ascend to heaven, where they shall enjoy eternal tranquillity and freedom from every woe; but those of you who covet ease will not get ease, and those who fear misery will experience misery. After all, obey heaven's commands and you will enjoy celestial bliss; disobey, and you will go to hell; we earnestly beseech you, therefore, both officers and soldiers, to awake from your lethargy. If you offend any more do not be surprised (if I punish you).”

Another dated 30th October, 1851, proves that there was no absence of “red tapeism” in the army. After telling the troops to act with energy and wisdom, and to press forward in the contest, it goes on to say:—

“It is now commanded to all the legions that after every battle against the imps (Tartars), every serjeant shall stand and record the names of the privates under his command. Those who have been most distinguished for obeying orders and marching forward are to be marked with a circle, to indicate their merit; those who have been most distinguished for disobeying orders and running away are to be marked with a cross, to designate their crime. Those who

have been distinguished neither one way nor the other are to be left without any mark. When the record is complete the sergeant is to take the book and hand it up to the centurion, the centurion is to give it to the leader of the cohort, and the leader of the cohort is to pass it over to the commander of the legion, who, in his turn is to present it to the general, and the general to the inspector-general, who shall further send it to the director-general, and the director-general shall lay it before the minister of state, the minister of state shall further communicate it to the generalissimo, who shall report it to our little heaven,¹ in order to settle the degree of rank to which each one shall be elevated or degraded. Small merits shall be requited with small rewards, and great merits shall be distinguished by conspicuous promotions; let every one, therefore, put forth his utmost energies, and display self-respect.”²

All the remaining proclamations that were issued at Yung-gnan contain little else but exhortations to fight and promises of high dignities to those who prove themselves worthy. In the last of them, great notice is taken of the infraction of the Seventh Commandment, and directs the chiefs to strictly examine the soldiers under their orders, and those who are found to have offended in this respect are to be immediately beheaded as a warning to others. It concludes by stating that—

“There shall assuredly be no forgiveness; and we expressly enjoin upon the soldiers and officers not to show the least leniency, or screen the offenders, lest we bring down upon ourselves the indignation of the Great God our Heavenly Father.”

In the mean time the imperialist troops were investing the city and reducing the Taepings to great straits. Provisions began to fail, sickness set in, and at last it became necessary either to perish from want or by a

¹ “Little heaven” probably means the celestial court.

² Translated by Dr. Medhurst.

bold dash to cut their way through the enemy's forces. In November, 1851, the imperialists gained several successes, drove the Taepings from their outposts, and obliged them to keep within the walls. The Pekin Gazette mentions that "the Kwang-si rebel Hung-siu-tsuen having long possessed himself of the city of Yung-gnan, with Yung-tow and Moh-tsun as his outposts before and behind, Woo-lan-tae at the head of his officers proceeded to attack Yung-tow, where he killed seven or eight hundred rebels, and burnt their tents and military weapons. Having thus destroyed their advanced post, the spirits of the rebels were very much damped."

A later gazette records that the imperial troops attacked the rebel position both from the north and the south, but without success. In December, 1851, the Tartar general Sae-shang-a reported that he had led his troops close up to the city, where he obtained several victories, and pitched his camp within a mile of the city walls. On the night of the 7th April, 1852, the Taepings sallied out from the city in three bodies, and after suffering considerable losses broke through the imperialists' lines and directed their march towards the north-east angle of the province. The Tartar general, in his report of the affair, states that "he had regained possession of the city of Yung-gnan, and had captured the general of the army Hung-TA-tsuen, who was under an escort to the capital. . . . At the retaking of the city, upwards of three thousand of the rebels were put to death; on account of the heavy rains which prevailed, and the slipperiness of the roads, two Tartar generals,

named Chang-suy and Chang-show, lost their lives in the pursuit; also sixteen officers, from the rank of colonel downwards, fell in the engagement. . . . The emperor, on hearing of their deaths, graciously conferred on them posthumous honours, and rewards on their descendants."—(*Gazette.*)

The rebel chief, Hung-ta-tsuen, was after his capture sent to the capital, where he underwent a searching examination, and was subjected to torture in order to obtain his confession. This confession, which is a most remarkable document, was afterwards translated in one of the English local papers, and gave rise at the time to great discussion. For many years it was supposed that Hung-ta-tsuen was the Tien-Wang, and that the Taepings consequently had lost their leader. The seclusion in which the Tien-Wang kept himself gave colour to this belief, and from thence arose the idea that, in point of fact, there was no such person, but that the other chiefs kept up the faith in his existence in order to prevent dissensions and dismay among the troops. The Board of Punishments at Pekin gave the following account of the end of this captured chief:—“The Kwang-si rebel chief, named Hung-ta-tsuen, who had been brought under escort to the capital, having confessed that in the province of Kwang-si he had falsely assumed the title of Tien-teh (Heavenly Virtue), and that he was a fellow conspirator with Hung-siu-tsuen, who had falsely assumed the title of Tae-ping-wang (the Great Pacifying King), was put to death by being slowly cut into small pieces, according to law, and his head was exposed as a warning to all.”

No punishment is considered so degrading by the Chinese as that of dismemberment, and it is only awarded in very heinous cases, and is intended to prevent a recurrence of such offences through the horror and terror it creates. A similar system was carried into effect during the mutiny in India by blowing some of the mutineers from the muzzles of the guns: the natives there, as in China, holding dismemberment in great dread.

The confession alluded to, and which I give as rendered in the translation of a writer in a South of China journal, deserves to be carefully read. "Hung-Tai-tsuen confesses as follows:—I am a man of the district of Hung-shán, in the prefecture of Hung-chau; I am thirty years of age. My parents are both dead, and I have neither brothers, wife, nor children. I have been from youth devoted to letters, and have several times entered the examinations; but as the officers did not acknowledge my talent for writing, and repressed my abilities, I became a priest. I had not long left the priesthood when I again entered the examination, and as before I was unsuccessful. This greatly irritated me, and I began to study books on the military art very carefully, in order to scheme against the empire; I also made myself perfectly familiar with the topography of every part of the land. While I was a priest, I kept myself quiet and retired, diligently examining all works on strategy, so that all the rules of discipline and war since the days of antiquity were familiar to me; and I was emulous to equal to Kung-Ming (in the days of the Three States). Thus I came to

think that I could carry out my plans speedily, and if I followed the plans of Kung-Ming, flattered myself that I could take the empire as easily as turn my hand over.

“Several years ago, when I was a priest, I was travelling over Kwang-tung, and when in the district of Hwa, became acquainted with Hung-Siú-tsuen (who is not my relative) and Fung-yun-shán, both of whom are literary persons of great talents, and the former, like me, had been unsuccessful in the examinations. He had formerly been through both the Kwáng provinces, and formed an association of reckless persons of the Triad Society. Every one of those who joined it in Kwang-tung adhered to Fung; and this was done several years, he deluding every one who joined the association to take their oaths that they would live and die with him, and exert all their efforts to assist him. They gradually increased in numbers, and it was feared that there might be a want of hearty union in some of the members; so Hung-Siú-tsuen learned magical arts, and to talk with demons, and with Fung-yun-shan made up a story about a ‘Heavenly Father, Heavenly Brother, and Jesus; narrating how the Heavenly Brother came down from heaven, and that all who would serve the Heavenly Father would then know where their best interests and profit lay; that when he sat, it was in a small hall of heaven; and when he had been put to death by men, he sat in a great hall of heaven.’ With these inflaming words they beguiled the members of the association, so that none of them left it; and this procedure, I was well aware, had been going on for many years.

“In December, 1850, when their numbers and strength had become large, I went to Kwang-si, where I saw Hung-Siú-tsuen ; he had then engaged the graduate Wei-ching, alias Wei-Chang-kwui, of Ping-nan, and Siú, Yáng, and others of Kwang-tung, to go out and begin to plunder and fight the government. The members of the brotherhood willingly followed these men, giving themselves, their families, property, and all to them, so that they had funds for their purposes, and bought horses and engaged troops. Their hopes were now high, and they took at this time the name of the Shang-ti Association.¹

“When I reached Kwang-si, Hung-Siú-tsuen called me his worthy brother, and honoured me with the title of King Tien-teh (Celestial Virtue), and took all his lessons in the art of war from me. He called himself King Taeping (Great Peace). Yang was generalissimo of the troops with civil powers, and had the title of Eastern King ; Siú was deputy-generalissimo of the right, with the title of Western King ; Fung-yun-shán was general of the reserve, with the title of Northern King. Ministers were also made ; thus Shih was appointed minister over the Board of Civil Office, and King of the Right Wing ; Tsin was over the Board of Revenue, and King of the Left Wing ; Wu-lai and Tsang were Generals of the Guard, Chu was Judge-Advocate, and Tsung-yuh-siu Lo Lieutenant-General. There were many military officers, whose names I do not remember, some of them over three hundred men, and others over one hundred men.

¹ “Shang-ti,” rendered by Protestant translators “God.”

“In action whoever backed out was executed, and their officers severely punished; while rewards and promotion were given to those who were victorious. The government troops killed many of our men. I called Hung-Siú-tsuen my elder brother, and those under our lead addressed us both as ‘Your Majesty;’ we addressed them by their names.

“On the 27th August, 1851, we took Yung-gnan, Wei-ching having before given battle to and defeated the imperial troops.

“I and Hung entered the city in our sedans on the 2nd of September, and occupied the official residence, which we called our court, and where we permitted none to dwell. This Hung-Siú-tsuen received most of his tactics from me; but my opinion did not accord with his, and I often spoke of this being a small spot, and asked where was the propriety of having so many persons styled kings? Moreover he had relied upon his magical arts for assistance; but no one, even in ancient times, ever reached the throne by them: added to this he was both a wine-bibber and a licentious man, having thirty-six women with him. I wished to hear of his destruction, and defeat, for then I could myself succeed in obtaining dominion.

“At this time the Eastern king Yáng managed the forces, sending them out and appointing their duties, and the officers who should be over them. Wei-ching had the superintendence of actual engagement with the troops, in which he was both skilful and unwearyed: he was a most courageous man; even ten thousand of the imperialists were not a match for him with a thousand men

under him. During the several months we occupied Yung-gnan-chau, which we called our court, all our officers memorialized us respecting the affairs of state. A calendar was issued under the direction of Yáng in which no intercalary month was inserted; but in this matter I was not a party.

“Now when it happened that the ingress into the city was stopped, and rice, gunpowder, and other ammunition were beginning to fail, we reflected that the members of our association in Kwáng-tung and in the department of Wu-chau were formerly very numerous, and plucked up heart to make the attempt to get out of our hole.

“On the 7th of April we rallied our spirits and attempted the sortie, dividing the forces into three bands. About 8 P.M. Wei-ching sallied out with six thousand men under him, followed by Yáng and Fung-yun-shán with five or six thousand men, about 10 P.M., to cut their way through; these took Hung-Siú-tsuen and his women with them, thirty or more persons, with horses, sedans, and all. About 2 A.M., having more than a thousand men with us, I and Siú went out, being distant from Hung-Siú-tsuen about a league, and were attacked by the Government troops, and pursued. Siú would not attend to my orders or signals, and our force was routed, more than a thousand men losing their lives, and I was taken prisoner. It was our intention to have gone by way of a place called Kú-chuh to Chau-ping-hien (in the department of Ping-lo), and then to Wú-chau-fú, and thus get into Kwáng-tung.

“The firing of the east fort when we sallied out was

my act, and I also directed putting fire in the city, so as to facilitate our sortie.

“ My original surname is not Hung ; but it is only since I contracted a brotherhood relation with Hung-Siu-tsuen, that I changed it to Hung-Tai-tsuen. I wore embroidered clothes and a yellow high cap ; the four kings had red-bordered caps like it ; the rest of the high officers wore yellow embroidered aprons when they went into action, and carried yellow flags. In the Yamun I wore a yellow robe ; and I did not of my own will desire to sit on the king’s throne.

“ This Confession is true.”¹

Before this Confession was made public, rumours were in existence at Canton to the effect that the Taepings had found in a monastery a priest who was a descendant of the Mings, and that they had, in order to gain adherents to their cause, raised him to the rank of emperor with the title of Tien-teh. Chu, the founder of the Ming dynasty, was also a priest, and the coincidence may have been deemed of good augury. This rumour, in some degree, corroborates the statement of Hung-ta-tsuen. There are several points in the Confession showing such intimate knowledge of the chiefs and their plans, that it is much more difficult to believe it to be an imposture than to believe it to be truth, and yet both opinions have their objections. In the narrative of Hung-jin, and in the proclamations of the Tien Wang, no mention is made of any one holding such a position as Hung-ta-tsuen assumes to himself. In all the appointments the names are published, and the men

¹ From ‘Overland China Mail,’ Aug. 23, 1852.

who held them were afterwards met with at Nankin; and also, there does not appear any reason why he should have been nominated to the high rank of Tien-teh-Wang, which placed him on almost an equality with the leader. It is possible that the examiners, wishing to make the emperor believe that a rebel of great importance had been captured, forced the Confession to be so worded that it would have the desired effect; but this is not likely, for the danger they would run through giving false information was far greater than any corresponding advantage could warrant. The fact of the chief being, immediately after his capture, forwarded to Pekin by the Tartar general is a sufficient proof of the estimation in which he was held. The account given in the Confession of the creeds and practices of the God-worshippers,—the mention of the privations undergone by the Taepings whilst shut up in Yung-gnan,—the description of the sortie and the distribution of troops, with numerous other independent statements,—so perfectly agree with the narrative of events given both by the imperialists and Taepings, that there can be no doubt but that Hung-ta-tsuen was in some manner intimately connected with the whole progress of the rebellion. The way in which the Tien-Wang is said to have obtained his knowledge of military tactics throws some light upon what is, otherwise, the most mysterious portion of that remarkable man's career, and from the absence of any other apparent means must be taken as giving the best explanation on that subject.

The greatest proof, however, of the truth of the Con-

fession lies in the fact that, at that time, and until the capture of Nankin, the years were reckoned by the title of Tien-teh—that is, the proclamations were headed “Tien-teh, first or second year”—this was afterwards altered. Still, admitting the apparent trustworthiness of Hung-ta-tsuen, the original difficulty still remains, and, as yet, no clue has been found which will clear up the doubt which exists with regard to his proper place in the rebellion. That he was a person of importance must be granted—beyond this nothing is known. The name given is no guide—a false one being probably assumed by him in order to screen his family from punishment.

CHAPTER VII.

Yang's Visions—March of the Taepings from Kwang-si to Yoh-chow—Descent of the Yang-zte-kiang.

BEFORE following the career of the Taepings from the time they left Yung-gnan until the capture of Nankin in March, 1853, I shall draw attention to the first recorded "possession" of Yang that was used for the purpose of political punishment. Although it has no immediate bearing upon the military history of the Taepings, yet in order properly to comprehend the motives and influences by which they were swayed, it is necessary that some consideration should be given to it.

On December 4th, 1851, Fung-yun-shan, Yang-siu-tsing, Wei-ching, and Shih-tah-kae attended at court, when Yun-shan informed the Tien-wang, saying: "To-day I, your younger brother, with Wei-ching, Tah-kae, Tsang-teen-fang, and Mung-teh-teen, went to brother Siu-tsing's dwelling in company, to hold a conference, with the view of praying your majesty to give an appointment to Chow-seih-nang; when suddenly the Heavenly Father came down into the world, and directed us to fetter Chow-seih-nang; having given which command, he said 'I shall now return to heaven.'" Siu-tsuen (the Tien-Wang) thereupon asked, "Has he been seized?" They replied, "He has already been taken into custody." Siu-tsuen said, "What a

mighty display of the Heavenly Father's power is this! Let us kneel down and acknowledge the Celestial favour!" The princes thereupon dispersed.

That same night Yun-shan and Tah-kae attended at court again, and reported that the Heavenly Father had come down a second time. Siu-tsuen thereupon hastened into the divine presence, when the Heavenly Father directed him to summon Chow-seih-nang. The examination over, the Heavenly Father said, "I shall now return to Heaven." Siu-tsuen also returned to his palace, and commanded Wei-ching and the other ministers to record the declared will of the Heavenly Father during his descent upon earth. Wei-ching commissioned Mung-Tih-teen and Tsang-Teen-Fung to carry out this instruction. On December 9th, 1851, Siu-tsuen perused the document, which read as follows:—

"We Tsang and Mung, in obedience to command, hereby record the declared will of the Heavenly Father, the supreme Lord, the great God, given during his descent amongst men.

"On the 4th December Fung, king of the South, Wei, king of the North, and Shih, the Assistant king, accompanied by ourselves, repaired in a body to the dwelling of Yang, the Eastern king, to pay him our respects, and also to confer with him concerning certain weighty matters of this earthly domain of our Heavenly Father, the supreme Lord and great God. We had not spoken above a few words, when, all on a sudden, the Heavenly Father came down amongst us, and secretly addressed the kings, saying: 'There is a person named Chow Scih-nang, a treacherous, traitorous man, who has been in collusion with the Tartar elves, and has returned to court intending to co-operate with them in a scheme to subvert your designs; are you aware of this?' We all said, 'No.' The Heavenly Father then said, 'Send at once and attach the persons of these men, and keep them in custody for the present, until I give directions respecting them.' We all replied, 'Your commands shall be obeyed.' The Father thereupon

rejoined, 'You must all act prudently and with secrecy, whilst I return to heaven.' After the departure of the Heavenly Father, we, Tsang and Mung, together with the three kings, reported this declaration of the Heavenly Father to Yang, the Eastern king. On being made acquainted with its purport, he became excessively indignant, and forthwith directed a fierce attendant to apprehend the traitor imp Chow Seih-nang, as also the two confederates of the Tartar elves, Choo-pah and Chin-woo, and commit them all three into custody to await their trial; this done, he reported the matter to the Celestial king (Tien Wang). That evening the Northern king proceeded to question the prisoners, but without any satisfactory result. Happily, however, the Heavenly Father gave himself the trouble to appear once more, and ordered Yang-juntsing and Yang-poo-tsing, the two royal cousins, to go to the several kings and inform them of his presence. The kings, on learning the fact, attended at court, and entreated the Celestial king to accompany them; whereupon His Majesty, guarded by the kings and body-guards, together with a host of officials, ourselves included, advanced into the presence of the Heavenly Father. Arrived there, the king with all his ministers knelt down, and asked, saying, 'Is the Heavenly Father come down?' The Heavenly Father then addressed the Celestial king, saying, 'Sew-tseuen, I am going to take this matter in hand to-day; a mere mortal would find it a hard task; there is one Chow Seih-nang, a traitor at heart, who yesterday, after holding some collusive communication with the enemy, returned to court, intending to carry into effect a very serious revolt; are you aware of this?' The king rejoined, 'Tsing and the other brethren have already informed me of this; I am fortunate in being able to depend upon the Heavenly's Father power and ability in the management of the matter this day; otherwise I should find it a hard task.' When he had finished speaking, the Heavenly Father commanded Mung Tih-teën, saying, 'Go you and fetch Chow Seih-nang.' Mung Tih-teën replied, 'Your commands shall be obeyed;' and forthwith brought Chow Seih-nang into the presence of the Heavenly Father. The Heavenly Father then addressed that individual thus, 'Chow Seih-nang! from whence did you come lately?'

"*Seih-nang.*—'After repeated applications through the eastern and other princes to the sovereign, I was graciously permitted to return to Po-pih¹ to assemble the brethren and sisters.'

¹ Po-pih, a place in Kwang-si.

“*The Father*.—‘With whom did you go?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘With Hwang Chow-leen.’

“*The Father*.—‘Chow Seih-nang! who is it that is now speaking to you in the eastern palace?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘The Heavenly Father, the supreme Lord, and great God is addressing me.’

“*The Father*.—‘And who is the sun?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘The sun is my sovereign, the celestial king, the true sovereign of all the kingdoms under Heaven.’

“*The Father*.—‘Over what breadth of space does the sun shine?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘He illumines the entire world.’

“*The Father*.—‘Does he shine upon you?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘He does.’

“*The Father*.—‘Who is it that is now managing this matter?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘It is the Heavenly Father, the supreme Lord, and great God.’

“*The Father*.—‘Seih-nang, are you aware that the Heavenly Father is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘I am aware that the Heavenly Father is possessed of those attributes.’

“*The Father*.—‘Are you aware that China, in this world of mortals, has, for many years past, paid me no reverence?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘The inhabitants of China, blind to the goodness of the Heavenly Father, have long neglected and ceased to worship Him.’

“*The Father*.—‘Do you know the measure of the Heavenly Father’s indulgence?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘His indulgence is vast as the ocean.’

“*The Father*.—‘Are you aware that the Heavenly Father can assist men?’

“*Seih-nang*.—‘I know that he can assist men; he has already aided me several times.’

“*The Father*.—‘If you know that I have often assisted you, you must be aware that your evil deeds cannot be concealed from Heaven; tell me then truly wherein you have done wrong?’

“*Seih-nang* (attempting to deceive Heaven) said,—‘I am a man of honest disposition, and I would not act towards Heaven with double heart; I did really return home to assemble the brethren and sisters.’

“*The Father*.—‘Heaven and myself are identical. I can fully discern whether you are double or single-minded; as you state that

you really returned home to assemble the brethren and sisters, pray tell me how many persons you have brought hither ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'I brought hither above one hundred and ninety persons.'

" *The Father*.—'When did the brethren whom you have brought leave Po-pih, and how did you manage to transport them hither ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'In the first place I am much indebted to the Father for moving Choo Seih-liee and Seang Shih-luh to consult with me, and under pretence of conveying volunteers for the imps (enemies), we started with the brethren from Po-pih on the tenth day of the tenth month (Nov. 15th), and arrived here on the twenty-first day of the same month (Nov. 26th).'

" *The Father*.—'According to your own account you brought more than one hundred and ninety persons: how came it then that but three of you reached this place? pray where are the rest of the brethren whom you brought ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'Having adopted the pretence of conveying volunteers for the imps (enemies), I was compelled, against my will, to convey them to the imp's (enemy's) camp at Sin-hew, where they have been these seven or eight days.'

" *The Father*.—'Chow Seih-nang! when you returned to court what did you tell your king ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'I did not attempt to deceive the king in what I told him upon my return to court; I certainly made a mistake in saying that I had returned only three or four days before, an error I fell into through not counting the days; but now, not presuming to talk at random in the presence of the Heavenly Father, I should say, on carefully reckoning the number of days, that seven or eight days have elapsed since my return.'

" *The Father*.—'Chow Seih-nang! the hundred and odd people you brought entered, you say, the impish camp; do you know what impish chief was at the head of the said camp ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'The name of the said impish chief was Sae; he is an uncle of that imp Hien-fung.'¹

" *The Father*.—'What did you say to him when you saw him ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'When I saw the impish chief, he held no conversation with me. What could I then have to say to him ?'

" *The Father*.—'When you got into the impish camp, how did you manage to get out again, and return hither to court ?'

" *Seih-nang*.—'I told the impish chief that I wanted to go out of

¹ The reigning emperor.

the barrier to guard the road for him ; I then put on a sword and dagger, mounted a white horse, and accompanied by Choo-pah, the uncle of Choo Seih-kwan, with my sister's son, Chin-woo, I came thence directly towards the holy camp, and so managed to escape here into the celestial court ; on reaching this, I told the prince that I had returned, in order to relieve him from further anxiety. As to the hundred and more persons brought by me, and now in the impish camp at Siu-heu, they were only going to wait until I had come hither to report these particulars, after which they would all come in a body without fail. Such is the true state of the case.'

"*The Father.*—'Chow Seih-nang ! I suspect that there would be some failure in their coming, as you state ; do you suppose (if you had brought them with you) that your prince would not have recognised you ; or did you harbour any suspicions of your prince ?' (Chow Seih-nang could say nothing to this, so the Heavenly Father resumed) : 'Now, Chow Seih-nang, just relate to me honestly, from beginning to end, this scheme of yours to impose upon Heaven ; for you must know that you cannot impose upon the Heavenly Father.'

"Chow Seih-nang, fancying that his treasonable plan was of so aggravated a nature, that it would be punished without mercy, feared to confess it at once, but continued his attempts to deceive Heaven, as follows :—'I really returned to the court with an honest intention ; it was because I found the road so difficult to pass, that I was forced to feign myself an adherent of the imps, and to turn soldier to them. I really did return hither by fraudulent means, as I have described ; but further than that I have cherished no sinister designs. I pray the Heavenly Father of his mercy to pardon my sin.'

"*The Father.*—'Chow Seih-nang ! are you really ignorant of the extent of my forbearance ? Has China failed to worship me for a long series of years, whilst I bore with her neglect ; and can I not treat you with forbearance, even though you have slightly erred ?'

"Chow Seih-nang still feared to acknowledge the truth.

"*The Father.*—'Chow Seih-nang ! it was I, God the Father, who begot you and brought you up ; you should not therefore render all my exertions on your behalf of no avail. I know well how your whole plan has been carried out from the time that you left until the day that you returned ; why then persist in concealing it from Heaven ? You are surely aware that Heaven presides over this matter ; you know, too, that the great God is possessed of omniscience ; further, that the sun shines over the whole empire. Now,

since the Great God, the Heavenly Father, is here present, and your sovereign the celestial king is also here, why do you yet persist in cherishing a traitorous heart? Am I not aware whether what you tell me is the truth, or whether it is not the truth? Tell me, then, honestly, the whole truth, for I warn you, that if you continue to deny the allegations brought against you, and make it necessary for me to expose your traitorous heart, you will be in a difficulty.'

"Chow Seih-nang still hesitated to acknowledge his guilt; and, continuing his attempts at deception, said—'I really am not harbouring a traitorous feeling against heaven; I beseech the Heavenly Father to have mercy upon me.'

"*The Father*.—'Are you aware that I, the Heavenly Father, am the great God and ruler of the whole universe, and that when I will the life of a man, he lives, and when I will his death, he dies?'

"*Seih-nang*.—'I know that the Heavenly Father, the great God, who created Heaven and earth, is the one true Spirit (God), and supreme Ruler; I now own that I am in the wrong, and I pray the Heavenly Father to have mercy and pardon my sin. Of a truth I dare not harbour a traitor's heart, and attempt to impose upon Heaven.'

"The Heavenly Father then, pointing directly at Chow Seih-nang, said—'Chow Seih-nang! if you did not harbour a traitor's heart, and endeavour to impose upon Heaven, pray, what object had you in bringing those two men with you to this court?'

"Chow Seih-nang (still attempting to deceive) said—'The two men who accompanied me hither said they wished to follow me back to the court in order to worship God, the Heavenly Father.'

"The Father, again pointing at Chow Seih-nang, said—'Chow Seih-nang! if you, as you aver, simply brought those two men with you hither to worship God, what conversation was it that these two individuals held with Choo Seih-kwan and Hwang-wang-an yesterday evening in the stillness of the night? Think you that I know not that you are still attempting to deceive me? If you would but acknowledge your error, and tell the truth, I would pardon you; if you make it necessary for me to expose the whole matter myself, you will be in difficulty.'

"Chow Seih-nang, not being able to avoid telling the truth, replied—'When I was abroad, I erroneously followed the imps, and having been seduced by them, I did, according to an impish plan suggested by themselves, return to the court for the purpose of moving within the camp, in co-operation with their attack from

without. This scheme did not, however, originate in any intention of my own ; I beg the Heavenly Father, therefore, to have mercy upon me.'

"The Father (again pointing at Seih-nang) said—' You say that this traitorous scheme to subvert the cause did not originate with your own intention : if so, why did you, within one day after your return, take persons to spy at the turrets over the gates of the celestial court, and what passed between you there ?'

"Chow Seih-nang (moved with shame) replied—' Before my mind was thoroughly awakened I went to the turrets over the four city gates to examine their condition ; and, while there, spoke of the ease with which they could be attacked ; but I was under the delusion of the devil at the time, and did not act thus traitorously of my own free will ; I pray, therefore, the Heavenly Father to pardon my sin.'

"The Father (pointing directly at Chow Seih-nang) said—' You say that you did not act thus traitorously of your own free will ; how, then, came it to pass, that the moment you returned to the court, you hastened to see your wife, and secretly enjoined certain things upon her ? pray, what did you say to her ?'

"The Heavenly Father having thus begun to display his omniscience, and Chow Seih-nang, whilst kneeling down, having heard the Heavenly Father, the great God, thus repeatedly discover the real truth, and perceiving that he could no more conceal his traitorous intentions, but that the eye of Heaven shone broadly upon him, and the true Spirit (God) could not be imposed upon, then divulged the truth, saying—' I, Chow Seih-nang, having been deluded by the devil, was certainly misled by the impish chief, and entered into a wicked scheme with them, to return hither to court for the purpose of winning away the hearts of the soldiers, and effecting a simultaneous attack from within and without, under promise of a large reward in impish honours. This scheme I entered into of my own free will, and thus have rebelled against Heaven. But though my treason has been of such extent, I pray the Heavenly Father, of his extraordinary mercy, to pardon me.'

"*The Father.*—' Now, as for Choo-pah, what did he intend to do ?'

"Chow Seih-nang (wishing to screen Choo-pah) said—' He intended to do nothing.'

"*The Father.*—' Chow Seih-nang ! to whom are you most bound ? whether to the Heavenly Father or to that man ? whether to your sovereign or to that man ?'

"Seih-nang.—‘I am most bound to the Heavenly Father, and to my sovereign, the celestial king.’

“*The Father.*—‘Since you are aware that you are more intimately bound to the Heavenly Father, why do you refuse to declare honestly Choo-pah’s treason? Should I discover it for you, will you consent to bear his punishment?’

“Seih-nang, perceiving he could not screen Choo-pah, prayed the Heavenly Father’s pardon, saying—‘I really cannot impose upon the Heavenly Father, and I pray the Heavenly Father to pardon my sin. The truth is, that the impish chief concerted a plan with Choo Seih-kee and Choo-pah to send them into the celestial court, to kill and slay. That man Choo-pah, the devil having entered into his heart, did really come for this purpose.’

“The Heavenly Father hereupon commanded me, Tsang Teen-fang, to send some one to summon Choo Seih-kwan, and Hwang-Wang-an, whereupon I answered, ‘I obey.’ In a moment the two persons indicated appeared in the presence, and, kneeling, inquired, ‘Is the Heavenly Father come down?’

“The Heavenly Father said—‘Choo Seih-kwan! you conversed with Chow Seih-nang and Choo-pah during the first watch last evening, what did they say?’ He replied, ‘Yesterday evening Chow Seih-nang and Choo-pah endeavoured to seduce me to join the imps, promising me office as a reward for so doing; I became most indignant, and told them that I was not the man to act thus. This morning I happened to receive orders to go to the camp of the river volunteers to draw up the muster-roll, and I went, intending to return to-night and report the circumstance. To my surprise, however, I have rendered it necessary for the Heavenly Father to trouble himself to come down; I acknowledge my error and pray the Heavenly Father, of his extraordinary mercy, to pardon me.’

“The Heavenly Father thereupon blamed Choo Seih-kwan, saying—‘When you heard such a proposal you should instantly have reported it to your prince, for the information of your sovereign, the celestial king; why, on the contrary, did you wait till I had summoned you hither before you made it known?’ This said, the Father ordered him to receive one hundred blows. He then blamed the man again, saying—‘You, a director of the army, and yet ignorant of the difference between promptitude and delay! Whereupon he ordered him to receive another hundred blows. The Heavenly Father then interrogated Hwang Wang-an, saying,

‘Hwang Wang-an, what did Chow Seih-nang say to you yesterday?’ Hwang Wang-an replied, ‘When I asked Chow Seih-nang how he had managed to make his escape and get back, he told me that under pretence of recruiting for the impish troops, he had gone into the imps’ camp at Sin-hew, from whence he had got away back again. On my inquiring how many impish troops there were in the camp, he said that they were not very numerous, and that they intended making an attack upon us the day after but one, namely, the third of the month. I further asked him, as he had been in the impish camp, whether he knew anything of the wicked plans their chief had in view? he said that the devils had no particular plans in prospect, but that he had learned the impish chief was anxious to employ a man to come into our camp and win away our soldiers; he also led me to understand that, while in the impish camp, he had been invested with a button of the sixth rank, and that the imps were not anxious to meet our holy warriors in battle, but rather intended to purchase our good will by money. Such is the purport of what he told me.’

“The Heavenly Father thereupon blamed Hwang Wang-an, saying—‘Knowing all this, how came it that you did not at once report the matter to your king?’

“Hwang Wang-an replied—‘I confess my sin, and pray the Heavenly Father, of his extraordinary mercy, to forgive me; I was blinded at the time, and fancied he was talking nonsense; I did not think of trying to discern the treasonable motives he had at heart.’ The Heavenly Father, blaming him again, said, ‘You received from Heaven a commission to act as inspector, but now what have you been doing in fulfilment of your duties? You must receive one hundred blows.’ After the blows had been administered, the Heavenly Father spoke kindly to Hwang Wang-an, saying—‘Henceforward be more careful to discern the truth, and always strive to be more than usually intelligent, and reformed in conduct.’

“Hwang Wang-an rejoined—‘Having experienced the mercy of the Father in transforming my heart, I will not again presume to be neglectful, but will obey the Heavenly Father’s instructions.’ The Heavenly Father then commanded the king of the North to go out in front of the palace of the king of the East, and address the troops. The king of the North, having received this command, loudly harangued the soldiers as follows:—‘Soldiers! we

are indebted to the power and ability of the Heavenly Father and great God, in having laid open and confounded the schemes of the impish devils, and in having exposed the traitorous designs of Chow Seih-nang, whereby he intended to rebel against Heaven. Rejoice together and leap for joy, ye soldiers and officers! resolutely obey Heaven; Heaven will carry out what it has undertaken; be courageous all of you; and ever remember the power and goodness of the Heavenly Father, in everything endeavouring to be intelligent and to reform.' The assembled troops cried out with one voice—'The Heavenly Father, the great God, He is omniscient, He is omnipotent!'

"The Heavenly Father, sighing, addressed Chow Seih-nang, saying,—'Seih-nang, I, the Heavenly Father, having discovered your schemes of rebellion against Heaven did not expose them without reason, nor accuse you wrongfully; according to your own statement I was right.' Chow Seih-nang repentingly rejoined—'The Heavenly Father has rightly exposed my errors, and I have recounted my designs of rebellion against Heaven, also without a single mis-statement. I know that by my errors I have offended against the laws, and that my crimes are beyond forgiveness; I repent them now when too late.' The holy warriors of the great God, and the assembled troops, hearing this, were one and all moved with indignation, and, gnashing their teeth, prayed the Heavenly Father to order the traitorous devil to be instantly cut into ten thousand pieces, and burnt with fire. The Heavenly Father replied—'Be courageous, my children, and fear not to rejoice together; resolutely submit to Heaven; I have the direction of affairs.' He then addressed the celestial king, saying, 'Siu-tsuen, be composed; I am about to return to Heaven.' At this time it was already the third watch of the night; so the ministers, &c., all escorted their sovereign back to his palace. After they had cried, 'Long live the king!' they all returned to their respective quarters, glorifying and praising the goodness of the Heavenly Father, and conversing one with another on the omniscience and extraordinary power of God.

"All on a sudden the Heavenly Father returned to earth and directed the royal cousin, Yang Yun-tsing, to send some one to the residence of all the kings, to tell them of his presence. We, thereupon, together with all the officers of the court, hastened into the presence of the Heavenly Father, and, kneeling, asked him, 'Why he thus took the trouble to re-appear?' The Father thereupon addressed the southern, northern, and assistant kings, and the

assembled officers of all ranks, saying: 'I have this evening disclosed the schemes of those fiends, and have exterminated those traitorous imps; be increasingly careful, my children, to advance yourselves in intelligence and improvement; in all things I am present to direct: fear not therefore.' They all replied, 'We know that the Heavenly Father's power is great; we pray the Heavenly Father to regard us and regenerate our hearts.' The Father rejoined, 'If you are still ignorant of my power, recall to-night's scene to mind; if still unaware of my omniscience and omnipotence, ponder what has passed. Learn to know clearly the path to Heaven, and carefully abstain from going astray; be courageous, and resolutely obey Heaven; fear not, I hold the superintendence of affairs.' They all cried, 'We gratefully acknowledge the goodness of the Father in troubling himself to instruct us his children.' The Father replied, 'Be composed; I shall now return to Heaven.' The whole army then rejoiced together at the goodness of the Father; and proceeded to kill pigs and oxen, and offer them up in thanksgiving to the Heavenly Father and great God, for his power and mercy in confounding the fiendish schemes of mortal imps, and his gracious care over his children. The next day the Father gave orders to bind Chow Seih-nang, his wife, Tsae-Wanmei, his son, Chow Lechin, together with the imps who had been in collusion with him, Choopah, Chin-woo, and others, and bring them forward. When they were brought, Chow Seih-nang, perceiving he could not escape death, displayed some of his better feelings, and with a loud voice addressed the assembly, saying: 'Brethren, of a truth Heaven has this day interfered in this matter; be ye all careful to serve your country with fidelity; learn from me not to harbour traitorous designs against Heaven.' His wife also, indignantly pointing towards her husband, loudly scolded him, saying, 'Of a truth Heaven has indeed interfered this day; of a truth Heaven is now about to slay you for your treason and treachery. When you communicated to me these your designs, I then with tears bade you forego them, and now, alas! mother and son are by you murdered; of a truth you have injured your fellows as well as yourself.' At this moment Choo Seih-kwan, who was exposed in a cangue¹ at the door of the

¹ The cangue is a wooden frame weighing about thirty pounds, and is placed upon the shoulders of the offender sentenced to exposure, in such a manner as to allow freedom to the head above it; but the breadth of the frame makes it impossible for the hands to touch any part of the face. This mode of punishment is very common in China.

palace court, as an example to all, also cried out, 'Brethren, be awakened; I am deeply indebted to the power and might of the Heavenly Father; for, but for his aid, I should have been deceived by my uncle Choo-pah; my uncle has a wolfish heart, cut him, my brethren, into a thousand pieces.'

"At this time some sisters about the court remarked, 'We now understand why Chow Seih-nang's wife said to her son, You won't wear these cotton clothes long; in three days' time you will be dressed in silks.' Other women also related how they had heard it said, that Chow Seih-nang's wife was yesterday seen packing her boxes, and preparing things for her husband's plan; also that the day Chow Seih-nang was seen looking about the city gates, she was observed sharpening a great knife for his purposes. 'Who would have thought,' said all, 'that God was directing all affairs, and that he would so suddenly appear to discover what was really about to take place, so that the scheme should fail of accomplishment, to the eternal ruin and misery of the conspirator! Alas! alas!'

Mr. Medhurst, the translator, says that the whole of the above colloquy is given in the most commonplace style of phraseology, and contains a number of vulgarisms peculiar to the Canton patois. It is quoted from the 'Book of Declarations of the Divine Will made during the Heavenly Father's descent upon Earth.'

When the Taepings left Yung-gnan it was their intention to have marched into the Kwang-tung province, but, finding themselves unable to carry this plan into execution, they proceeded to the north-east portion of Kwang-si, and from thence entered the adjoining province of Hoo-nan, after having, without success, spent a month in besieging Kwei-lin, the capital of the Kwang-si province. At this time their entire force, including women and children, was under ten thousand. These were chiefly composed of the before-mentioned Hak-kas, a tribe of strangers that had immigrated into Kwang-si

and Kwang-tung, and that were always in feud with the original natives or Puntis.

One of the most important branches of our army in the late China war was the well-known Coolie corps. The men composing this force principally belonged to this very tribe of Hak-kas. Throughout the campaign their courage and endurance met with general approbation. At the assault on the Taku forts they encountered without flinching the heaviest fire of the enemy ; and it was in a great measure due to them that the forts were scaled with such small loss on our side. The officers appointed to command these coolies always spoke of them in the highest terms. One of these officers—one well qualified to give an opinion on the subject—states that, “ They are a race hated by the mandarins, as they do not consider them their rulers ; they all behave well under fire, and some of them did acts that would have given the Victoria Cross to any Englishman had he done the same. Their powers of endurance are wonderful ; I have known them work hard in a hot sun for ten or twelve hours, and not grumble when they saw that a certain amount of work had to be done. Their great bane is opium, and I do not think it is possible to induce any of them who have taken to it to give it up ; consequently, by the time they are forty years of age they are old men. They drink very little ; they are great hands at languages ; some of those we had for the whole time (three years and six months) spoke French, English, and could get on very well with the sepoys. I think, well led and officered, they would make fine light troops.”

The nucleus of the Taeping forces consisted of men of the same class as those to whom such high praise is given ; and this may account for their marvellous success during their northern march.

The Pekin Gazettes report that, on the “15th May (1852) the Kwang-si rebels attacked Kwei-lin, the provincial city of Kwang-si, when the imperial troops made a sortie and burnt and destroyed a great number of them. On the 19th the rebels raised the siege, and set out by different routes for the province of Hoo-nan On the 12th June the viceroy reported that the Kwang-si rebel chief, Hung-siu-tsuen, having broken up from Yung-gnan came and took the city of Taou-chow, in the prefecture of Ling-lin, in the southern part of the Hoo-nan province. The magistrate of the city ventured his life in defence of the place, but did not succeed.” The emperor ordered Sae-shang-a (the general who had recaptured Yung-gnan) to proceed immediately to Hoo-nan with all his forces to quell the insurrection ; two other generals were also ordered to advance upon the rebels with the entire force at command, and so to post themselves as to prevent their northern advance. From the reports of Sae-shang-a it appears that during July, August, and September, the Taepings steadily proceeded northward, taking the several cities that lay on their line of march, and evacuating them as soon as by forced contributions, or other means, they had obtained what necessaries they required. Avoiding the imperial camp at Hang-chow they, early in September, arrived before the provincial city of Chang-sha, where they entrenched themselves on some adjoining heights

and commenced a regular siege, which lasted over two months. All the imperialist forces immediately centred upon Chang-sha, and the suburbs of the city became the scene of some severe actions.

“On the 18th September the rebels, having ineffectually battered the walls of Chang-sha with their cannon, sprung a mine under the south gate, but were repulsed in their assault by the bravery of the imperial troops. The emperor, therefore, ordered eight thousand soldiers from the four provinces of Hoo-nan, Sz-chuen, Hoo-péh, and Kwei-chow, to unite with the ten thousand Chinese and Tartar troops already engaged in Hoo-nan, in order to exterminate the foe.”¹ This order proves how inadequate was the force at the command of the government to put down the insurrection even at this early stage of its proceedings. Soon after this a decree was issued degrading Sae-shang-a ; it says :—

“ From the commencement of the disturbances in Kwang-si, almost two years ago, conceiving that the minister of state, Sae-shang-a, was a faithful servant of the crown, and capable of enduring much for his country, we especially appointed him to be imperial commissioner, and bestowed upon him a ‘carte blanche,’ directing him to proceed to the extermination of the rebels. During the former year he distinguished himself ; but afterwards, when the rebels took possession of Yung-gnan, and attacked Kwei-lin, falling back upon Hing-gnan, and capturing Tsuen-chow, whence they rushed into Hoo-nan province, and took several cities, laying siege likewise to Chang-sha ; though during all this time Sae-shang-a was commander-in-chief, he displayed no abilities in military strategy, and did nothing but distress the troops and waste the revenue, by which means he has shown himself ungrateful and unserviceable. We therefore command that he be deprived of his rank, and sent up to the capital for examination ; also that an officer

¹ Pekin Gazette.

be despatched to guard him up to the Board of Punishments to be tried for his crimes ; and Ching-keuh-tsae, who, though he had under him the two Hoo provinces, had not a single plan to suggest, and allowed the rebels to do just as they pleased, we also order to be deprived of his office, and kept in the inferior post of intendant of grain to see whether he will still exert himself in the public service.”

During October and November the Taepings made frequent attempts to capture Chang-sha, but were each time repulsed with considerable loss. On the 29th of November they made their last assault. By the means of a mine sprung under the walls, a portion of them, some eighty feet in breadth, was destroyed ; through this breach they rushed to the assault, but the imperialists drove them back with great loss, and on the following night they raised the siege and moved towards the north-west.

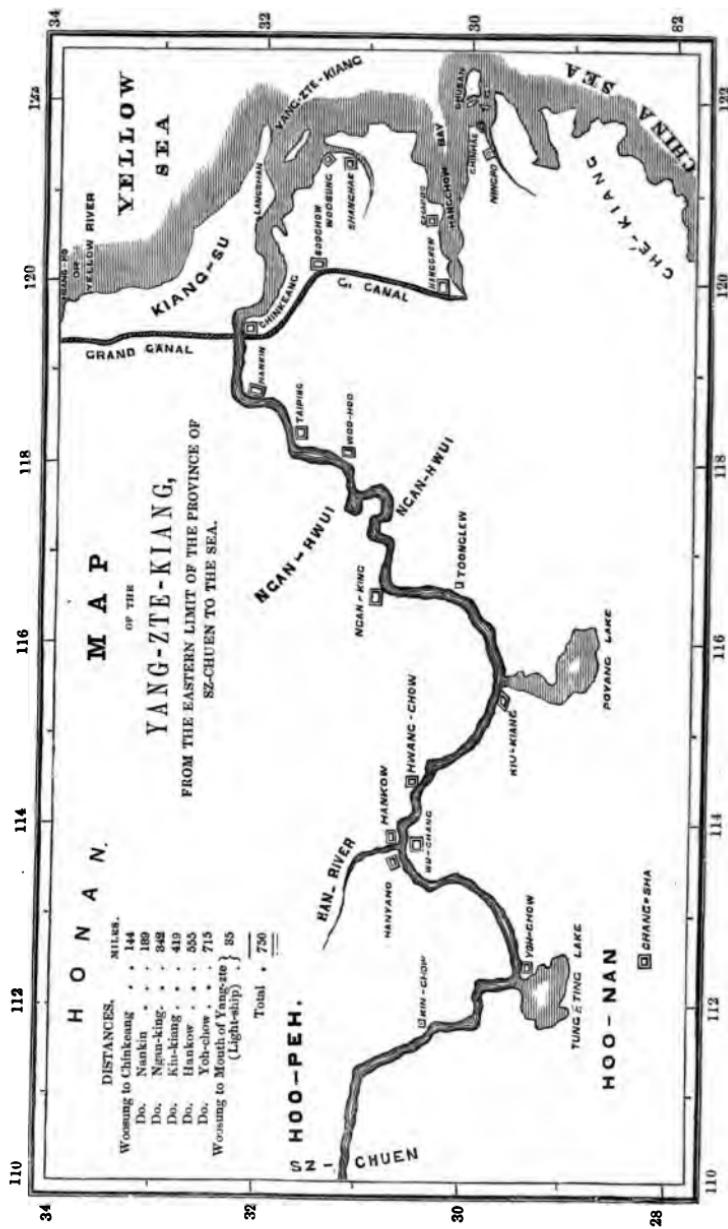
The Taepings proceeded on to the Tung-ting lake, and captured the city of Yoh-chow, situated at the point of junction of that lake with the Yang-zte-kiang. After ransacking the granaries and treasury of Yoh-chow, they advanced on by the Yang-zte, and soon arrived at the city of Han-yang, which they took possession of on the 23rd of December ; they then despatched a portion of their forces across the river to invest the city of Wu-chang, provincial capital of the province of Hoo-peh, which city was captured early in January, 1853. The official report of this affair states that the rebels, perceiving that two of the gates on the western side led to the Yang-zte-kiang, secretly dug a mine, and, introducing several hundred pounds' weight of gunpowder, they blew up about fifty feet of the wall,

when on the 12th of January, 1853, they took the city by storm. The lieutenant-governor of Hoo-nan, and many of his officers died in the defence of the place.

The Taepings occupied these two important cities of Han-yang and Wu-chang, together with the adjoining famous (in a commercial sense) city of Hankow, until February, during which time they collected money and provisions to an immense amount. About the 8th of February, having loaded their vessels with men and stores, they proceeded down the river towards Nankin. On the 18th they captured Kiu-kiang, a city standing near the junction of the Poyang lake with the Yang-zte. The city of Ngan-king, capital of the province of Nganhui, was entered on the 25th, and the inhabitants were forced to contribute largely towards the maintenance of the advancing army. On the 4th of March Woo-hoo was captured, and on the 8th the Taeping forces arrived before the city of Nankin.

Upon this the Emperor Hien-fung declared his intention of proceeding to the altar, and there present his heartfelt supplications for peace. "In the decree relating thereto the emperor blames his ministers for pursuing wrong measures, but likewise condemns himself for not instituting a searching inquiry into abuses, which abuses have given rise to the rebellion and distressed the people. Thinking upon this he declares that he is unable to eat or sleep. But blaming himself he deems an empty ceremony; he therefore anxiously and humbly entreats august Heaven to pardon his offences, and save his poor people."¹

¹ Gazette.





CHAPTER VIII.

Fall of Nankin — Proclamations — Visit of Sir George Bonham in H.M.S. 'Hermes' — Army Regulations — Dr. Taylor at Chin-keang.

NANKIN was taken by assault on the 19th of March, 1853. The Taepings adopted the same method of attack as at Wu-chang and Chang-sha. By springing a mine under an angle of the wall a breach was effected, through which they stormed the city, meeting with but a very faint resistance. Mr. Meadows, from inquiries made subsequently at Nankin, states the imperial garrison in the city to have been not less than seven or eight thousand able-bodied men. He says: —“These Manchus had to fight for all that is dear to man; for the imperial family which had always treated them well, for the honour of their nation, for their own lives, and for the lives of their wives and children. This they well knew, the Heavenly Prince having openly declared the first duty of his mission to be their extermination. It might have been expected, therefore, that they would have made a desperate fight in self-defence, yet they did not strike a blow. It would seem as if the irresistible progress and inveterate enmity of the insurgents had bereft them of all sense and strength, and of all manhood, for they merely threw themselves on the ground before the leaders, and piteously implored for mercy with cries of ‘Spare my

life, Prince! Spare my life, Prince!' They may have been paralyzed by the thought that their impending fate was the retribution of heaven for the indiscriminate slaughter of whole populations by their ancestors, when they conquered the country; as at Canton, for instance, where the Chinese still speak revengefully of the extermination of the inhabitants on the forces of the present dynasty taking that city."

"Only about a hundred escaped out of a population of more than twenty thousand, the rest—men, women, and children—were all put to the sword. 'We killed them all,' said the insurgents with emphasis; the recollection bringing back into their faces the dark shade of unsparring sternness they must have borne when the appalling execution was going on. 'We killed them all, to the infant in arms. We left not a root to sprout from.' The bodies were thrown into the Yang-zte."¹

The simplest way of judging the feelings of the Taepings towards the ruling Manchu dynasty, is that of examining a proclamation issued by Yang, the Eastern king, during the year preceding the capture of Nankin. After a bombastic preamble it states:—

"We hereby promulgate our explicit orders in every place, and say, oh! you multitudes, listen to our words. We conceive that the empire belongs to the Chinese, and not to the Tartars; the food and raiment found therein belong to the Chinese, and not to the Tartars; the men and women inhabiting this region are subjects and children of the Chinese, and not of the Tartars. But,

¹ Although the garrison of Tartars only amounted to 7000 or 8000 able-bodied men, their wives and families would make the whole amount of Tartars resident in the city equal, at the smallest computation, to twenty thousand persons.

alas ! ever since the Ming dynasty lost its influence, the Manchus availed themselves of the opportunity to throw China into confusion, and deprive the Chinese of their empire : they also robbed them of their food and clothing, as well as oppressed and ravished their sons and daughters, and the Chinese, notwithstanding they possessed such an extensive territory and multitudinous subjects, allowed the Tartars to do as they pleased without making the least objection. Can the Chinese still deem themselves men ? Ever since the Manchus have spread their poisonous influence through China, the flame of oppression has risen up to heaven, and the vapour of corruption has defiled the celestial throne, the offensive odour has spread over the four seas, and the demoniacal influence has distressed surrounding regions ; while the Chinese with bowed heads and dejected spirits willingly become the servants of others. How strange it is that there are no men in China ! China is the head, Tartary is the feet ; China is the land of spirits, Tartary the land of demons. Why may China be deemed the land of spirits ? Because the true Spirit, the great God, our Heavenly Father, made heaven and earth, the land and the sea (and the Chinese honour him) ; therefore from of old China has been termed the land of spirits. Why are the Tartars to be considered demons ? Because the devilish serpent, the king of Hades, is a corrupt demon, and the Tartars have been in the habit of worshipping him ; therefore may the Tartars be considered demons. But, alas ! the feet have assumed the place of the head, and demons have usurped the land of spirits, while they have constrained our Chinese people to become demons like themselves. If all the bamboos of the southern hills were to be used as pens they would not be enough to detail the obscenities of these Tartars ; and if all the waves of the Eastern sea were to be employed they would not be sufficient to wash away their sins, which reach to heaven. We will merely enumerate a few general circumstances that are well known to all men. The Chinese have a form peculiarly their own, but these Manchus have commanded them to shave the hair round their heads, and wear a long tail behind, thus causing the Chinese to assume the appearance of brute animals.¹ The Chinese have a dress peculiar to themselves,

¹ It is a remarkable proof of the supremacy of the Tartars that they should have felt themselves powerful enough a few years after their conquest to enforce a command which so completely changed the head-dress of a nation so numerous and powerful. It equally proves the peculiar submissiveness of the Chinese to any recognized ruler.

but these Manchus have caused them to wear knobs on their caps, with Tartar clothes and monkey caps, while they discard the robes and head-dress of former dynasties, thus causing the Chinese to forget their origin. . . . The Chinese have their own laws and regulations, but the Manchus have manufactured devilish enactments, so that our Chinese people cannot escape the meshes of their net, nor can they tell how to dispose of their hands and feet, by which means our young men are brought entirely under their control. The Chinese have their own language, but the Manchus have introduced the slang of the capital and interfered with Chinese expressions, designing thus to seduce the Chinese by their Tartar brogue. Whenever drought and inundations occur the government manifests no compassion, but quietly sees our people scattered abroad or dying of hunger, until the bleached bones are as thick as jungle, by which the country is depopulated. The Manchus also have allowed corrupt magistrates and covetous officers to spread themselves over China, flaying the skin and devouring the fat of our people, until both men and women meet and lament by the road-side to see our fellow-subjects reduced to want and poverty. Officers are to be obtained by bribes, crimes are to be bought off with money; rich fellows engross all authority, while heroes are filled with despair, by which means all the noble spirits in the empire are overwhelmed with despair and die. Should any, animated by a patriotic feeling, seek to revive China from its ruins, they are accused of fostering rebellion, and their whole race exterminated, by which means all heroic ardour is repressed in China. But the ways in which the Manchus have deluded China and abused it are too numerous to detail; for they are cunning and artful in the extreme. These Tartars, forgetting the meanness and obscurity of their origin, and taking advantage of Woo-san-kwei's introduction, have usurped dominion in China, where they have carried their villainies to the utmost. Let us for a moment look into the origin of these Manchu Tartars. Their first ancestor was a cross-breed between a white fox and a red dog, from whom sprang this race of imps that have since increased abundantly. They contract marriages without ceremony, and pay no regard to the relations of life or the rules of civilised society. At a time when China was destitute of heroes they seized upon the government of the country: the wild fox thus ascended

¹ Woo-san-kwei, the old Ming general, who, by calling in the Manchus to aid the government, led to the overthrow of the Ming dynasty.

the imperial throne, and these washed monkeys, having put off their caps, rushed into the royal court ; while our Chinese people, instead of ploughing up their holes and digging down their dens, have allowed themselves to be taken in their devices, to be insulted over by them, and to obey their command ; and what is worse, our civil and military officers, coveting the gains of office, have bowed down in the midst of these herds of dogs and foxes. A child three feet high is generally esteemed very ignorant, but if you were to tell him to make obeisance to a parcel of dogs and swine he would redden with indignation : and what are these Tartars but dogs and swine ? Some of you have read books and are acquainted with history, and do you not feel in the slightest degree ashamed ? Formerly Wan-theen-seang¹ and Sea-fang-teh² swore that they would rather die than serve the Mongols. Sze-ko-fah³ and Keu-shih-see⁴ swore that they would rather die than serve the Manchus. These facts must be familiar to you all. According to our calculation the Manchus cannot be above a hundred thousand, and we Chinese amount to more than fifty millions ; but for fifty millions to be ruled over by a hundred thousand is very disgraceful. Now, happily, a retributive Providence being about to restore the country to its rightful owners, and China having some prospect of a revival, men's minds being bent on good government, it is evident that the Tartars have not long to rule. Their three times seven, or 210 years' lease, is about to expire, and the extraordinary personage of the five times nine has already appeared.⁵ The iniquities of the Tartars are full ; high Heaven has manifested its indignation, and commanded our Celestial king sternly to display his Heavenly majesty and erect the standard of righteousness, sweeping away the demoniacal brood, and perfectly cleansing our flowery land.'

¹ Wan-theen-seang would not submit to the Mongols, and was slain by Kubla-khan.

² One of the adherents of the Sung dynasty, who, on being seized by the Mongols, refused to eat, and so died.

³ Killed himself when the Ming dynasty was irretrievably lost.

⁴ Lost his life in fighting for the Ming cause (1644).

⁵ "Allusion to an expression in the Book of Diagrams, under the Kéen diagram, or five and nine, where it is said that 'the dragon flies up to heaven,' which means that a new monarch is about to ascend the throne of China.—*Translator.*"

This proclamation, after exhorting the Chinese to join the rebel forces, and offering large rewards both temporal and future, concludes as follows:—

“ You, our countrymen, have been aggrieved by the oppressions of the Manchus long enough ; if you do not change your politics, and with united strength and courage sweep away every remnant of these Tartars, how can you answer it to God in the highest heavens ? We have now set in motion our righteous army, above to revenge the insult offered to God in deceiving Heaven, and below to deliver China from its inverted position, thus sternly sweeping away every vestige of Tartar influence and unitedly enjoying the happiness of the Taeping dynasty.”

Two important proclamations were made by the Taepings, when proceeding on their route to Nankin. The first was issued when they were bordering on the Yang-zte-kiang ; it was intended to calm the minds of the labouring classes, and was distributed in the cities on their line of march. It has been translated as follows:—

“ It appears that throughout the empire rapacious officers are worse than violent robbers ; and the corrupt mandarins of the public offices are no better than wolves and tigers, all originating in the vicious and sottish monarch at the head of affairs, who drives honest people to a distance, and admits to his presence the most worthless of mankind, selling offices, and disposing of preferments, while he reproves men of virtuous talent, so that the spirit of avarice is daily inflamed, and high and low are contending together for gain ; the rich and the great are abandoned to vice without control, whilst the poor and miserable have none to redress their wrongs ; the very recital of which exasperates one’s feelings, and makes one’s hair to stand on end. To refer to the case of the land revenue in particular, it appears that of late the exactions have increased manifold, while the taxes due up to the thirtieth year of the last king’s reign were at one time said to be remitted, and then again exacted until the resources of the people are exhausted and their miseries grown to excess. When our benevolent men and virtuous scholars contemplate these things their minds are deeply wounded, and they

cannot restrain themselves from rooting out these plundering officers and wolfish mandarins of each prefecture and district, in order to save the people from the flames and floods in which they are now involved."

"At the present moment, our army being now about to proceed to the region of Kiang-si, we deem it necessary to announce to the people that they need not be alarmed; while agriculturists, mechanics, merchants, and traders may each peacefully pursue their occupations. It is necessary, however, that the rich should have in readiness stores of provisions to aid in the sustenance of our troops. Let each clearly report the amount of his contributions to this object, and we will furnish him with receipts, as security that hereafter the money shall all be repaid." [This, as usual, concludes with promises of reward to the obedient, threats of punishment to those who fail in aiding them.]

The next proclamation was issued by Yang when the Taepings were within a few days' journey from Nankin.

"I, the general, in obedience to the royal commands, have put in motion the troops for the punishment of the oppressor; and in every place to which I have come, the enemy, at the first report, have dispersed like scattered rubbish. As soon as a city has been captured, I have put to death the rapacious mandarins and corrupt magistrates therein, but have not injured a single individual of the people, so that all of you may take care of your families and attend to your business without alarm and trepidation. I have already issued proclamations to this effect, with which I presume you are acquainted. I have heard, however, that throughout the villages there are numbers of lawless vagabonds who, previous to the arrival of our troops, take advantage of the disturbed state of the country to defile men's wives and daughters, and burn or plunder the property of honest people. I, the general, have already apprehended some of these, and decapitated about a score of them; now, because their localities are somewhat removed from the provincial capital, these persons flatter themselves that I, the general, am not aware of their proceedings, which are very much to be detested; I have, therefore, sent a great officer, named Yuen, as a special messenger, with some hundreds of soldiers, to go through the villages, and as soon as he finds these vagabonds he is commissioned forthwith to decapitate them, while the honest inhabitants have nothing more to do than to

stick up the word "shun" (obedient) over their doors, and then they have nothing to fear. I would wish to ask those of you who have given of your money, and aided with your provisions (the former government) in order to purchase titles and official dignities, what is the glory of such distinctions? and even those literary honours which the Manchu robbers have conferred at the literary examinations, of what use are they? I and my followers are all subjects of the great Chinese empire, and students of the books handed down by the great sages of antiquity; how, then, could we stoop to receive rank and emolument from the Manchu barbarians? Do you, therefore, each one throw away the diplomas which you have received, and deceive yourselves no longer with them. As soon as I have taken Nankin I will consult about arrangements for the literary examinations; and after having weighed the merits of the respective candidates I will select the most worthy scholars, and settle the degrees of literary rank to which they are entitled. With regard to the temples and monasteries which belong to the priests of Buddha and Taou, together with the property possessed by the brothels and gambling-houses, it is much better that it should be distributed among the poor people of the villages. At present we are seizing the priests of Buddha and Taou throughout the country, and putting them to death, and we are inquiring into those who have been foremost in the building and repair of the Buddhist temples, that we may have them apprehended likewise. When I the general have led forward my troops to the destruction of the Manchus, I will deliberate further about the examinations, in which everything shall be arranged according to the original customs of the Chinese. Should any disobey our injunctions, as soon as our grand army arrives we will not leave them a dog or a fowl remaining."

A few days after the capture of Nankin, the Tae-pings detached a large force to occupy the principal adjoining cities of Chin-keang on the south bank, and Yang-chow on the north bank of the Yang-zte. Both surrendered without making the slightest resistance (1st April, 1853). The garrison of Chin-keang fled without firing a shot, and a battery of three miles in length fell into the hands of the captors without a struggle. All the inhabitants of these cities were taken

to Nankin, and were there forced to assist in all the labour requisite to repair the breaches and place the town in a creditable state of defence. Those that were capable of being formed into troops were then enrolled among the Taeping forces. In the twelve months that had now elapsed since the evacuation of Yung-gnan, great changes had been made both in the constitution and numbers of the Taepings. Then a small body of less than ten thousand, including women and children, they since had gradually increased their strength, until at the time of the occupation of Nankin they numbered at a moderate estimate over seventy thousand. Of these a large proportion were from the roving bands of local rebels in the provinces through which they had passed ; others had been forced into their ranks against their will : the latter were chiefly lads under eighteen years of age. The original Kwang-si men, however, formed the nucleus of the entire mass, and from these, as being the most trustworthy, were selected the men that were required to fill the posts of civil and military officers. The entire number of people—men, women, and children—that were sent into Nankin from the cities of Yang-chow, Chin-keang, &c., was not less than a hundred thousand. Thus the Taepings, at the time when the English first came into contact with them (April, 1853), had a force at their disposal of at least one hundred thousand able-bodied men. The leader (Tien-Wang), acting, doubtless, upon the principles that he had found in the Chinese works he had read, as soon as he found himself installed in his new capital, adopted the customs of the ancient Chinese emperors. The

yamuns (official residences) were assigned to the respective chiefs who there held their minor courts. Tribunals were formed in accordance with those then existing at Pekin ; officers were appointed to carry out the magisterial duties, and lastly, the Tien-Wang himself, after taking up his abode in the principal palace, together with all his concubines (who by this time had increased considerably in numbers), completely shut himself out from the vulgar gaze of his followers, and even his brother chiefs were only admitted to his presence at rare intervals. Following in the footsteps of the early Ming emperors, he chose to consider Nankin to be the capital of all China, and in his proclamations Nankin is called the “heavenly capital, and residence of the Heavenly King.” If instead of dreaming away his life and nursing his pride at Nankin, he had at once proceeded with all his forces upon Pekin, how very different would have been the state of his affairs! In all probability Pekin would have been captured, and the Tartar emperor been forced to have fled into the outer province of Manchuria. History so clearly proves how easily the Chinese submit to any authority that proceeds from the acknowledged capital, and that has the power of collecting the taxes and nominating or degrading officers, that there does not seem any reason to doubt the probability, that if the Taepings had been governed by a chief possessing a little more prescience and energy than their present one, their dynasty would have now been ruling over China.

Alarmed by the progress that the rebellion was making, the imperialists, holding the positions between

Shanghae and Nankin, tried to raise the spirits of the people by issuing proclamations, in which it was stated that the English ships of war intended to assist them against the rebels. Partly to explain our intention of perfect neutrality, and partly in order to see personally to what extent the rebellion had spread, and what really were the creed and principles of the Taepings, Sir George Bonham proceeded up to Nankin on board H.M.S. 'Hermes,' and arrived there on the 27th of April, 1853. Mr. Meadows accompanied the expedition as government-interpreter, and landed to arrange preliminaries for Sir George Bonham's reception. After encountering some difficulties that were thrown in his way, Mr. Meadows succeeded in obtaining an entry into the presence of the Northern and Assistant kings. The conversation that ensued turned chiefly on the relative rank of the chiefs, and the circumstances under which Sir G. Bonham would be received. The falsehoods contained in the imperialist proclamations were explained, and assurance was given of our perfect neutrality. The Northern king seems to have listened to all this with great indifference ; "the conversation, in so far as directed by him, consisting mainly of inquiries as to our religious belief, and expositions of their own. He stated that, as children and worshippers of one God, we were all brethren ; and after receiving my assurance that such had long been our view also, inquired if I knew the 'Heavenly Rules.' I replied that I was most likely acquainted with them, though unable to recognise them under that name ; and, after a moment's thought, asked if they were ten in number ? He

answered eagerly in the affirmative. I then began repeating the substance of the first of the Ten Commandments, but had not proceeded far before he laid his hand on my shoulder in a friendly way, and exclaimed, 'The same as ourselves ! the same as ourselves!' while the simply observant expression on the face of his companion disappeared before one of satisfaction, as the two exchanged glances.

"He then stated, with reference to my previous inquiry as to their feelings and intentions towards the British, that not merely might peace exist between us, but that we might be intimate friends. He added, we might now, at Nankin, land and walk about where we pleased. He spoke repeatedly of a foreigner at Canton whom he named Lo-ho-sun,¹ as being a good man. He described this person as one who cured the sick without remuneration, and as having been recently home for a short period. He reverted again and again, with an appearance of much gratitude, to the circumstance that he and his companions in arms had enjoyed the special protection and aid of God, without which they could never have been able to do what they had done against superior numbers and resources; and, alluding to our declarations of neutrality and non-assistance to the Manchus, said with a quiet air of thorough conviction, 'It would be wrong for you to help them, and, what is more, it would be of no use. Our Heavenly Father helps us, and no one can fight with him.'"

The most noticeable point in this conversation, as reported, is the supreme indifference with which the chiefs

¹ Lo-ho-sun—Mr. Roberts.

seemed to regard our proffered neutrality. Knowing the province from which they had sprung, and supposing that frequent mention must have been there made of the power of our forces in 1841-43, it is strange that more anxiety should not have been shown to obtain our approval of their acts: the similarity of their faith with ours was the only point in which they appear to have felt interested.

The Northern king, in reply to a question put by Mr. Meadows, who did not approve of the arrangements proposed for the interview with Sir George Bonham, said, "However high his rank may be, he cannot be so high as the persons in whose presence you are now sitting." The next day the following mandate was sent off to the 'Hermes':—

"Commands are hereby issued to the brethren from afar that they may all understand the rules of ceremony.

"Whereas God the Heavenly Father has sent our sovereign down on earth, as the true sovereign of all nations in the world, all people in the world who wish to appear at his court must yield obedience to the rules of ceremony. They must prepare representations, stating who and what they are, and from whence they came, after previous presentation of which only can audience be accorded them. Obey these commands.—24th day of the 3rd month of the 3rd year of the Heavenly State of Tae-ping. (28th April, 1853.)

"NOTE.—No seal is affixed, because your petition of yesterday had none."

This latter remark refers to a letter that had been sent from the 'Hermes,' stating the reason of her arrival.

This mandate rather astonished Sir George Bonham and suite, who did not expect to meet with such arrogance, and it was returned to the chiefs together with

a copy of the treaty then in force between the English and the government, as also a strong letter expressing dissatisfaction.

On the following afternoon Lae, one of the inferior chiefs, went on board the 'Hermes' to explain matters, and it was then arranged that the next morning at eleven A.M. chairs and horses, accompanied by officers holding high rank, should be in readiness to convey our plenipotentiary to the residences of the Northern and Eastern kings.

The Taepings carried into execution their part of the agreement, and the chairs, &c., were duly down at the landing-place at the time specified. Sir G. Bonham, however, deeming that some difficulties in the way of ceremonial might injure the good feeling then existing, made the boisterous state of the weather an excuse for not landing.

On the morning of the 2nd of May a lad, who had acted as a guide, brought off a communication written on yellow silk: the translation of this as given by Mr. Meadows is as follows:—

"Of the Heavenly kingdom of Tae-ping by the true Divine Commission, We,

YANG, SEAOU,
The Eastern King, &c. &c. and The Western King, &c. &c.

Hereby issue a decree to the English from afar who have hitherto revered Heaven, and have now come to give in their allegiance to our sovereign, specially enjoining them to entertain no doubts, but to set their minds at rest. The Great God, the Heavenly Father, the Supreme Lord, in the beginning created, in six days, heaven and earth, land and sea, men and all things; from that time till this the whole world has been one house, and all within the four seas have been brethren; there can be no difference between man and

man, no distinction between high and low born. But from the time that evil spirits entered into the hearts of men, they have not acknowledged the great grace of God the Heavenly Father, in giving and sustaining life; neither have they acknowledged the great merit of Jesus, the Heavenly Brother, in the work of redemption; and they have caused lumps of clay, wood, and stone to do strange things in this world. Hence it was that the Tartars, the demon Huns, succeeded in thievishly possessing themselves of our heavenly country.

“But happily the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Brother have from early times displayed Divine manifestations among you English; and you have long revered and worshipped God the Heavenly Father, and Jesus the Heavenly Brother, so that the true doctrine has been preserved and the gospel has had its guardians.

“Happily now again the Great God, the Heavenly Father, the Supreme Lord, has manifested His great grace. He sent angels to take the heavenly king, our sovereign, up into Heaven, and there personally gave him power to sweep away from the thirty-three heavens the evil spirits, whom he expelled from thence into this nether world. Again, to our great bliss, in April, 1848, the Great God, the Heavenly Father, manifested his great grace and compassion by descending on earth; and in October, the Lord, the Saviour of the World, the Heavenly Brother, also manifested his great grace and compassion by descending on earth. From that time for six years the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Brother have largely directed our affairs, and helped us with a mighty arm, displaying numberless manifestations and evidences, exterminating a vast number of evil spirits and demons, and aiding our Heavenly king in assuming the sovereignty of the world. Now since you English have not held vast distances too far, but have come to acknowledge allegiance here, not only are the armies of our heavenly dynasty in great delight and joy, but in the high heavens even the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Brother will also regard with pleasure this evidence of your loyalty and sincerity. We therefore issue this special decree, permitting you, the English chief, with the brethren under your superintendence, constant ingress and egress in full accordance with your inclination and wish, whether to aid us in the extermination of the demons (Tartars), or to pursue as usual your commercial avocations. And it is our earnest hope that you will, with us, achieve the merit of diligently serving our sovereign, and, with us, repay the goodness of the Father of Souls.

"We now bestow upon you English the new Books of Declarations of the Taiping dynasty, in order that the whole world may learn to revere and worship the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Brother; and also know where the Heavenly Prince exists, so that all may offer their congratulations where the true commission (to rule) has fallen.

"A special decree for the information of all men. Given this twenty-sixth day of the third month of the Kwei-haou year (1st May, 1853), of the heavenly kingdom of Taiping."

"To this very extraordinary document," writes Sir George Bonham,¹ "I returned the accompanying reply:"—

"I have received your communication, part of which I am unable to understand, and especially that portion which implies that the English are subordinate to your sovereign. Owing to its contents, I am now compelled to remind you that my nation, by treaty entered into with the Chinese government, has obtained the right of trading at the five ports of Canton, Foo-chow, Amoy, Ningpo, and Shanghae; and that if you or any other people presume to injure in any manner the persons or property of British subjects, immediate steps will be taken to resent the injury in the same manner as similar injuries were resented ten years ago, resulting in the capture of Chin-keang, Nankin, and the neighbouring cities, and in the Treaty of Peace, the conditions of which you will have learnt from the copy sent to you the day before yesterday.

(Signed) "S. G. BONHAM."

At four P.M., shortly after Sir G. Bonham's answer had been dispatched, the 'Hermes' weighed, and proceeded down the river on her way back to Shanghae; when passing Chin-keang, she was fired upon by the rebel batteries and junks. The 'Hermes' in her turn distributed amongst them some of her shot and shell as she slowly dropped down past the long line of defences to an anchorage a few miles below. Some correspondence

¹ China Blue Book, 1853.]

took place with reference to this affair, between Sir George Bonham and the military commandant at Chin-keang. The latter, who proved to be Lo-ta-kang, the Triad chief, apologised for what had occurred, and threw the blame upon his subordinates. The 'Hermes' arrived at Shanghae on the 5th of May. Nothing could have been more unsatisfactory than this, our first intercourse with the Taepings. It might have been presumed that in their correspondence a little less arrogance would have been displayed. The tone of the letter sent off at Nankin was not probably more offensive in its pretensions than would have been written under similar circumstances by the Tartar government; but the case is very different when it is considered from what a very low origin the writers of the despatch] sprung. Their assumption of supreme power at such a very early period of their progress, together with the indifference they displayed towards a would-be friendly Power, was undoubtedly the reason why Sir George Bonham should have so strongly disapproved of their proceedings. He, in his report, says, that "the sooner the minds of these men are disabused, in regard to their universal supremacy, the better for all parties." That portion of the document which speaks of the descents of the Heavenly Father and Brother evidently alludes to those before-mentioned cases of ecstatic fits undergone by Yang and Seaou. The books presented by them contained all their views on politics, religion, military organization, and court etiquette. These were all translated by the late Dr. Medhurst, a missionary long resident in China, and who bore a high reputation

for his knowledge of the language.¹ The most interesting of these are the productions of the pen of the Tien-Wang. He seems to have confined himself to writing moral precepts and religious declarations. The military proclamations, &c., were left to the other chiefs, principally to Yang; and these latter, according to Dr. Medhurst, were generally composed in a very inferior style, being full of provincial vulgarisms.

The Book of Regulations for the Army was published in 1852, and tends to show that their military organization (on paper), was not to be despised. The rules laid down for an army on service are divided in a manner similar to the "Commandments," and are worthy of being quoted. Those to be observed in camp are:—

"1. Carefully obey the celestial regulations.

"2. Make yourselves thoroughly acquainted with the commands of Heaven, and the form of worship, with praise and thanksgiving to be used every morning and evening, as well as the orders issued by the sovereign.

"3. Cultivate good morals, avoid the smoking of tobacco and the drinking of wine, be just and mild; do not conceal offences nor

¹ The Books were twelve in number, viz.—

1. The Book of Religious Precepts of the Taeping Dynasty.
2. The Trimerical Classic.
3. An Ode for Youth.
4. The Book of Celestial Decrees.
5. The Book of Declaration of the Divine Will, made during the Heavenly Father's descent upon earth.
6. The Imperial Declaration of Taeping.
7. Proclamations from Eastern and Western Kings.
8. Arrangement of the Army.
9. Regulations of the Army.
10. A New Calendar.
11. Ceremonial Regulations.
12. Book of Genesis, chap. i.-xxviii.

indulge partialities, nor comply with inferiors at the risk of disobeying superiors.

“4. With united heart and effort obey the requisitions of officers; do not conceal the number of military weapons, nor hide gold and silver ornaments.

“5. Observe the distinction between the camp of the males and that of the females; let not men and women give or take from each other's hands.

“6. Make yourself familiar with the signals given for the assembling of troops by means of the gong, horn, or drum, whether by day or by night.

“7. Do not, without necessity, go from one camp or legion to another, lest you should throw into confusion public arrangements.

“8. Learn correctly the proper titles of officers, and the terms to be used in addressing them.

“9. Let your arms and accoutrements be always in order and ready for immediate service.

“10. Do not falsify the laws of the state and the regulations of the sovereign; do not wrongly communicate the military signals or the regimental orders.”

Some of the rules that are ordered to be observed on the march prove that the framers of them were desirous to prevent the disorders that usually follow in the train of an advancing army.

The first rule says—

“Every soldier and officer, whether inside or outside men, from fifteen years old and upwards, must carry about with him the necessary military accoutrements, provisions, cooking utensils, oil, and salt; let no spear want its shaft.”

The fifth prohibits officers or soldiers, male or female, from entering into the villages to cook rice or steal food; they—

“are not to injure the dwellings of the people, nor steal their property; neither let them ransack apothecaries' or other shops, nor the public offices in the different prefectures and districts.

“Let not any one impress the outside menials who sell tea, rice, or water, to be bearers of burthens; neither let any fraudulently

appropriate the baggage of any of their brethren throughout the host.

“Let not any hang up their lanterns on the road-side or in the shops, and go to sleep, so as to impede the march; but let all, whether in front or rear, press forward in succession, and not attempt to run away.

“Let not any one set fire to the dwellings of the people; let not aged and infirm bearers of lanterns be wickedly put to death.”

The above regulations appear to be much at variance with the reported cruelties of the Taepings; but it is probable that these have been much exaggerated. The necessity, however, that evidently existed, to promulgate these orders, proves that great excesses were frequently committed. This cannot be a matter for surprise, for even with disciplined troops it is well known how difficult it is to prevent the commission of the gravest crimes when marching through an enemy’s country; and it could not be expected that men of the stamp and origin that formed the major portion of the Taeping forces—men gathered from the disaffected local bands of rebels in the southern provinces—would form an exception to such a general rule.

Two months after the return of the ‘Hermes,’ Dr. Taylor, an American missionary, animated apparently with hopes of conversion, went to pay a visit to the Taepings at Chin-keang, carrying with him a carpet-bag filled with tracts and other religious books; in addition to these he carried some medicines in order to act as medical missionary if required. To this visit we are indebted for the best *personal* information upon the state and circumstances of the rebel forces at this period (June, 1853).

Upon Dr. Taylor's return to Shanghae, he, for reasons which did not transpire, declined publishing a narrative of his journey ; but this was rectified by means of a local paper,¹ which published such details as came to its knowledge in a trustworthy form. He left Shanghae on the 2nd of June, and proceeded up to Chin-keang in a native boat. His boatmen refused to take him nearer than two miles below the city ; upon which, at day-break on the 5th, he landed alone, taking with him his carpet-bag, and walked along the river-bank until within sight of some people working at some stockades. These beckoned him to approach.

"Our friend found the city fortified with great strength, and no little military skill, by means of ditches, palisades, embankments, abattis, trous-de-loup, chevaux-de-frise, &c. When he had succeeded after much difficulty in passing these various obstructions, one of the insurgents came down the hill, took his carpet-bag, and led the way up to the garrison. On coming within the stockades, he found himself surrounded by great numbers of fierce-looking, long-haired men, who addressed him as 'Brother.' He was asked many questions, but being desirous to get an interview with Lo, commandant of the forces, he resolutely refused to answer any till conducted into the presence of that officer. After many ineffectual efforts to induce him to communicate with officers of inferior rank, he was furnished with an escort of several soldiers, who conducted him to the head-quarters of the commandant within the city walls. When this person made his

¹ North China Herald.

appearance, so destitute was he of the pompous display so common to Chinese officials, our friend began to think another attempt was being made to thwart him in his design of obtaining access to their chief; and, at first, refused to reply to his interrogations; nor was it until his attendants had invested him with a yellow and red silk gown, that the doubts of his visitor were removed, who then informed him fully of himself, whence he came, and the object of his visit. At the same time opening his carpet-bag, he presented him with the books, which gave evident satisfaction, and elicited the remark which was oft repeated, that the doctrines were the same as their own—they indeed claiming a common brotherhood with foreigners. Lo hospitably entertained our friend at his own quarters during his visit, and on leaving provided him with a horse and an escort of several hundred soldiers with their officers, to accompany him beyond the city walls and the stockades to the river bank. We hear Dr. Taylor observed that they had no regular uniform, probably from want of a sufficient quantity of material of the colours requisite, consequently their appearance was of a most motley colour, being attired in clothing of all colours and descriptions. Many of them had their hair bound with a bit of red or yellow silk in a kind of knot on the top of the head. They were mostly armed with long spears and swords, few comparatively having matchlocks. Great numbers of boys were seen bearing spears and swords, and performing duty with the older soldiers. Their stockades and batteries were well

provided with guns of every size and description, from gingalls to large cannon. Their flags of a triangular form were very numerous, inscribed with the name of their chief, and the title of the new dynasty. On repeated inquiries of different individuals at different times and places, as to their numbers, Dr. Taylor was uniformly told there were fifty or sixty thousand insurgents at that city. He observed no regularity or order in their movements, and yet a state of perfect discipline and subordination prevailed. The city presented in the streets a scene of utter desolation ; the doors and shutters of all the shops and dwellings having been taken to form the stockades along the bank of the river. The temporary stockades were being rapidly taken down, and replaced by well-built heavy walls of brick and stone. Blacksmiths and carpenters were making warlike implements and gun-carriages ; and were the only artizans seen pursuing their regular avocations.

We understand our friend was present at their worship, which he describes as consisting of chanting hymns and doxologies in a very solemn manner, whilst those engaged in it remained seated ; after which, all kneeled, apparently with much reverence, closing their eyes, while one of their number uttered an audible prayer. Their chanting was accompanied with the usual dissonant instruments employed by the Chinese at their festivals.

These acts of worship were repeated twice or thrice a-day and included in them the grace before meat ; and

immediately afterwards they proceeded to the tables without further ceremony. Dr. Taylor saw no females, and on inquiry was informed they were all at Nankin. He saw tables placed with bowls of various kinds of food as offerings to the Supreme Being, among which were three bowls of tea, one for each person of the Trinity. In reply to frequent inquiries as to when and in what direction they would next move, Dr. Taylor was informed that they could not tell themselves, but must wait for intimations from their Heavenly Father. He was struck with the calm and earnest enthusiasm that pervaded the whole body, and the perfect confidence evinced in the justice of their cause, and in its final success. The Imperial fleet attacked the city during our friend's visit, and the Imperialist land forces were encamped on the hills in the vicinity of Chin-keang.

Before Dr. Taylor left he was given a letter written by the commandant, Lo-ta-kang, to the English brethren at Shanghae, from which it was evident that Lo did not approve of these visits.

The letter was translated as follows :

“ Lo, the fifth arranger of the forces attached to the palace of the celestial dynasty of Taeping, who have received the command of Heaven to rule the empire, communicates the following information to all his English brethren :—On the 1st day of the 5th moon (5th June) a brother belonging to your honourable nation, named Charles Taylor, brought hither a number of books, which have been received in order. Seeing that the above-named individual is a fellow worshipper of God, he is therefore acknowledged as a brother; the books, likewise, which he has brought agree substantially with our own, so that it appears we follow one and the same road. Formerly,

however, when a ship belonging to your honourable nation came hither (the 'Hermes'), she was followed by a fleet of impish vessels belonging to the false Tartars; now, also, when a boat from your honourable nation comes among us, the impish vessels of the Tartars again follow in its wake. Considering that your honourable nation is celebrated for its truth and fidelity, we, your younger brothers, do not harbour any suspicions. At present both heaven and men favour our design, and this is just the time for setting up the Chinese and abolishing the Tartar rule. We suppose that you, gentlemen, are well acquainted with the signs of the times, so that we need not enlarge on that subject; but while we, on our parts, do not prohibit commercial intercourse, we merely observe, that since the two parties are now engaged in warfare, the going to and fro is accompanied with inconvenience; and, judging from the present aspect of affairs, we should deem it better to wait a few months, until we have thoroughly destroyed the Tartars, when perhaps the subjects of your honourable nation could go and come without being involved in the tricks of these false Tartars. Would it not, in your estimation, also, be preferable? We take advantage of the opportunity to send you this communication for your intelligent inspection, and hope that every blessing may attend you. We also send a number of our own books, which please to circulate amongst you."

The information gathered through Dr. Taylor's visit is specially interesting upon the point of the religion of the Taepings. It shows that the religious forms and ceremonies were as strictly carried into practice at Chin-keang, forty-seven miles away from the immediate superintendence of the respective chiefs as at Nankin itself; and taking into consideration the fact that the governor of the former city was previously a member of the Triad Society, and not an original "God-worshipper," all due credit should be given to the Tien-Wang and his assistant chiefs for having been able, in so short a time, to enforce the observance of their religious laws.

For a year subsequent to the visit of the 'Hermes,' no European intercourse took place with the Taepings at their capital.

The important military proceedings of this year have now to be noticed, and it will be found requisite, in order clearly to understand them, to make frequent reference to the map.

CHAPTER IX.

Northern March — 'Susquehanna's' Visit to Nankin — Decalogue — Visions of the Eastern King — His death.

THE possession of Nankin caused a complete change in the tactics of the Taepings. Hitherto little better than a migratory horde, they had now concentrated all their forces at their capital and its immediate neighbourhood, and devoted their time to fortifying the cities they retained and drilling their troops. In addition to this, the minds of the Tien-Wang and other leaders were occupied in the formation of a kind of government, with its attendant tribunals and courts of justice. The imperialists gained great advantages by this stationary change. Instead of hopelessly following in the rear of an advancing and devastating army, they were now enabled to combine their forces on one or two points; and, consequently, the Taepings soon found themselves at Nankin and Chin-keang invested both by land and water by a force which they could have but small hopes of defeating in the field. Nankin became the great dépôt for stores and troops, and the plans now adopted were to send out bodies of men in different directions, either for the mere purpose of conquest, or else to obtain the necessaries required for the maintenance of the Nankin garrison. It was in May, 1853, that the great northern expedition was determined upon. It

has been doubted with what intention this expeditionary force was detached. Judging from the line of march, which was as far as possible direct for Pekin, it seems probable that the capture of that capital was intended ; but the force employed, and the officers appointed to command it, were peculiarly inefficient to carry out the plan with any hopes of ultimate success.

It was in the middle of May that the northern army of Taepings left Nankin and crossed to the northern bank of the Yang-zte-kiang. Their numbers do not appear to have exceeded six or seven thousand fighting men, and were commanded by one of the inferior chiefs ; the Tien-Wang and the four assistant wangs remaining behind at Nankin. After defeating a body of Tartar troops that were stationed near the point of debarkation, the army proceeded rapidly in a north-west direction through the provinces of Ngau-hwui and Hoo-nan. Kai-fung, the capital of the latter province, and famous to Europeans by being the city in which the small and only tribe of Jews in China have their synagogue and carry out their religious observances, was attacked without success, but great injury was caused to the city. Near this point the Taepings crossed the Yellow River, and proceeded to the departmental city of Hwae-king. Here they were checked in the northern progress by the imperialist forces, and were forced to diverge for a considerable distance in a westwardly direction as far as Yuen-keuh, which city they captured on the 4th of September. Here they again turned north, and with but slight deviations kept steadily on in the direction of Pekin, capturing several important cities on their way.

Late in September they entered the province of Chih-le, and, after a rapid advance through that province, capturing city after city with but little resistance, they arrived on the borders of the Grand Canal towards the close of October. Proceeding by the Grand Canal they reached and occupied, about the 28th October, the district city of Tsing-hae, distant about twenty miles from Tien-tsin. At this point their advance was arrested. A portion of their force detached from the main body appeared before Tien-tsin on the 30th October, but was driven back with considerable loss. At this time the Court at Pekin were much alarmed at the progress the Taepings were making, and every possible means was adopted to send troops down in sufficient numbers to stop them. A portion of the Manchu garrison of Pekin, together with a large force of Mongols, arrived before Tsing-hae early in November, and these were soon reinforced by the imperialist troops that had followed, as rapidly as possible, in the rear of the Taepings, ever since they had changed the direction of their march after the check received at Hwae-king. The combined forces now closely blockaded the rebel position at Tsing-hae. Here, in the north, everything was in favour of the imperialists. The roads were good, and consequently their cavalry was now of great service. Being near Tien-tsin, the great northern commercial city, they stood in no want of supplies, and Pekin could always, if required, detach additional troops. The Taepings, on the other hand, were completely cut off from all communications with their brethren at Nankin; besides which it is probable that few, if any,

of them were able to speak the dialect of the province in which they found themselves. The cold at this time of the year must have been intense, and would be much more felt by the lightly-clad southerns than by the hardy and inured Tartars wrapped in their furs.

Several unsuccessful sorties were made by the besieged during the months of November and December, and at last, on the 5th of February, 1854, after an occupation of three months, the Taepings evacuated the city, and commenced their retrograde march. Mr. Meadows, in commenting upon this northern movement, says with great truth that "the march of this Taeping army from Nankin to Tsing-hae is one of the most remarkable of which history gives record. The distance which the army marched in its advance from Nankin to Tsing-hae is not less than thirteen to fourteen hundred miles, and the very day that it left the northern bank of the Great River (Yang-zte-kiang) opposite Nankin, all communication with its friends at the later place was cut off, with the exception of such correspondence as could be maintained by disguised messengers. It was immediately followed by a force of the imperialists, detached from their armies of observation near Nankin and Chin-keang ; apart from which the local troops always closed in its rear as it advanced. The spectacle of this army, so isolated, making its way perseveringly northwards in spite of constantly accumulating difficulties in the shape of inclement weather and more numerous as well as more efficient foes ; swerving first to the west and then to the east, but never turning southwards during a period of six months ;—this spectacle speaks powerfully

for the strength of the Taeping organization." Another small army detached from the Taeping forces from Ngan-king, the capital of the province of Ngan-hwui, started on its march for the north in November, 1853. This army proceeded rapidly through the provinces of Ngan-hwui, Kiang-su, and Shantung, making an almost due north course, capturing city after city on its line of march. It crossed the Yellow River in March, and captured by storm, on the 12th April, the important city of Lin-tsing, on the borders of the provinces of Shantung and Chih-le. The first northern force, that had evacuated Tsing-hae in February is supposed to have joined the second army at this city. If the first army had been able to maintain its position at Tsing-hae until the second one had joined them, there is every probability that the combined troops would have captured and held Tien-tsin, and there waited until reinforcements arrived from Nankin. The fate of Pekin, and consequently that of the Manchu rule, was most dubious, as the court full well knew. The want of energy and foresight shown by the Taeping leaders at this period lost them the empire.

In May, 1854, the Taeping army, unsuccessful in most of its undertakings, and much harassed by the cavalry of their opponents, slowly turned back towards the south, and in the early part of the following year they had evacuated all that part of the country lying north of the Yellow River. The tactics pursued by both these northern armies seem to have been precisely the same as those adopted by the leaders on the march from Kwang-si to Nankin. All the principal cities on

the road were captured or attempted to be captured, but with no intention of occupying them. The inhabitants were forced to contribute by money or by grain what was necessary for the maintenance of the advancing force. The Manchu officials were decapitated, but the Chinese residents were spared. Immediately the Taepings evacuated a city the imperialists following in the rear re-occupied it, new magistrates were appointed, and things went on the same as before. The Taepings by their method gained a great advantage whenever some one terminal point was aimed at, as at Nankin.

The imperialist troops that followed them from Kwang-si and Hoo-nan, never were able to overtake them; and in the Pekin Gazette, which details the loss of Nankin, this very reason is assigned in explanation of its easy capture. On the other hand the Taepings never had any points to fall back upon in the event of defeat, and came to be considered as mere marauders without any hold or position in the country, save that one most important city or rather ruin—Nankin.

A short time subsequent to the departure of the first northern army in May, 1853, a large force was sent by the Taeping leaders up the Yang-zte-kiang, as far as the Poyang Lake. Ngan-king was occupied, and formed a base for operations. Many cities more or less important were entered, the granaries emptied, and then evacuated. Several actions took place with the imperialist troops with no very decisive results. This force was one of the many sent out from Nankin to collect

provisions and money, and it was no part of their instructions to hold the places that they captured. Early in 1854 one of these armies penetrated as far as the Tung-ting lake, and retraced a portion of their old line of march in the province of Hoo-nan. In June they re-captured the capital of Hoo-peh (Wu-chang), together with the adjoining cities of Han-yang and Hankow. The loss of these three important places so incensed the emperor that he ordered the governor of the province to be decapitated.

Thus in the middle of the year 1854, the Taepings were in possession of all the principal cities on the Yang-zte-kiang from Chin-keang to Hankow. To the north of this river, although not absolutely holding any city, yet their two northern armies were at this time spreading over the country, constantly engaging the imperialist troops, and a source of great anxiety and expense to the government. The Pekin Gazettes were full of requests for loans, and the sale of offices and degrees was carried on to an enormous extent. The emperor, alluding to the latter, states in one of the Gazettes his grief at being obliged by stern necessity to break through rules that were so necessary to the well-being of the people.

Meanwhile Nankin and its inhabitants remained much in the same position with regard to its military aspect, as in the previous year 1853. A year's tenure of power had not however tended to lower the pride and pretensions of the Tien-Wang and other kings. Through a visit paid them by the American frigate 'Susquehanna,' the European community in China

obtained most valuable information concerning them. The late Dr. Bridgeman, an eminent Chinese scholar, accompanied the expedition, and on his return wrote to the 'North China Herald' a full account of what he had seen.

His letter, written at a time when the Taepings were not so well understood as at present, contains some most erroneous impressions with regard to several points of their religion; but, apart from this, his opinions are expressed clearly and justly. Another member of the expedition wrote under the signature of "X. Y. Z." By means of these two letters great light is thrown upon the position and actions of the people at Nankin at that time. The 'Susquehanna' arrived off that city on the 27th May, and communications passed between the American minister and the Taiping leaders, somewhat similar to what had passed on the occasion of the visit of the 'Hermes.' On the part of the people and subordinate officials, the same friendly feeling was manifested as was observed before. Dr. Bridgeman, who landed and had considerable intercourse with several of the officials, says, after detailing the organization of the kings,—"This royal fraternity claims also universal sovereignty. Of what the kingdoms and nations of the earth really are, in numbers and in power, these kings and their brethren are doubtless almost wholly ignorant; but their claim to universal dominion on earth is put forth in language most unequivocal. As the Heavenly Father, the Supreme Lord, is the only one true God, the Father of the souls of all nations under heaven; so their heavenly king is the peaceful and true

sovereign of all nations under heaven. These, and words like these are common, both in their conversation and in their writings; and from these partly true and partly false premises they draw the conclusion, that as all nations ought to obey and worship the only true God, so ought they to bow submissively and bring tribute to their heavenly king Hung-siu-tsuen. In their holy city, as they termed their capital, order and discipline were observed in the greatest perfection. Parts of the city were appropriated exclusively for the use of the wives and daughters of those men who were abroad in their armies, or elsewhere employed in the public service. Everywhere extreme watchfulness was observed in the maintenance of order; and all irregularities and infractions of the laws were rebuked or punished with a promptitude seldom seen among the Chinese. All persons, without exception, had their appropriate duties assigned, and all moved like clock-work. In short, martial law throughout all their lines, in their streets, in their boats, and wherever else they were seen, was the order of the day. Their religious creed, though it may recognise in some sort all or most of the doctrines of the Bible, is, through ignorance or perverseness, or both, grievously marred with error. While their government is of a mixed form, being partly religious, having in it a very strong religious element, still they have no churches. Christians they may be in name; and they are in very deed iconoclasts of the strictest order. They have in their possession probably the entire Bible, both the Old and New Testaments; and are publishing what is usually known

as Gutzlaff's Version of the same. I have said, therefore, that, 'in some sort,' they may recognise its doctrines. How far their errors are to be attributed to errors or defects in that version, is a question I must not here discuss. Their ideas of the Deity are exceedingly imperfect. Though they declare plainly that there is only one true God, yet the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the equality of the Son with the Father, and many other doctrines generally received by Protestant Christians, as being clearly revealed in the Bible, are by them totally ignored. True they have formulas in which some of these doctrines are taught; but then they are borrowed formulas, and they have used them without comprehending their true import. So I believe; and I think this is made manifestly plain in their new version of their Doxology, or Hymn of Praise, where Yang the Eastern king is proclaimed the Holy Spirit.

"Our Saturday we found observed by them as a Sabbath-day; but they appeared not to have any houses for public worship, nor any Christian teachers, ministers of the Gospel, properly so called. Forms of domestic worship, forms of prayer, of thanksgiving, &c., &c., they have; and all their people, even such as cannot read, are required to learn and use these. We saw them repeatedly at their devotions; some of them were exceedingly reverent and devout, while others were quite the reverse. Most who were asked to do it, promptly recited that form of the Decalogue which is given in their tracts. 'Heavenly Father' was the appellative used almost invariably by them when speaking of the

Deity. A form of Baptism was spoken by them. Great numbers of proclamations were seen on the gates and walls of the cities visited (Chin-keang, Nankin, and Woo-hoo), and most of them were from Yang, the Eastern king. These included a much greater circle of topics than is found in their books, and, as to style, were like their books, not above mediocrity.

“ The distribution of food, of clothes, and of medicines, the payment of taxes, the preservation of property, the observance of etiquette and decorum, and injunctions to repair to certain quarters for vaccination,—these were among the topics discussed in them. One document announced the names of sundry candidates who had been successful in winning honours at a recent literary examination in the Heavenly Capital.

“ Of their social condition very little is known. To a certain extent, at least, they have a community of interests. With a very few exceptions no one seemed to say that aught of the things he possessed was his own. Whether this results from the necessities of the case, or is an established principle with them, I could not ascertain. Certain it is, however, that immense stores and treasures had been accumulated by them, and that these were daily being augmented.

“ The personal appearance of their men in arms and of their women on horseback, was novel. They formed a very heterogeneous mass, having been brought together from several different provinces, principally from Ngan-hwui, Kiang-si, Hoo-peh, Hoo-nan, Kwang-si, and Kwang-tung. The finest men we saw, were from the hills of Kiang-si (?), and those from Hoo-nan were

the meanest and the least warlike. Their arms and accoutrements were quite after the old fashion of the Chinese; but their red and yellow turbans, their long hair, and their silk and satin robes, so unlike the ordinary costume of the black-haired (Chinese) troops, made the insurgents appear like a new race of warriors. All the people we saw were very well clad, well fed, and well provided for in every way. They all seemed content, and in high spirits, as if sure of success."

"The reception given to foreigners at Nankin," says another writer ("X. Y. Z."), "does not prove the existence of a feeling of hostility on the part of the insurgent chiefs. They are naturally averse to such visits, because they cannot understand their object; and it is not strange that they should be suspicious of those whom they know to be on friendly terms with their enemies."

"In the immediate vicinity of Nankin the country is not in the power of the insurgents. An imperialist force is encamped near the east gate, and this prevents the exercise of authority by the insurgents over the country people. A daily market is held at a point about a mile distant from the wall, for the sale of poultry, vegetables, meat, and other produce. The country people who attend it still shave their heads, and are not permitted to approach any nearer to the city than the site of the market.

"The city itself is under strict martial law, and indeed, is at present a mere military camp. The most rigid discipline and perfect order are maintained. None are permitted to pass in or out at the gates without permission. When the city was taken, the

victors seem to have regarded the place and all within it as their own. The inhabitants became members of the army. The women and young children were separated from the men, and reside in a separate quarter of the city, all being clothed and fed from the public stores. All property was of course turned over to the public treasury. The people are all well clothed, and doubtless have an abundance of rice to eat, though the supply of other articles of diet may not be very abundant. The use of tobacco is not only prohibited, but the prohibition is made effectual. The prohibition of opium is of course still more carefully enforced. Betel-nut, however, is freely used. Grain junks bring constant supplies of rice from the country bordering on the Yang-zte; and some were seen which had just arrived from the province of Hoo-peh. Large parties of women were seen carrying the rice into the city; it was packed in small bags, and each woman carried one on her shoulder. Men are not entirely excluded, during the day at least, from the women's quarter, for many were seen in the streets; gaily dressed ladies were occasionally met with on horseback, or on donkeys, riding astride like the men, and like them having their heels instead of their toes in the stirrups.

“Where everything is common property, there can of course be no trade. No shops were seen, nor any articles exposed to sale; nor could boats, sedan-chairs, or horses be obtained for hire. Boats were abundant, and their use was cheerfully granted occasionally when needed, without pay.

“In passing through the city, little was seen to dis-

tinguish it from other Chinese cities, except that some of the streets are very wide, and appear to be kept in a state of cleanliness not often seen in China. The houses are generally low, and many of them at present uninhabited and much broken up.

“As to the religious features of this remarkable movement, several facts of great interest have been brought to light. The leaven of fanaticism which has been manifested from the first, is operating for evil, and developing itself in new forms. The Eastern king has added to the titles which have heretofore appeared in connection with his name, two others.

“He has applied to himself the terms employed in Gutzlaff’s Version of the New Testament for ‘the Comforter,’ and that used by Morrison to designate the Holy Ghost. In all his proclamations posted on the walls, he appears with these titles, ‘the Comforter, the Holy Divine Breath.’ He is, doubtless, ignorant of the true import of these terms, and is not aware of the blasphemy of which he is guilty.

“He was constantly referred to among the insurgents as the source of authority. It might perhaps be inferred from this that Hung-siu-tsuen is no longer living; but when inquiry was made about him, the uniform testimony was, that he was living and well, and resided within the city.

“Whatever Hung-siu-tsuen may mean by calling himself the Brother of Jesus, it is but justice to say that no evidence was found of its being insisted on as an essential article of faith among the mass of his followers. Several officers who subsequently visited the

steamer, when asked what was meant by it, professed themselves unable to give any information on the subject. They were so evidently puzzled, that it was plain their attention had never been called to the matter before.

“ Each of the other kings has also assumed a high-sounding title, as appears from the following Ode, given out by the favour of the Heavenly Father, the Heavenly Elder Brother, and the Heavenly King, that all soldiers and people under heaven may celebrate praises in accordance with it.

“ Praise the Supreme Ruler, who is the Holy Heavenly Father, the one only true God.

“ Praise the Heavenly Elder Brother, the Saviour of the world, who laid down his life for men.

“ Praise the Eastern King, the Holy Divine Breath, who atones for faults and saves men.

“ Praise the Western King, the rain-teacher, an high-as-heaven honourable man.

“ Praise the Southern King, the cloud-teacher, an high-as-heaven upright man.

“ Praise the Northern King, the thunder-teacher, an high-as-heaven benevolent man.

“ Praise the Assistant King, the lightning-teacher, an high-as-heaven righteous man.

“ How different are the true doctrines from the doctrines of the world !

“ They are able to save men’s souls, causing the enjoyment of happiness without end.

“ The wise with exultation receive them as their source of happiness.

“ The foolish, when awakened, may know by them the way therein.

“ The grace of the Heavenly Father is vast, exceeding great, without bounds.

“ He spared not his first-born Son, but sent him down into the world.

“ To lay down his life for the redemption of our sins.

“ If men experience repentance, their souls shall ascend to Heaven.”

“Whatever may be thought of such an ode among persons better instructed, there is the best evidence that it is not regarded as offering worship to the kings mentioned. The uniform testimony at Nankin was that none but the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Elder Brother were worshipped. The worship is very simple. Before each of the three meals an offering is placed upon the table, consisting of three bowls of rice, three bowls of vegetables, and three cups of tea or wine. Then all join in a hymn, remaining seated, after which they kneel and offer a short prayer. There is preaching as often as the proper authorities give orders for it. A large stage, erected in an open field, was said to be used as a pulpit on such occasions.

“Little evidence was found of religious culture, or of any just appreciation, by the mass, of the doctrines of Christianity. This, indeed, could not be expected; yet many of the multitude who visited the steamer could repeat the Ten Commandments as given in their books.

“The printing of the Bible is still going on, and the Old Testament has been carried at least as far as Joshua.

“Of the crowds who covered the decks of the steamer there were men from almost every province of the empire; but Hoo-peh and Hoo-nan seem to have contributed most largely to the forces of the insurgents.”

The ‘Susquehanna,’ before returning to Shanghae, proceeded up the river as far as Woo-hoo, a city that was in the possession of the Taepings. Here they found trade being carried on, the shops open, and the inhabitants engaged in their ordinary employments.

They, however, are stated to have been in great awe of their new rulers, who strictly enforced the laws which prohibited the use of opium and tobacco. In all the communications held with the high officials at Nankin, the tone of assumption and authority adopted by them seems to have been most extraordinary and far beyond all reasonable limits. In the letter quoted above frequent allusion is made to the general acquaintance with the Ten Commandments. These, as published in the later edition (1854), were translated as follows:—

- “ 1. Worship the Great God.
- “ 2. Do not worship depraved spirits.
- “ 3. Do not take God’s name in vain ; his name is Jehovah.
- “ 4. On the seventh day is the Sabbath, when you must praise God for his goodness.
- “ 5. Honour father and mother.
- “ 6. Do not kill or injure people.
- “ 7. Do not commit adultery, or practise any uncleanness. (Under this command opium and foreign tobacco are prohibited, on the ground that their use is associated with the vices prohibited.)
- “ 8. Do not steal.
- “ 9. Do not lie.
- “ 10. Do not covet.”

At this time religion was a much greater element with the Taepings than it has been since ; the books brought from Nankin almost entirely consisted of religious precepts and prayers. Nothing can be more satisfactory than the version of the Ten Commandments ; it is as perfect a counterpart of ours as could possibly be expected ; and the fact that so many of the lower classes were able to repeat them with ease, proves how carefully the Tien-Wang and his brother kings attended to or enforced religious instruction ; and how necessary

a point, even with those unable to read, must have been deemed some degree of acquaintance with the published code of prayer. A letter written by the Tien-Wang in 1853, to Mr. Issachar Roberts, the American missionary, affords much insight into his peculiar character. It will be recollected that, when simply a poor school-teacher in the Hwa district, Hung-siu-tsuen, hearing that a foreigner was propagating the true doctrine at Canton, gave up his school, and, accompanied by his friend Hung-jin, went there to visit him. Upon their arrival they discovered that Mr. Roberts was the person referred to, and accordingly they proceeded to his house. There they were received kindly, and Mr. Roberts at once took them under his direction and tuition. From various causes, partly through the jealousy of the native teachers, and partly from his own poverty, Hung-siu-tsuen did not remain above two months; at the expiration of which time he left and started on his journey into the Kwang-si province. A few days after the capture of Nankin, a time when he had reached to the height of his power, he dispatched a special messenger to Canton with directions to deliver the accompanying letter.

“Though it is so long since we parted, yet I constantly cherish a remembrance of you. Now that the grateful breezes of spring salute men, while distant, I have thought of you, my venerated elder brother. It is indeed praiseworthy that you have traversed myriads of leagues of ocean to publish the true doctrine of the Redeemer, and that you, with all your heart, serve the Lord. I respectfully make known to you that, notwith-

standing my unworthiness and incapacity, the Heavenly Father has not cast me off; but, in the fulness of his grace, has enabled me to obtain possession of the extensive region embraced in the Liang-hu and Kiang-nan (Hoo-nan, Hoo-peh, Ngan-hwui, and Kiang-su). I have written to you several times, but have yet received no answer to my letters.

“In consequence of the multiplicity of public affairs engaging my attention, I have not had leisure to instruct (the people) morning and evening. But I have promulgated the Ten Commandments to the army and to the rest of the population, and have taught them all to pray morning and evening. Still, those who understand the Gospel are not many. Therefore I deem it right to send the messenger in person to wish you peace, and to request you, my elder brother, if you are not disposed to abandon me, to (come and) bring with you many brethren to help to propagate the Gospel and administer the ordinance of baptism. So shall we obtain the true doctrine. Hereafter, when my enterprise is successfully terminated, I will disseminate the doctrine throughout the whole empire, that all may return to the one Lord, and worship only the true God. This is what my heart truly desires. I refrain from alluding to other matters than the above, and say no more at present. Wishing you happiness, your ignorant younger brother, Hung-siu-tsuen, salutes you.”

Dr. Happer, by whom this translation was communicated to the ‘Chinese Overland Mail,’ states that the letter was brought to his house at Canton by a messenger who had left Nankin four or five days after its capture,

and arrived at his residence on the 11th May. Dr. Happer immediately forwarded the letter to Mr. Roberts, upon which the latter gentleman determined to proceed up to Shanghae and take an early opportunity of joining the Taepings in accordance with their chief's request. The letter was written in a bold, free hand. "Over the name was stamped a large seal, about two inches square, with the following six Chinese characters, in the seal character,—Tien-teh, Tae-ping Hwang-yin, *i.e.*, the seal of Tien-teh and Tae-ping-Wang."

The lapse of a few years made a great difference in the character of Hung-siu-tsuen. At the time this letter was written it is evident that he was earnest in his desires to spread what he believed to be the Christian faith; his request that more teachers of the Gospel might join him, and the mention of his regret that public affairs had hitherto prevented him from fully carrying out his religious views sufficiently prove this. When, however, Mr. Roberts joined him at Nankin, seven years afterwards, great changes had taken place, and Mr. Roberts found that his endeavours to propagate the Gospel did not meet with approval.

During 1853 and 1854 the Tien-Wang devoted a great portion of his time to the composition of his prayers and precepts, and to the study of Chinese history and classics. He kept himself in the most entire seclusion, none of the officers of the several embassies that visited Nankin were ever able to get admitted to his presence, and at last a strong impression gained ground to the effect that no such person existed.

Yang, the Eastern king, was the active head of the

rebellion; from him emanated all the proclamations civil and military, and he must have exercised immense power to have been able to act in the manner he did towards the Tien-Wang at the close of 1853. The first important use that Yang made of his "trances," or "possessions," was in 1851, when the Taepings were at Yung-gnan. On that occasion they served for a political purpose in detecting and bringing to punishment a traitor; but on the 25th of December, 1853, he underwent a series of these trances, and the use made of them does not appear to point to any other purpose than that of humiliating the Tien-Wang.

On the morning of the 25th of December, being the day of worship, the Northern king, accompanied by other officers, went to the palace of Yang, the Eastern king, to pay their respects, and deliberate on the affairs of government; this over, they left, and shortly after Yang fell into a trance. Whilst thus representing the Heavenly Father, he sent for some of the females of his household, and, after lecturing them for their faults, he ordered that the Northern king should be informed that the Heavenly Father commanded his immediate attendance. In the mean time he communicated to his attendants some instructions that were to be delivered to Yang, the Eastern king (himself, when no longer the mouth-piece of the Heavenly Father): these instructions were that he was to proceed to court and rebuke the Tien-Wang for his impetuous disposition, and harshness in the treatment of his household. He was also to draw attention to the moral education of the heir-apparent (the son of the Tien-Wang), and warn his father not to

allow him to act with too much freedom, and so to instruct him that he might grow up to become an example to the empire, and a pattern to the world. After some further injunctions the Heavenly Father said, "I shall now return to heaven." When the Northern king arrived at Yang's palace, he was informed that the Heavenly Father was no longer present, but that he had left orders with the Eastern king to proceed to court, and that he and his officers were to accompany him thither. While on their way the Heavenly Father again descended, and Yang fell into a trance in his sedan-chair. He then ordered the Northern king to have the sedan conveyed into the Hall of Audience; the Tien-Wang, having been acquainted with what had occurred, hastily went on foot to the second gate of the palace to receive the Heavenly Father. The last-named on his arrival was angry with the Heavenly king, saying, "Siu-tsuen, you are very much in fault, are you aware of it?" The Heavenly king, kneeling down with the Northern king and all the officers, replied, saying, "Your unworthy son knows that he is in fault, and begs the Heavenly Father graciously to forgive him." The Heavenly Father then said, with a loud voice, "Since you acknowledge your fault you must be beaten with forty blows." At that time the Northern king and all the officers prostrated themselves on the ground, and, weeping, implored the Heavenly Father to manifest his favour and remit the punishment, which their master had deserved, offering to receive the blows themselves in the stead of the heavenly king." The Heavenly king said, "Do not, my younger brethren, rebel against the will of

our Heavenly Father ; since our Heavenly Father has of his goodness condescended to instruct us, I, your elder brother, can do no less than receive the correction."

The Heavenly Father would not listen to the request of the officers, but still insisted on the blows being given, whereupon the Heavenly king replied, "Your unworthy son will comply with your requisitions ;" and so saying, he prostrated himself to receive the blows. The Heavenly Father then said, "Since you have obeyed the requisition I shall not inflict the blows." The Heavenly king was informed that the Eastern king would communicate some other instructions to him, and then the Heavenly Father returned to heaven.

The Northern king and other officers then escorted the Heavenly king into his palace, and soon afterwards the Eastern king, having recovered from the effects of his trance, obtained admittance, in order to communicate the instructions given to him by the Heavenly Father during the first descent, relative to the conduct of the Heavenly king and the moral training of his son. In the most respectful manner he drew the attention of the Heavenly king to the necessity of being indulgent to those who have to work, especially to the females who were employed in the works connected with defence ; also in all cases where offenders commit crimes worthy of death, he advised him not at once to act upon his prerogative, and upon insufficient inquiry put them to death, but to hand over the case to him (Yang) for proper examination. The Heavenly king in answer said, "That which you, my younger brother, have said is very right, and is truly in accordance with the benevo-

lent feeling displayed by our Heavenly Father, who loves what is good and hates what is evil, while he carefully discriminates between the one and the other. The disposition displayed by me, your elder brother, is impetuous; and if you, my younger brother, had not made this suggestion, it is to be feared that I should have wrongfully put some persons to death. Now, in consequence of your advice, not only shall I be prevented from wrongfully inflicting condign punishment, but future generations, observing this our example, will not dare to do anything rashly."

A conversation ensued, in which the Eastern king pointed out at great length the manifold duties that should be attended to by a ruler over many people. A portion of his address is interesting as showing to how great an extent female labour was employed. He says, "Now among the female officers of the heavenly court, and in the palace of me, your younger brother, those who attend to the business of the state are very much harassed. Some of these are the wives, and others the mothers, of meritorious and faithful officers; some have young children to attend to, and others old relations to look after. Some of them also have meritorious husbands, who have given up their households out of regard to their country. Now, when women have surrendered their domestic ties with a view to the services of the state, and abandoned their private interests in order to promote the public weal, the king ought to take into consideration their faithful devotion, and allow them every six weeks to go and look after their relatives; or every month or six weeks to go and inspect

their households; or it may be every week or fortnight to take in turn to visit their domestic hearth; whether to fondle their children, or to manifest respect to their aged relatives, or to serve their husbands. In this way they will be enabled to carry out the duty of first regarding the interests of their country, and after that attending to the welfare of their family."

The works in which the women were chiefly employed were erecting palaces, digging moats, throwing up banks, and sweeping the imperial gardens.

In conclusion Yang alluded to the interior economy of the palace, and, judging from the advice given, it appears that the Heavenly king was peculiar in his display of ill-temper towards the females of his household.

"With respect to the female apartments royal reformation must begin there. The palace is a fountain from which all government springs; hence he who wishes to illustrate intelligent virtue throughout the empire will first regulate his country; and he who wishes to have his country well regulated will first put his family in order. At present, through the favour of our Heavenly Father, the number of ladies at court is very great; the daughters of the king are also very numerous: it will not, therefore, be right to listen only to the statements of the elder ladies, and not give heed to the complaints of the younger ones; still less would it be right to mind the prattle of the younger branches of the royal family, to the exclusion of the remonstrances of the elder ones. In every case you should allow both parties to make their statements clearly, and thus you may decide between them as to which party is in the right and

which in the wrong, without showing any partiality to either.

“ When the ladies wait upon you, my elder brother, it is of course their duty, but sometimes they may be apt to excite your righteous displeasure, in which case you must treat them gently, and not kick them with your boot on ; for if you kick them with your boot on, it may be that some of the ladies are in such a state as to call for the congratulations of their friends, and thus you interfere with the kind intentions of our Heavenly Father, who loves to foster human life. Further, when any of the ladies are in the state above alluded to, it would be as well to manifest a little gracious consideration and allow them to rest from their labours, while you select some separate establishment for their residence and repose. You may still require them morning and evening to pay their respects. Such a method of treatment would be proper, and, if still any of the ladies should commit any trifling fault so as to give offence to my Lord, it would be as well to excuse them from being beaten with the bamboo. You may, however, scold them severely, and tell them not to offend any more. Should any of them commit any grievous crime, you should wait till after their confinement, when you can inflict punishment.”

After some remarks by the Heavenly king relative to a circumstance that occurred to him in a vision some years previously, the audience broke up and the Eastern king returned to his palace.

Two days after the above occurrences (27th December), the Eastern king, together with other kings

and officers, again went to court to condole with the Heavenly king, and express their sympathy with him on account of the manner in which the Heavenly Father had thought fit to visit his displeasure upon him. Some more advice and suggestions were given, and the audience concluded by Yang obtaining the title of Comforter. The Heavenly king said, "That which you, my brother, have reported, may be considered an important, specific, and a precious remedy, every word of which is consistent with the higher reason, and fit to be preserved as a rule for succeeding generations. When our celestial Elder Brother Jesus, in obedience to the commands of our Heavenly Father, came down into the world, in the country of Judea, he addressed his disciples, saying—'At some future day the Comforter will come into the world.' Now I, your second elder brother, considering what you have reported to me, and observing what you have done, must conclude that the Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, spoken of by our Heavenly Elder Brother is none other than yourself."

From this time forward Yang, in all his proclamations, added to his other titles that of "Comforter" or "Holy Spirit."¹

The only method of explaining how the Tien-Wang could have submitted to such humiliation as he underwent on this occasion is by regarding the whole of the leaders as a set of fanatics. It is impossible to have any clear conception of what effect their reading of the

¹ The lengthy document in which the events and conversations that took place on this occasion are recorded was one of the many that were brought down from Nankin by the 'Susquehanna,' 'Rattler' and 'Styx.' The quotations are from Dr. Medhurst's translation.

Bible would have upon their semi-educated minds. Taken literally, many portions of the Old Testament, especially the book of Genesis, would almost justify their extraordinary proceedings. The bestowal of the title of Holy Ghost is, however, with every allowance made, an unwarrantable stretch of authority on the part of the Tien-Wang, and is the first instance that begins the series of his later assumptions.

The books brought from Nankin by the 'Rattler' in 1854 show how indefatigably he must have worked at his compositions. In one of these he alludes to the objections that his adherents might have in following a religion that came from foreigners. He says:—"Some also say erroneously that to worship the Great God is to imitate foreigners; not remembering that China has its histories, which are open to investigation. The fact is, that according to the histories, both of the Chinese and foreign nations, the important duty of worshipping the great God, in the early ages of the world, several thousand years ago, was alike practised both by Chinese and foreigners. But the various foreign nations in the West have practised this duty up to the present time, while the Chinese practised it only up to the Tsin and Han dynasties, since which they have erroneously followed the devil's ways."¹

But not only did this extraordinary man compose prayers, precepts, and essays, but among other papers is a very long one concerning the "Land Regulations of Political Economy of his Celestial Dynasty." In this

¹ It was during the reign of the latter dynasty that Buddhism first became prevalent in China.

he commands that all fields are to be divided into nine orders, and to be classed according to their produce. Divisions of fields are regulated according to the number of individuals in a household. Everything is arranged so that "all the people in the empire may together enjoy the abundant happiness provided by the Great God, our Heavenly Father and Universal Lord." In every circle of five-and-twenty families there is to be a granary and a church. The youths of these families are daily to go to their church and study the Old and New Testaments. On the Sabbath day all are to attend service, "the males and females are to sit in separate pews. On these occasions there will be preaching, thanksgiving, and offerings to our Heavenly Father, the Great God."

Certain seasons are set apart for the supplying of vacancies in offices, and for elevating or degrading officers. Provision is made for the performance in each circle of twenty-five families, of the duties of potter, blacksmith, carpenter, and mason, and regulations are made for the proper supply of soldiers.

The pamphlet thus concludes: "All the officers throughout the empire, every Sabbath-day, must, according to their rank, reverently and sincerely provide animals, with meat and drink offerings for worship, in order to praise our Heavenly Father, the Great God and Universal Lord; they must also explain the Holy Book. Should any fail in this, they shall be degraded to the level of plebeians."

According to the testimony of a young captive woman, who escaped from Nankin in 1855, it appears

that the Tien-Wang was in the habit of himself explaining the dogmas of his religion to his followers.¹

This he did in his own palace. The Père Clavelin, upon her authority, states that all orders were issued through Yang, the Eastern king. Yang did not much longer enjoy his high position, for, in August, 1856, he, with a number of his adherents, was slaughtered.² No very reliable information has been obtained which would explain the reasons which led to his destruction. Dr. Bridgeman, in a letter written to one of the local papers, says that Yang had been, for some time previous, plotting the overthrow of the Tien-Wang. This coming to the latter's ears, preparations were made to meet the emergency, and one night Yang's palace was surrounded by a large force of armed men, and on the following morning Yang and his attendant officers were found dead—some had been speared, others decapitated.³ The death of Yang must be considered a most important event in the history of the Taepings. In his religious capacity as the direct means of communication between God the Heavenly Father and his worshippers, and in his political capacity as adviser of the Tien-Wang, and the acknowledged head of all civil and military organization, he always took a most leading, if not the leading part, in the progress of the rebellion.

¹ Letter from Père Clavelin, 'Prop. de la Foi.'

² The Northern king is also said to have been put to death at this time, in consequence of being leagued with Yang in the intended revolt.

³ Dr. Bridgeman's authorities for his statement were three persons who said they were eye-witnesses; these, from their inferior positions, were little qualified to give an opinion as to the *reasons* for Yang's murder.

CHAPTER X.

Proceedings of the Taepings — Lord Elgin's expedition to Hankow — Proclamation of the Tien-Wang — Hung-jin's career.

THE military operations of the Taepings, after the failure of their great northern expedition in 1853-54 are little else than a series of incursions made upon the country bordering on the Yang-tze-kiang, in order to obtain contributions of money and provisions. The large cities of Wu-chang (capital of Hoo-peh), Han-yang and Hankow, captured by them in June, 1854, were evacuated in the following October, after having taken from them all the supplies they required, and which were forwarded to the treasury and granaries at Nankin. The smaller cities lying north and south of the river between Hankow and Nankin were also one after the other abandoned, and the imperialist forces regained possession of them.

Early in 1855,¹ another force was detached along the river up to Hankow, and in March Wu-chang was for the third time carried by storm, the imperialists suffering considerable losses. The Taepings again occupied the three cities, and for a much longer time than before. During this year the Pekin Gazettes published numerous accounts of actions fought in the provinces of Kiang-si and Hoo-peh, generally favourable to the

¹ Summaries from Pekin Gazettes.

imperialists. Towns were taken and retaken, but no very important results were obtained on either side. The local rebels in the adjoining provinces, emboldened by the example of the Taepings, created great ravages, and caused much trouble to the government.

In January, 1856, the Gazette records several successes in the province of Kiang-su; and on the Yang-zte the Taeping fleet is said to have been pursued with great loss to within a few miles of Nankin. At this time the Taepings were in possession of the greater part of the country bordering on the south of the river from Chin-keang to Hankow; they also held portions of the provinces of Kiang-si and Hoo-peh. Their northern army which, after its repulses in 1855, commenced its retrograde march towards the south, incited all the lawless characters on their line of march to rise in arms against the magistrates. In a report of one of the latter, named Tuh-shih-tsuen, published in the Gazette of April, 1856, it is stated that "On the appearance of the Kwang-tung outlaws (Taepings) in the third year of Hien-Fung (1853) the local vagabonds dwelling on the common boundary of Honan and Ngan-hwui rose in swarms, and in the autumn of last year Chang-loh-king, and other rebel leaders, having privily made banners of five colours, took each one a colour of his own, assumed the title of king (Wang), appointed officers, enrolled followers, committed violence, and ventured on insurrection. . . . They have slain the authorities and harassed the people, trampling them under foot at their good pleasure. From Ngan-hwui, westward, into Honan, throughout a region measuring

some three hundred 'li' in length, and one thousand 'li' in circumference, the villages are in ruins, and dead bodies are lying in all directions. . . . Their force is something under one hundred thousand men, they spread to the east into Kiang-su, and north to the borders of Shan-tung. . . . The waters of the Yellow River have lately been disturbed, and the sufferers, having no home to return to, are seduced into joining these bands."

Previous to this report of Chang-toh-king, Honan had suffered also from famine, and the whole province was in a frightful state of anarchy.

In a decree of the 25th March, the emperor announced his intention of calling in the forces of Inner Mongolia to suppress the rebellion. This was a strong measure, and one only resorted to under great pressure. The old jealousy between the Manchu and Mongol Tartars is too strong ever to allow the Mongols to be placed in a position which might endanger the power of the present dynasty.

On the 1st of June the imperialists suffered a severe defeat before Chin-keang, and about the same time their lines before Nankin were forced to retire. During the whole of this year the suburbs of these cities had been the constant scene of conflict, and, latterly, the Taepings gained considerable advantages. In the provinces of Kiang-si, Hoo-nan, and Hoo-peh, the imperialists regained possession of several large towns. In the early part of the year, they, for the third time, recaptured Wu-chang, and consequently its adjoining cities. The Taepings fell back, down the stream, upon

Nankin. The Gazettes speak of many victories, but it is probable that the Taepings were merely carrying out their usual tactics, and that as soon as they had obtained the necessary supplies, they vacated the respective towns on their way back, and the mere reoccupation of these by the imperial troops was magnified by the Gazettes into victories.

In Sz-chuen and Kwei-chow, local insurgents were everywhere in arms and causing much misery. Both the Kiang provinces were, in November, visited by swarms of locusts that ruined the crops, and gave rise to a famine. The government edicts speak bitterly of the state of the whole country, and several of the papers prove how much embarrassed was the imperial treasury. The war with England, which commenced this year, together with the destruction of the Bogue forts, did not tend to improve matters.

In the first half of the year 1857, the Taepings remained comparatively quiet, and their field of occupation was much more limited than in the previous year. The imperialists were in undisturbed possession of Hoo-peh, and their adversaries held little more than the country immediately bordering the river between Chin-keang and Ngan-king. The Pekin Gazettes were filled with reports from the provinces, detailing numerous local insurrections. The Mahometan population in the province of Yunnan were openly defying the power of the magistrates, and plundering several towns. What with rebellions, inundations, famines, and locusts, the country presented a most lamentable picture. On all these

points the Gazettes speak very sadly, and strongly urge all those whose means place them above want to subscribe towards alleviating the general misery. In many of the provinces, rice was selling at five times its usual price. Knowing how closely, in China, population presses on production, this fact alone proves how dreadful must have been the sufferings of many of the labouring classes.

During the latter part of the year but very little mention is made of the Taepings, who appear to have kept very quiet, and confined themselves to the three or four cities that they held on the south bank of the Yang-zte. There were rumours that they were organizing a large force to proceed to Hang-chow, a city most important to them as a sea-board port, but no such move was made. All the eastern provinces were rife with local rebellion, especially Fo-kien, the old seat of the Triad Association. In Kwang-si the rebels, who came from districts adjoining those from whence the Taepings had sprung, had captured the very important city of Wu-chau, on the Western River (Si-kiang), and were threatening Shoo-king in the province of Kwang-tung; at this time Yeh (the governor) was fully occupied in preparing Canton for defence against the English, and could not spare his troops to march against these rebels. In Yunnan the Mahometans had become so troublesome that the Governor Hang-chun, despairing of his power to suppress them, committed suicide.

The most important events during the year 1858 were the occupation of Canton by the allied English

and French forces, which took place a few days subsequent to the assault and capture of that city (29th of December, 1857); the capture of the Taku forts on the 20th of May, the approval of the emperor to the treaty of Tien-tsin (July 3rd), and the subsequent expedition of Lord Elgin up the Yang-zte-kiang as far as Hankow, in the following December. The Taepings, as in the previous year, abstained from making any military movement of consequence. Pressed by want of supplies they had abandoned Chin-keang to the imperialists, and the garrison of Nankin also suffered very considerably from the same cause. Their principal operations were in the province of Kiang-si, whither they had sent a large force, apparently for the purpose of obtaining provisions and money. On the Yang-zte-kiang they retained all the chief cities, as far as the borders of Hoo-peh. This latter province and Hoo-nan, although entirely in the hands of the imperialists, were throughout the year the scene of local rebellion and general anarchy, and the magistrates found themselves unable to obtain payment of the taxes. The Gazettes contained numerous reports of severe conflicts in several of the provinces lying north and south of the river, but the Taepings had little or nothing to do with these. Fo-kien, Che'-kiang, and Kwang-si were the most troublesome. In Kwang-si the rebels were in great strength, and had overrun the adjoining province of Hoo-nan, as far north as the Tung-ting lake. The Western River was also infested with their war-junks. In the northern provinces of Honan and Shan-tung the power of the local insur-

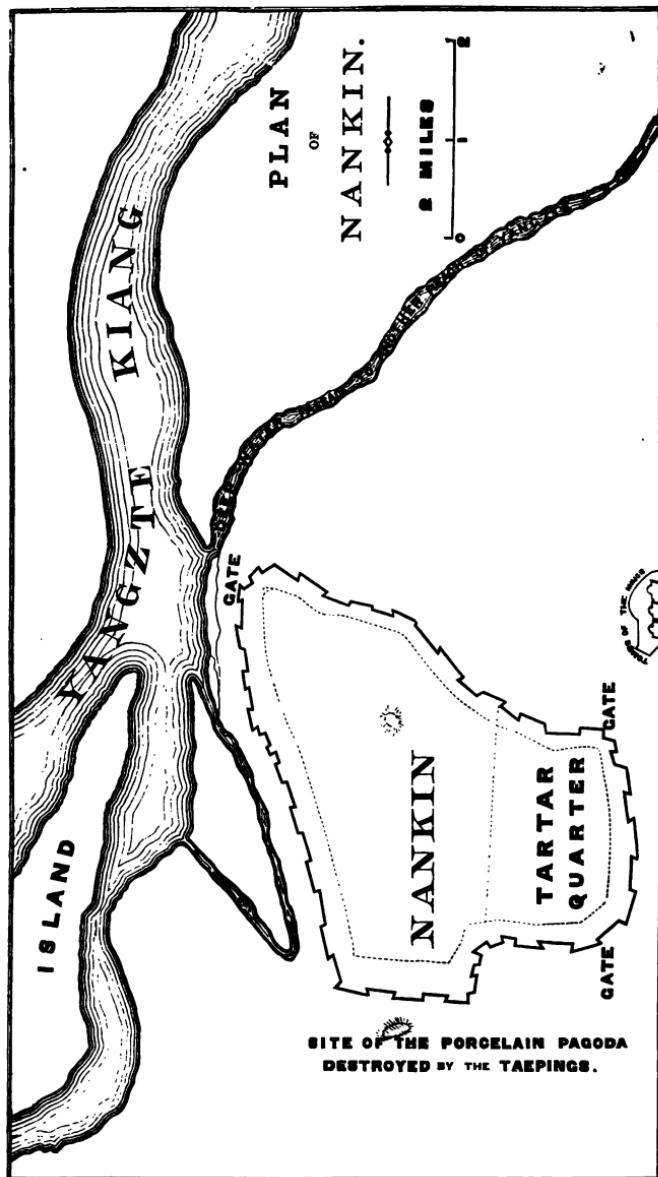
gents was such as to cause great disturbance to the government at Pekin; several towns bordering on the Yellow River were almost totally destroyed, and at one time the communication by means of the great northern road was all but stopped. Many of these insurgents are stated by the Gazettes to have been adherents of the Taepings—probably portions of the old northern army. When Lord Elgin's mission proceeded up the Yang-zte they found that the Taepings were in possession of all important places on the banks of that river, from the provincial capital of Ngan-hwui to Nankin. The river itself was entirely in the hands of the imperialist fleets, that appeared to be employed more as a force of observation than of action. The vessels placed at the disposal of Lord Elgin for this expedition, came into collision with the Taepings in a manner somewhat similar to what had taken place on the occasion of the 'Hermes' passing Chin-keang in 1853. The expeditionary force left Shanghae for Hankow on the 8th of November, 1858. On approaching Nankin on the afternoon of the 20th, the gunboat 'Lee' was sent ahead of the squadron to communicate, if possible, with the authorities; in the event of being fired upon her commander had orders to hoist the white flag of truce.¹ "It was a lovely evening," states Lord Elgin in his report, "and I was on the paddle-box of the 'Furious,' anxiously watching the progress of the gunboat, as it was my earnest wish to avoid if possible a collision with the rebels. She had already passed several of the forts unmolested, and I was beginning to think that my

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1857-59, p. 444.

wishes on this point were about to be realised, when a puff of smoke, followed by the booming of a cannon, undeceived me. Seven additional shots were fired on the flag of truce, before the British ships proceeded to reply. By this time the other vessels of the squadron were within range of the nearest forts, which opened upon them with all the vigour of which they are capable. They steamed slowly by, returning with considerable effect the fire directed against them." The squadron anchored for the night above the walls, and before proceeding on their upward course, they on the following morning redescended the stream to Nankin, and bombarded the forts, with but little reply for an hour and a half. On the evening of the 21st the squadron anchored off Tai-ping, after having previously silenced some forts a few miles below. At this city a request came off to ask for our assistance against the imperialist war-junks. Lord Elgin, in reply sent the following notification, referring to the recent affair at Nankin :—

"Whereas a number of Her Majesty's ships were on their way to Hankow, it was the particular desire of the ambassador that the party in possession of Nankin should understand that these ships were proceeding with no hostile intention to them. For this purpose a small vessel was specially detached in advance. A gun was fired on her, to which, in obedience to her instructions, she made no return, but hoisted a flag of truce. The garrison of Nankin notwithstanding continued to fire at her. The forts commanding the passage have been in consequence taken and demolished, as a warning to all who may be hereafter minded to interfere with the ships of Her Majesty."

The squadron now proceeded peaceably up the river, until they arrived at Ngan-king, the last stronghold of





the Taepings. Whilst passing this city on the 26th of November, the forts fired several shots, upon which the ships bombarded the town for half an hour, thus adopting a policy similar to that followed at Nankin. This was the last instance of hostilities occurring between the English and Taepings. This latter event would not have probably taken place if the communications between the city of Tai-ping and Ngan-king could have kept pace with the rapid progress of the squadron.

Great contrition was expressed at the former city for what had through misunderstanding occurred, and subsequently at the cities of Woo-hoo, Kiu-hien, &c., care was taken that due civility should be shown. Ngan-king, too distant to be acquainted in time with the object and intention of our force, was the only exception. Upon the return of the squadron from Hankow, Mr. Wade, the present Chinese secretary, landed at Ngan-king, in order to ascertain the reason why the squadron had been fired upon when passing that city. He was told that it was a mistake, due to the ignorance of the men in charge of the forts, and that the English flag had not been recognised until the vessels had passed by. The officer with whom Mr. Wade communicated was a native of Kwang-si, and third in command. He apologized humbly for what had passed, and promised that such a thing should never happen again. The interview concluded by his offering a present of oxen and other provisions, which was declined.

At Nankin similar explanations were given, and a letter sent to the senior officer¹ stated that the Tien-

¹ Sent to H.M.S. 'Retribution' at Woo-hoo.

Wang on hearing what had happened, when the British ships were proceeding up, had given orders to decapitate the ignorant offenders who had fired upon them. The reports of Lord Elgin's mission show how disastrous was the effect of the Taeping rebellion upon that portion of the country that had felt its influence. Hankow, Hanyang, and Wu-chang were found to be little else than three enormous ruins. In the latter city, Lord Elgin gives an idea of its state of desolation by mentioning that whilst walking through it, he had flushed two brace and a half of pheasants in the very centre of the town. The places held by the Taepings were remarkable from their total want of commercial activity. At Woo-hoo the houses were divided according to a kind of barrack system, a certain number being told off amongst the various companies of fighting men. The surrounding country was found to be desolated, and the inhabitants in a deplorable state of misery; those fit for service had been pressed into the rebel army, and others had been forced to contribute to the utmost limit of their means. The districts lying near the prefectural city of Tai-ping were covered with numerous miserable huts, the temporary residence of the original inhabitants of the town, who had been forced to vacate their houses. In all the cities occupied by the Taepings, it was their policy to eject all the inhabitants that could not be made useful. The reasons they gave for this were that, by that means, they were enabled to hold the cities for a longer period against the attacks of the imperialists, as there were fewer mouths to feed; and another reason adduced was, that it reduced the chances of treachery,

as in all probability many of the residents would seize any favourable opportunity that might occur in order to admit within the walls the besieging force. The observance of this plan, and the system of public granaries and community of goods, sufficiently account for the almost entire absence of shops and trade. The fortresses at Ngan-king and Woo-hoo were found to be wretchedly armed, and the towns very dirty. All offices of trust were held by Kwang-tung or Kwang-si men, but the majority of the population spoke all kinds of dialects, and were composed of the lowest description of Chinese rabble. Near Tai-ping a rebel army was seen on the march. The officers on horseback and the men in their many-coloured uniforms, presented an unusually gay appearance.

When the squadron were at Woo-hoo, Messrs. Wade, Oliphant, and others, landed to try and obtain fresh provisions and vegetables. Mr. Oliphant, in his Narrative,¹ gives an account of their visit to the Commandant, How, part of which I quote. He writes:—

“A noisy particoloured crowd, jostling each other into the water in their anxiety to inspect us, received us as we stepped on shore. We were surrounded by a mob of these long-haired, long-robed ragamuffins, as we walked into the fort through the wretched gateway which served as its principal entrance, and, passing along a narrow, half-ruined street, were ushered into a dilapidated yamun in a state of repair. Strains of discordant music announced our approach to the high dignitary within, whom we found seated in solemn state

¹ *Narrative of Lord Elgin's Mission.*

behind a high table or altar, upon which stood two open carved jars, like wine-coolers, of silver, or imitation silver, which contained long thin slips of wood, covered with Chinese characters. The chamber was a small square apartment, hung with scrolls of yellow silk, covered with texts and mottoes in Chinese, belonging, apparently, as much to Confucianism as to Christianity ; and the presiding genius himself was a stout, sensual-looking man, with a keen eye, and an intelligent but bad cast of countenance. He was dressed in a robe of yellow, which fell from his neck to his heels, and was devoid of ornaments ; round his head was wrapped an orange-coloured handkerchief, in the centre of which, above the forehead, was fastened a single piece of jade, mounted in a gold setting. His long hair was collected in a bag, and hung in the nape of his neck, as though in imitation of the fashion prevalent among English young ladies of the present day.

“ Bowing to us slightly as we entered, How, for so was this great man called, beckoned us to chairs ; the mob by which we had been followed, crowding unceremoniously into the small apartment. Not the smallest respect was shown by the insubordinate rabble to their leader, who strove in vain to keep them from pressing round, much to the disparagement of the dignified manner which he evidently desired to maintain in our presence, and by which he hoped to impress us with a due sense of his rank and importance. The odour of garlic which pervaded his undisciplined retainers, their boisterous and noisy manner and filthy aspect, rendered our audience by no means so agreeable as it might

otherwise have been. A perfect equality seemed to reign, or rather an absolute confusion of ranks and persons ; well-dressed and ragged, old and young, thronged impetuously into the little room. It struck me, however, that the young predominated ; many of these had been rebels all their lives, and had no tails, but generally the tail was wrapped round the long tangled hair.

“ How told us that, to his functions of commandant and judge, he united those of high priest. The thin slips of wood in the silver vase were inscribed with various punishments ; and the form of sentencing consisted in his selecting and throwing to the criminal the punishment to which he was condemned. The building itself was, like its occupant, partly ecclesiastical, and partly secular. But we could not obtain from How any very precise description of the form of worship over which he presided. Indeed, we were not tempted to prolong our visit beyond what was necessary ; and we gave him a list of our wants, which was rapidly transcribed by his secretary, who stood near him, and concealed the eyes of a countenance which bore a villainous expression with a pair of huge green goggles. His dress consisted of a flowered crimson silk robe, and reached to his heels. Near him stood another scribe, in a light pea-green tunic and loose red trowsers. Presently appeared another official, apparently of equal rank with How, for he took a seat next to him, and commenced a deliberate and somewhat insolent survey of our persons. His head was wrapped in an orange handkerchief, like his colleague's ; but his robe was of purple, above which

he wore a flowered lilac silk tunic. These gay colours looked bright enough when they happened to be new, but those of the crowd were for the most part faded; the material of which their garments were composed was shabby and torn, giving them a tawdry, disreputable appearance, which was not belied by the dissipated, haggard expression of their countenance.

“We were accompanied on our rambles by a crowd, with the more intelligent of whom Wade got into conversation upon religious subjects; but their theology was of the vaguest description, and did not prevent them from using the foulest language to each other.

“We saw very few women, and they were evidently all from the north, probably captured on some of their raids in that direction.”

At Nankin Mr. Wade landed to obtain explanations concerning the attack by the forts. In his report he says:—“Our way lay along the western wall towards the spot on which in former days stood the celebrated pagoda. Somewhat short of this, we found a gate open, after a ride of some six miles, most of it over lands now desert, but part through suburbs very ruinous and deserted. In no place did we observe more than two small chandler’s shops, and two or three for the sale of second-hand clothes. Within Nankin there was even greater desolation. The number of houses standing is very great, but there is a lamentable dearth of population, and a total absence of commercial life of any kind.

“We were received by a heavy-looking Kwang-si man, named Li, in what seemed his private apartment,

for he immediately called for his cap of office, the high conical head-dress, stated by Mr. Wylie¹ to have been worn under the Ming dynasty, and led us into a really handsome hall. Our host was dressed in yellow silk, and curiously embroidered shoes.

“ We stated the object of our visit, which was to inform the garrison that we had received the explanation forwarded to Woo-hoo of the mistake they had made in firing on her Majesty’s ships, and that as we had ships now up the river, others would be probably going and returning, interference with which would oblige us to resent it as before. Li was apologetic, but without servility : he seemed more anxious to take us on the religious side, beginning again and again, that we were brethren of one family, as Christians ; but this in a constrained way, without impressiveness or enthusiasm.

“ We asked for the Eastern king, who it was long since reported had been slain in a fray. This was an embarrassing question ; but after a few moments’ hesitation, Li replied that he was in heaven ; and to a further question, that he was succeeded in his honours and functions by his son. The number of his own force he put at several hundreds of thousands. He himself was governor-general of Kiang-nan, and, as we afterwards heard, chief executive authority in Nankin. He called himself an officer, or noble of the third degree, and wore on his high cap the badge Yih-tien-fuh (To advantage heaven—happiness). We asked to see their place of worship, but though one of them at first seemed to

¹ Of the London Missionary Society.

say that there was one at no great distance, Li interfered to observe, that the brethren celebrated their worship every day in their own houses, and assembled on the sabbath at the temple in the king's court. Before our departure we again referred to the question of our ships. He begged that if we were coming by, we would let the garrison know, in which case there would be no chance of collision."

Mr. Wade was accompanied back by a Cantonese, who informed him that the Taepings had then (December, 1858), four armies in the field: one in the Kwang provinces, one in Fokien, one in Che'kiang, and a very large one in Ngan-hwui. From the Pekin Gazettes of this period, it is, however, evident that the rebel forces in the three first-named provinces were not Taepings, but rebels who had their own interests to serve, and utterly unconnected with them. The walls in the streets were covered with proclamations in the joint names of Chin, Li, Lin, and Mung. Nankin, similarly with Ngan-king, was closely beleaguered by the imperialist fleets, and the former city was besieged by a large imperialist army. The above-mentioned chief, Lin, had been the bearer of an important document from the Tien-Wang, and which was sent off to H.M.S. 'Retribution,' when lying at Woo-hoo. This document, addressed to foreigners, was translated by Mr. Wade, and marks the anxiety of Hung-siu-tsuen that his doctrines and pretensions should be properly understood. It is written in seven-foot verse, and was enclosed, under cover, to Lord Elgin. The annexed translation was printed in the Blue Book of 1858-59.

“1. We proclaim for the information of our foreign younger brethren of the Western Ocean.

2. The things of heaven differ extremely from the things of the world.

3. The Heavenly Father Shang Ti, the Imperial Shang Ti.

4. To the Sacred, or Sainted, Father of one and all that heaven overspreads.

5. Our uterine Elder Brother is Jesus.

6. Our uterine Younger Brother is Siu-tsuen.

7. In the 3rd moon of the year, “Mo-shin,” (1848), Shang Ti descended,

8. And commissioned the King of the East to become a mortal.

9. In the 9th moon of this year the Redeemer descended,

10. And commissioned the King of the West to manifest divine powers.

11. The Father and Elder Brother led us to sit on (the throne of) the heavenly kingdom;

12. With great display of authority and might to sit in the hall of heaven;

13. To make the heavenly city our capital; to found the heavenly kingdom,

14. (That) the minister and people of all nations might do homage to their Father Emperor.

15. The chapel (or temple), of the True Spirit is within the heavenly court.

16. The chapel of Ki-tu (Christ), is alike glorious for ever.

17. In the year, ‘Ting-yu,’ (1837), we ascended to heaven.

18. The Father, with words of truth, bestowed on us a volume of verse,

19. Enjoining us to read it well, and regard it as a proof;

20. By the verses to know the Father, and to keep steady.

21. The Father, moreover, commanded the Elder Brother to instruct us how to read it.

22. The Father and the Elder Brother did personally instruct us, and laid their injunctions upon us again and again.

Verse 3. Shang Ti, generally by Protestant missionaries translated “God”; 8, 9, 10, allude to the ecstatic fits of Yang and Siu in 1848, in Kwang-si; 13. Nankin, after its capture by the Taipings, was by them called Tien-kin (Heavenly Capital); 17. In this year took place his sickness and visions when at home in Hwa-hien.

23. The Heavenly Father, Shang-ti, is in the measure of his capacity as the depth of the sea.
24. Up to the thirty-third heaven the demons burst their way.
25. The Father and Elder Brother, taking us with them, drove them away time after time.
26. Supplanted by the officers and soldiers of heaven on either side of them.
27. They smote on this occasion two-thirds of them;
28. From one gate of heaven after another were the demons and goblins repulsed,
29. Until they were all driven down below, (or to the earth, or under the earth).
30. And but a remnant of them were left; (thus) was the august Father (or the Father's majesty), made manifest.
31. The Father subsequently (or then) desired us to return to the world, (promising)
32. In all things to be our support.
33. He enjoined us to set our heart at rest and not to be alarmed;
34. He, the Father, would come forward. His injunctions were repeated twice and again.
35. In the year "Wu-shin," (1848), when the king of the South was besieged in Kwei-ping,
36. We besought the Father to come down and manifest his terms.
37. We had returned from Kwang-si to Kwang-tung.
38. The Heavenly Father did come down to the world and rescued (the king of) the South.
39. The king of the East redeems from sickness; he is a holy spirit.
40. The Father sent him down with a commission to exterminate the demons.
41. He destroyed goblin-devils without number.
42. And so was enabled to arrive without delay at the capital (Nankin).
43. When the Father descended to the world he made known his holy will.
44. All this we read, and committing it well to memory,

Lines 17 to 30 all refer to his visions in 1837, and coincide with his statements then made; 35. The district of the God-worshippers; 39. Fung was imprisoned in 1848, and subsequently liberated and sent back to his native province, Kwang-tung.

45. We knew the Father's infallibility,
46. And were brought by the Father and the Elder Brother to found the (dynasty of) Taeping.
47. The Father having deputed the king of the East to redeem from sickness,
48. (On behalf of) the blind, the deaf, and the dumb,
49. He suffered infinite misery.
50. When fighting the demons he was wounded in the neck and fell headlong.
51. The Father had declared by his holy decree,
52. That when our warriors went forth they would have inexpressible affliction,
53. That when they came to the court (Nankin ?) they would suffer severely.
54. (The words of) the Father's holy decree were all accomplished.
55. The Elder Brother to ransom sinners gave his life.
56. He became a substitute for myriad myriad thousands of the people of the world.
57. The king of the East in ransoming the sick suffered equally with the Elder Brother;
58. And when he fell with the pestilence he returned to the (place of) spirits to thank the Father for his goodness.
59. Which is the right among the writings of the Father and the Elder Brother it is impossible to know.
60. He who would choose the true must ascend to high heaven.
61. The holy decrees of the Father are numberless.
62. We declare the general purport of one or two.
63. It is some years since the Heavenly Father descended into the world.
64. He was accompanied by the Heavenly Brother, whose distress was as great as formerly.
65. Jesus is your redeeming Lord,
66. And continues with all his mind to instruct and admonish.
67. The Heavenly Father produced Tsuen to be your ruler.
68. Why are you not loyal to the utmost? Why do you wilfully pursue your former course?

Verse 58. "Pestilence—the word is often used of rebellion (*Translator*)."
Yang (Eastern king) is believed to have lost his life by orders of the Tien-Wang, for trying to raise a rebellion, 1856. 67. Tsuen himself (Hung-siu-tsuen).

69. You have often (been guilty of) serious disobedience of commands.

70. Were we not to issue our decree your boldness would be great as heaven.

71. For whom was it that the Heavenly Father descended ?

72. For whom did Jesus throw away his life ?

73. Heaven has sent you down a king to be your true lord.

74. Why are you so troubled, your hearts so unsettled ?

75. Let your sons in all parts quit their houses,

76. Leave their homes, resolved to be loyal ministers.

77. Come forward to aid their king, fierce as tigers and leopards ;

78. Knowing that now they have a ruler, they can be men.

79. If you believe not that the best in the world has appeared in us,

80. Yet bethink you that the Spirit Father errs not in the ruler he establishes.

81. Accept as a proof of the independent authority (of heaven)

82. That though a thousand surround (us), with valour and daring they are broken as the dust.

83. The myriad countries, the myriad nations, throng in myriads to (our) court.

84. (Ours are ?) the myriad hills, the myriad waters, at infinite distance.

85. For a myriad li myriad eyes throng their way up.

86. All knowledge, all happiness, all merit (is ours ? or Heaven's ?).

87. Would (a man) conceal anything from Heaven, let him not say that Heaven is ignorant of it.

88. Heaven measures as far as the sea is deep ; yea and farther.

89. See now yourselves without courage or resolution.

90. How long will you not be faithful servants ?

91. Remember that if in the third watch (of the night) you escape along the dark road,

92. The vengeful demon will blind (or bewilder) you before daylight.

93. Walk, each of you, in the true path for your king.

94. Believe the Heavenly Father, and doubt not.

95. Heaven produced the rightful ruler to govern the empire.

When Shang Ti sent down this holy decree, he commanded us to add three sentences ; we added—

96. The Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Elder Brother have great distress of mind (have too much to think of).

97. All authority and power reverts to the Supreme Ruler.

98. How is happiness to be given to the whole empire of Taeping?

Shang Ti sent down another holy decree, saying—

99. In the nine-fold heaven let there be one king of the East,

100. To aid the empire as a counsellor long to endure.

When Shang Ti declared his holy pleasure in these two lines, he desired us to add two more. In accordance with the holy pleasure of the Father we added these two:—

101. Ho-nai the teacher, who is at the same time the Lord Redeemer from disease,

102. Is the great support of all the people in the world.

At a later period Shang Ti made a change, saying,—

103. Let there be appointed a pair of phœnixes, one to the east, and the other to the west;

104. Let the east, west, north, and south do homage to them.

Shang Ti made another change, saying—

105. Let there be appointed a pair of phœnixes, one to the east, and the other to the west,

106. And let them, in gratitude for the bounty of Heaven that has descended on them, do homage together.

107. This purport of the Father's holy pleasure in general terms,

108. Do we truthfully declare for the information of you, our foreign younger brethren.

109. That the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Elder Brother really descended on earth,

110. Is proved to be true by the verses of the Father.

111. Their (or his) divine intelligence and authority words cannot tell.

112. Come soon to the heavenly temple, and you will be sensible of it.

113. The chief Elder Brother Jesus is the same (or of the same fashion) with the Father.

114. Not a half-sentence of (their) holy decrees shall be changed.

115. Shang Ti, the Heavenly Father, is the true Shang Ti.

116. Jesus, the Heavenly Elder Brother, is Heavenly Elder Brother indeed.

Verse 101. Ho-nai refers to Yang-siu-tsuen as the great physician.

103. The fabulous bird of China (Fung).—*Translator*. Verse 113. The title Elder Brother, preceding the name Jesus, is, nevertheless, made one degree less honourable by its place in the column.—*Translator*.

117. The Father and the Elder Brother set us to rule the heavenly kingdom.

118. To sweep away and exterminate the devilish spirits; bestowing on us great honour.

119. Foreign younger brethren of the Western Ocean, listen to our words :

120. Join us in doing service to the Father and Elder Brother, and extinguish the stinking reptiles.

121. In all things the Father, the Elder Brother, and ourself are master (or act independently of any one else).

122. Come, brethren, enthusiastically, and merit all honour.

123. When we were travelling in Kwang-tung some time ago,

124. In the hall of worship we addressed Lo-Hiau-tsuien.

125. We then told him that we had been up to Heaven,

126. And that the Heavenly Father, and the Heavenly Elder Brother had committed to us great authority.

127. Is Lo-Hiau-tsuien now come hither or not?

128. If he be, let him come to court and speak with us.

129. We are the second son of Shang Ti.

130. The Elder Brother and the king of the East are our uterine brothers.

131. All as one family together adoring the Heavenly Father.

132. There shall be universal peace (Taeping) in earth. It was said long ago.

133. The kingdom of heaven is (or was) at hand; now that it is come,

134. Brethren of the Western Ocean, be of good cheer.

135. In former days, when we ascended to Heaven, we saw what was destined by the Father.

136. (To wit, that) the myriad nations should aid us to mount the heavenly tower.

137. What the Father destined has now come to pass.

138. Put forth your strength for Heaven; it is a duty; yes, it is a duty.

139. For the Father, and for the Elder Brother slay the goblin demons.

140. Out of gratitude to the Father for your birth and growth; and when you have conquered in battle return.

141. We, the ruler, have given the younger ruler (our son) to be adopted by Jesus;

142. As the adopted of the Elder Brother and ourself to sit in the heavenly capital.

143. The young ruler, as one-half the son of Jesus

144. And one-half our son, is the object of the protection of Heaven.

145. (Thus) for generations the young ruler, as the son of Shang Ti,

146. Inherits from the Elder Brother and ourself the whole empire.

147. Brethren of the Western Ocean, adore (or you adore) the Supreme.

148. It is our wish that the Father and the Elder Brother should cause it so to be.

149. The chief Elder Brother being, in time past, nailed on the gallows, shaped like the character "shih," (ten); (*i.e.*, the cross),

150. Left it as its sign. In this there is no mistake.

151. The "shih-tsuien-te-kit," the tenfold (that is, all) perfect and all fortunate is ourself.

152. In all ways (our course) is that destined by the Father.

153. That the chief Elder Brother came to life again in three days,

154. And in three days built the temple, is not a vain boast.

155. We were produced by the Father in three days.

156. We built the temple of the Father and Elder Brother, and destroyed the devilish serpents.

157. In our third year, "Kwei-chau" (1853), we beheaded the devilish serpents.

158. In the year "Yih-yung" (1855), we exterminated the brutes by the aid of the Father and the Elder Brother.

159. The serpents and brutes humbled, and all exterminated for ever,

160. The whole world together sings the song of peace (or the song of Taeping).

161. Foreign brethren of the Western Ocean, you adore Shang Ti; (and it is)

162. The Father and the Elder Brother that have brought us to sit on the throne of the empire.

Verse 149. Ten, "shih" +, is also the number of completeness in China; ten parts is ten tenths, all.—*Translator.* 151. A play on "shih" (meaning complete) and "tsuien" (perfect); which also is part of Hung's name.

163. We have now declared you the truth.
164. Come rejoicing to court, and give thanks to the Father and the Elder Brother.
165. By the memorials of our ministers,
166. We have been informed of the coming of the brethren to the heavenly capital.
167. We have desired our ministers to treat you with courtesy,
168. As brethren in one harmonious community, be not doubtful or suspicious.
169. Apprehensive that the brethren might not be aware (of our sentiments),
170. We have issued our manifesto to show our sympathy with you.
171. Foreign brethren of the Western Ocean, worship Shang Ti.
172. Man's blessings (*lit.*, bounty and peace) are in this.

11th moon, 8th year of the Celestial Kingdom of Tai-ping."

"The writing," states Mr. Wade, "is mostly in seven-foot verse, of very small literary pretension and indifferent handwriting; singularly indifferent, when it is borne in mind how generally the educated Chinese are found to write decently, if not well. . . . The column is broken, according to the Chinese custom, before names of honour; those that refer apparently to the first person of the Trinity rising two places; those indicating the second person, one place. A character, coined to represent the Holy Spirit, is also allowed two places; it occurs but once. "Tien" (heaven) is raised in some lines two places, and in such case is spelt with a capital letter in the translation."

In one of the earlier chapters is given an account of some of Hung-siu-tsuen's visions in 1837. After perusing the above statement of the doctrines held by the Taiping chief in 1858, the reader must be struck by the coincidence of the description of the ascent to

heaven, &c., verses 17-34, with the narrative of the visions as related by Hung-jin to Mr. Hamberg in 1852. It is evident that Hung-siu-tsuen always believed that when on his sick-bed, at his home in Hwa-hien, he indeed held spiritual communion with the "Heavenly Father," and that from him he received orders to slay the demons, and to reconstruct the religion of the Chinese empire. The subsequent perusal of Afah's tracts strengthened this belief. Upon this he afterwards based his assumption of divine origin. As the rebellion progressed, it became more and more necessary to impress upon his fanatical followers the divine attributes of their leader, and to this end, he, in his edicts, places himself as the junior of the Trinity; not as equal with the Heavenly Father and Elder Brother, but as having, in virtue of his visions, such a relative position, as entitled him to take the third place of rank. The nomination of his young son to divine honours followed as a necessary consequence, in accordance with the Chinese ideas of succession. This boy was born in the village of his father in the year 1849. A curious account is given by Hung-jin of the circumstances attending his birth: "In the tenth month, on the ninth day, at the rising of the sun, the first-born son of Hung-siu-tsuen was born. Just at the same time, thousands of birds, some as large as ravens, and others as small as magpies, made their appearance. They continued long hovering in the air, and finally settled in the trees behind the dwelling of Siu-tsuen. The birds remained in the neighbourhood of the village about a month, to the great astonishment of the people, who said that the crowd of

birds came to do homage to the new-born king. When he knew that the wife of Siu-tsuen had been delivered of a male child, he dispatched a messenger with a letter to Kwang-si, informing Siu-tsuen of this happy event." At the time of the visit of Lord Elgin, the Tien-Wang had already begun to cease taking an active part in the proceedings of his adherents. Living in almost absolute retirement, he devoted his time to the promulgation of his religious edicts. None but females were employed in his palace, and it was only at rare intervals that the subordinate chiefs were admitted into his presence. The military organization had undergone considerable changes. The original four kings, the most important leaders, under the chief, in the rebellion, were all dead.¹ Fung-yun-shan, the Southern king, and Siau-chau-kwui, the Western king, had fallen in action. Yang-siu-tshin, the Eastern king, and Wei-ching, the Northern king, had lost their lives in the city of Nankin, in consequence of their attempt to rebel against the Tien-Wang. The only one remaining that had held an important post throughout the rebellion, was Shik-ta-kae, the Assistant-king, and he was away on the borders of the provinces of Kiang-si and Fokien, where he commanded a considerable army. The only representative of these four kings, now existing, is the young son of Siau, the Western king, who retains his father's title of Si-wang, and is one of the present ten kings.

¹ Fung was the great friend of the chief, and originator of the Society of "God-worshippers." Wei joined the God-worshippers, with a great number of his clan, in 1847. Yang and Siau were the well-known exponents of the wills of the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Elder Brother respectively.

The name of Kan-wang (the Shield king), has been of late years familiar to Europeans, as representing the man in whom great hopes were placed by missionaries and others, who trusted, that by his means the errors that had crept into the religion of the Taepings would be eradicated, and that thus the rebellion might go hand-in-hand with the progress of Christianity. As in subsequent pages the Kan-wang will be the subject of frequent notice, it is requisite, in some measure, to trace his previous career. The fact that he is no other than Hung-jin, the relative of the Tien-Wang, and the man from whom Mr. Hamberg obtained all his information respecting that chief's early life, will at once interest the reader in the following account.

At the period when the Society of God-worshippers broke out into open revolt, Hung-jin was acting as a school-teacher in a village in the Hwa district (Kwang-tung). Hung-siu-tsuen sent a request from Kwang-si that he, together with other relatives, would join him as early as possible.

Upon this Hung-jin and fifty other relatives and friends started on their journey; but, when they arrived near the district of the God-worshippers, they heard that the latter had raised their camp and had marched elsewhere, and that the government officers were seizing upon and murdering all persons connected with them. After several ineffectual attempts to reach his relative, Hung-jin returned to Kwang-tung. Upon his arrival at home he found that the fact of Hung-siu-tsuen and Fung-yun-san having raised an insurrection in Kwang-si was already known to the magistrates of this province.

A police force had arrived at the village, seized the people, demolished the ancestral tombs, and were extorting money from the inhabitants. Some of the near relations of the two leaders had been taken and put into prison. Hung-jin, no longer safe, passed his time in staying with friends in other districts, and twice again attempted to penetrate into Kwang-si, and in both cases was foiled by the vigilance of the government officials. At last he became involved in a small local insurrection and was taken prisoner. He managed to escape through the negligence of his captors, and, by the means of a distant relation who happened to be a Christian convert, he reached Hongkong in April, 1852. Here he was introduced to Mr. Hamberg, who, in his account of the circumstance, says, "I was astonished to hear a person from the interior of China speak with such interest of the Christian religion, and display so much acquaintance with it. I liked to listen to his animated narratives about Hung-siu-tsuen, Fung-yun-san, and their followers, though at the time I could form no clear conception of the whole matter, which was then little known and still less believed." After a short stay at Hongkong, Hung-jin obtained an engagement on the adjoining mainland as a teacher, but he returned again to Mr. Hamberg at the close of 1853. Early in 1854 he embarked for Shanghae, on his way to Nankin, having previously been baptized. The kindness of Mr. Hamberg provided him with sufficient money to defray his expenses, and he took also with him a number of religious books. He stopped at Shanghae several months, but, finding it impossible to reach Nankin, or in any way to hold com-

munication with his friends, he returned again to Hongkong. During his absence Mr. Hamberg had died, and he was received by some members of the London Mission Society, and was subsequently employed by them as a catechist and preacher during the years 1855-58. His character at this period is thus spoken of:—"He soon established himself in the confidence and esteem of the members of the mission, and the Chinese Christians connected with it. His literary attainments were respectable; his temper amiable and genial; his mind was characterised by a versatility unusual in a Chinese. His knowledge of Christian doctrine was largely increased, and of the sincerity of his attachment to it there could be no doubt."¹

In June, 1858, Hung-jin again determined to try and join his friends at Nankin, and, to this end, started by land in disguise and gradually worked his way up to the province of Hoo-peh. When Lord Elgin's expedition was at Hankow in December, he was heard of as being among the rebels at a small town in the neighbourhood, and managed to get a letter put on board one of the vessels, addressed to his teacher at Hongkong (Mr. Chalmers), informing the latter that he had got so far on his way and was trying to reach Nankin. This city he reached in the spring of 1859; and a few days after his arrival his relative the Tien-Wang appointed him to the high rank of Kan-wang.

In a letter to the Rev. Mr. Edkins he says that he felt unequal to this position of responsibility, but was very anxious to promote the diffusion of true religion.

¹ Missionary Magazine.

Writing of the Tien-Wang he states that, "On meeting with his relative, the Celestial king, and having daily conversations with him, he was struck by the wisdom and depth of his teaching, far transcending that of common men." This letter was written in 1860, more than a year after his arrival.

This unexpected elevation of a man who for years had been holding the position of native catechist in our principal Chinese colony naturally gave rise to hopes that his influence would have a great effect in spreading the Christian religion among the Taepings: these hopes, however, were doomed to be disappointed. The Kan-wang is hardly deserving of blame in this matter, for, circumstanced as he eventually was, it would have been very hazardous for him to have adopted any other policy than that which he has up to the present time followed.

CHAPTER XI.

Defeat of the imperialist army besieging Nankin—Capture of Soo-chow—Attack on Shanghae—Mr. Holmes' residence among the Taepings—Edicts.

DURING the greater part of the year 1859 no important change took place in the position and power of the Taepings, but in the winter of that year and 1860 the closer investment of their capital made it necessary for them to adopt a system of tactics totally differing from what had until then been followed. Hitherto the main stream of the Yang-zte-kiang had been sufficiently open to them to admit of their junks bringing down to Nankin supplies from the upper country. Their armies, both on the north and south banks, were constantly occupied in loading these junks with the spoils from the granaries of the conquered cities, and forwarding them to their beleaguered friends. The occupation of the river by the imperialist fleet now entirely closed this means of communication, and consequently the garrison were forced to turn to the stores within the city, which, day by day, were becoming more scanty. Some of the features attached to the long-protracted siege of Nankin present an interesting picture of the peculiar system of warfare adopted in China. From the year 1853 the imperialists had been constantly besieging the city; but yet, although their army carefully invested the three

landward sides, the fourth side facing the river was left free to the ingress or egress of the besieged. The latter always commanded that portion of the river which ran immediately abreast of the city, and on the opposite bank they had a powerful fortress well garrisoned, by which means communications were kept open at all times with their brethren at Ngan-king, and elsewhere. At the time now alluded to (1858 and 1859) the forces on either side had become so accustomed to each other's presence, that it was not at all unusual for the besieged, during the day, to mix very freely with their adversaries. Outside one of the gates was established a regular market, where the imperialists would gather together provisions either from their own stores or from the surrounding country, and a regular trade was carried on with those inside. As in all other markets in China, a great deal of gambling took place, and from this resulted numerous squabbles, which frequently ended by the offending parties being reported and brought before their respective chiefs for punishment. The Tien-Wang was very severe upon the shortcomings of his followers, and in many cases decapitation was awarded for the most trifling offences. This total disregard for the destruction of human life is one of the most marked characteristics of the Taiping rule. As the year 1859 advanced, the imperial government deemed it necessary to take more serious steps than they had hitherto done to secure the ultimate fall of Nankin. The abandonment of Chin-keang on the part of the Taepings materially assisted them in this purpose, for thus the eastern portion of the province south of the river was

entirely under their rule ; and they were enabled to concentrate a larger force upon the principal point than they otherwise could have done. It is one of the many remarkable facts connected with this siege, that the total force of the garrison seldom exceeded in number fifteen thousand people. The imperialists, on the other hand, were estimated as averaging about thirty thousand. It was the general remark of all who visited Nankin between the date of its capture and 1860, that the city seemed deserted ; very few troops were seen, and but slight apparent signs of life or activity going on. When it is considered that the very existence of the Tien-Wang's power then depended upon his holding his heavenly capital, it appears strange that more care should not have been taken to ensure its preservation. There are several reasons, however, which explain, to a certain degree, this seeming neglect. In the first place the necessity for husbanding the provisions required that as few mouths as possible should be retained within the walls ; and the rebellion of the Eastern king also, probably, was a warning to the Tien-Wang not to keep too large a force near his palace. The main idea of the latter seems to have been, that of looking upon his capital as a grand centre *from* which radiated all edicts and orders to his wandering armies, and *to* which converged all the spoils, both of money and grain, obtained by them. At the end of the year 1859, the imperialists had collected a force round Nankin, stated at not less than one hundred thousand fighting men ;¹ all trade with the force inside the walls ceased ; the fleet threatened

¹ Report of governor of province.

the city on the river face, and everything denoted a fixed determination to bring the siege to a close by forcing the garrison into submission by means of starvation.

The prospects of the Taepings in the early spring of 1860 had become very gloomy. Pressed by want, the garrison of Nankin resorted to every possible means of sustaining life short of eating human flesh. The imperial government were highly elated, and the besieging force looked upon the fall of the city as a mere matter of weeks. Now had arrived the time when the Taepings had to show their utmost power in order to avert so imminent a catastrophe, and at no period of the rebellion has such organization been displayed by them as during the three months preceding the relief of their capital. The policy at first adopted was that of trying to distract the attention of the besiegers, and to oblige them to detach portions of their force. To this end the army on the northern borders of Kiang-si and Che'-kiang, under the command of Shih-ta-kae (the Assistant king), proceeded to the province of Che'-kiang, captured the cities of Ku-chau and Yen-chau, and ravaged the country lying west of these cities. Another force, apparently proceeding from the eastern province of Ngan-hwui, suddenly attacked the important city of Hang-chow, the walls were mined, and after a most desperate fight they obtained possession of the outer city on the 19th of March. The Tartar garrison, strengthened by the knowledge that if they yielded, they would be to a man massacred, held the inner city until succour arrived from the neighbouring province. The besieged now

attacked the captors with great impetuosity, and eventually drove them outside the walls on the 24th. The carnage that took place during this short siege is described as perfectly awful; the ditches were choked with dead, and men, women, and children suffered indiscriminate slaughter. Other smaller Taeping armies were on the march, and attacking several towns in adjoining districts: all these movements, however, did not yield the result anticipated by the leaders at Nankin. The imperialists had sufficient force elsewhere to meet the attacks made upon them, and they carefully avoided detaching any portion of their force lying before that city.

The Taepings, now driven to their last resource, assembled a powerful army of relief, which, on the 3rd of May, burst its way through the imperialist lines, and combining with the garrison, which at the same time made a sortie in great force, they turned upon the whole imperialist army, and utterly routed them, and drove them from the field of action, with the total loss of all their ammunition and provisions. The Taepings now spread over the province like a flood; town after town fell into their hands. In every engagement with the imperialists the latter were invariably defeated, and seemed to have lost all courage and all discipline. The distressed country-people and the scattered and terrified government troops now flocked to the magnificent city of Soo-chow. To prevent this city falling into the hands of the advancing army, the entire suburbs were ordered to be destroyed by fire: the consequent loss of property was enormous. This act did not answer in the

manner expected by the authorities. The imperialist troops, at no time very subordinate, now gave themselves up to all kinds of excesses, and made the firing of the suburbs an excuse for every description of pillage and rapine. The Taepings, on their approach on the 24th of May, found the former only too ready to admit them, and through the most open treachery the government lost what perhaps at that time was the most valuable city in the empire.

The governors of the two Kiang provinces, and Che'-kiang, in their memorial to the emperor, relative to the above events, thus account for what had passed :—

“ The dissolution of the main body encamped before Nankin on this occasion, your servants are humbly of opinion, was entirely due to the fact that Ho-chun (the Manchu commander-in-chief) put faith in persons undeserving it. Hence dissatisfaction amongst the troops, not of a single day's growth ; while Chang-kwoh-liang (the other general), annoyed at his inability to carry out his own measures, threw himself into the fight at Tan-yang, and died. On this, simultaneously the whole army became so demoralized, that wherever the enemy came—and he very presently moved on Tan-yang and Wu-sih, as well as on Chang-chow and Wu-nih—it broke up. In every instance it behaved equally ill. At Soo-chow spies had already introduced themselves into the city ; and besides this, runaway soldiers and braves (inside) conspired with the rebels without the walls, so that in less than half a day (after the alarm was given) news came suddenly of the loss of the place. Ho-chun, who was at the Hu-shu-kwan, seeing with his own eyes that every one was disheartened, and that the situation was desperate, put an end to himself before the crisis (which he anticipated) ; while, on the other hand, Chang-luh-liang, finding that Soo-chow was lost, moved with all haste into Cheh-kiang. Thus the army, its first and second in command having, one after the other, both lost themselves, was left without a chief, and troops and braves, many myriads in number, were in one morning scattered as the stars, their ammunition and supplies all going to supply the enemy. Such was the degree of

dilapidation and overthrow attained in less than a month. Never in all antiquity has there been a state of confusion so remarkable."

During the three months that now elapsed between the occupation of Soo-chow and the attack on Shanghae, the Taepings made no military move of importance, but contented themselves by transferring a portion of the stores found in Soo-chow to Nankin, and in appropriating to their own use all the valuables in money or in silks found in the former city. Some modified system of taxation was also practised by them, the farmers in surrounding villages paying a certain sum, varying according to their tenure of land. An interesting account is given of the state of the country lying between Shanghae and Soo-chow, in a letter written to the London Mission Society by the Rev. Griffith John. Hung-jin (the Kan-wang) and Le¹ (the Chung-wang) had written to him and Mr. Edkins, another missionary, inviting them up to Soo-chow, there to meet them and hold a conference respecting religious matters. With this object in view, Messrs. John and Edkins, with three other brother missionaries, left Shanghae on the 30th of July. "Before starting," writes Mr. John, "we were told that large bands of the country-people were gathered here and there for the purpose of harassing the rebels in their movements, and that travelling was extremely dangerous in those parts. We were surprised to find, however, that the last imperialist station was only ten miles from Shanghae, and that from this point to Soo-chow there was not a man to oppose their march. At one point we passed a floating bridge, which had been

¹ Commandant at Soo-chow.

constructed by the insurgents, and left in charge of some of the country-people. A proclamation was put up on shore, exhorting the people to keep quiet, attend to their avocations, and bring in presents as obedient subjects. One of the country-people remarked as we were passing along, that the proclamation was very good, and that if the rebels would but act accordingly, everything would be all right. 'It matters very little to us,' said he, 'who is to be the emperor; whether Hien-Fung (the late emperor), or the Celestial king (Tien-Wang), provided we are left in the enjoyment of our usual peace and quiet.' Such, I believe, is the universal sentiment among the common people. A part of the bridge was taken off to allow our boats to pass through; after which it was closed again very carefully. The country-people were, for the most part, at their work in the fields as usual. The towns and villages presented a very sad spectacle. These once flourishing marts are entirely deserted, and thousands of houses are burnt down to the ground. Here and there a solitary old man or old woman may be seen moving slowly and trembling among the ruins, musing and weeping over the terrible desolation that reigns around. Together with such scenes, the number of dead bodies that continually met the eye were indescribably sickening to the heart. It must not be forgotten, however, that most of the burning is done by the imperialists before the arrival of the insurgents; and that what is done by the latter is generally in self-defence, and that more lives are lost by suicide than by the sword. Though the deeds of violence perpetrated by the insurgents are neither few

nor insignificant, still they would compare well with those of the imperialists. The people generally speak well of the old rebels. They say the old rebels are humane in their treatment of the people, and that the mischief is done by those who have but recently joined them. We were glad to find both at Soo-chow and Kwun-shan, the country-people were beginning to go among them fearlessly to sell ; and that they were paid the full value for every article. We were told at the latter place that to sell to the rebels is good trade, as they gave three and four cash for what they formerly got only one cash.¹ Their most difficult task is that of winning the confidence of the people, and establishing order. In this they have hitherto signally failed. Their recent brilliant victories, and consequent large territorial acquisitions, will enable them to give more time and attention to this point. They have proved themselves equal to the work of destruction ; it remains to be seen whether they will display as much talent in the work of re-organization—by far the most difficult task.

“ We reached Soo-chow early on the 2nd (August), and had an interview with the Kan-wang on the same day. He appeared in a rich robe and gold-embroidered crown, surrounded by a number of officers, all of whom wore robes and caps of red and yellow silk.

“ We visited him again on the following day. On our arrival at his residence we found a foreign merchant waiting upon him, and the Kan-wang considerably agitated in mind. The reason of this we afterwards learnt was, that he had heard that the letters which he

¹ 100 cash = *circa* fourpence-halfpenny (4½d.).

had sent to the representatives of foreign powers at Shanghae had not been opened ; and that the city was held by English as well as French soldiers. The first he spoke of as a personal insult to himself, and the second as a direct violation of the principle of neutrality which foreigners should adopt between the two contending parties.

“Though we told him that these were matters with which we, as missionaries, had nothing to do, still we could not but feel a secret sympathy with him.”

After this, a long conversation was held with reference to religious teaching, and also the character of the Tien-Wang. The Kan-wang stated him to be a pious man, much devoted to reading the Scriptures, his favourite books being the Bible and the ‘Pilgrim’s Progress.’ The travellers returned to Shanghae on the 5th, much pleased with the result of their journey, and hoping much good from the religious character of their friend the Kan-wang.

Throughout the rebellion the Taepings were desirous of obtaining possession of some seaport, in order to secure communications by sea, and also to enable them to trade freely in arms, &c., with foreigners. Judging that Shanghae would easily fall into their hands, and undoubtedly misled by European traders who led them to believe that the English and French troops in the settlement would make no opposition, they now prepared to march a force from Soo-chow for this purpose. On approaching Shanghae the Chung-wang¹ (loyal or

¹ Chung-wang commanded the army during the operations occurring

faithful king) addressed the following communication to the foreign ministers of Great Britain, France, and the United States :—

“Le, the Loyal King of the Heavenly Dynasty, &c., to the Honourable Envoys, &c.

“Previous to moving my army from Soo-chow I wrote to you, acquainting you that it would soon reach Shanghae, and that if the residences of your honourable nations and the mercantile establishments would hoist yellow flags as distinguishing marks, I would give immediate orders to my officers, and soldiers prohibiting them from entering or disturbing them in any way. As you would consequently have received and perused my letter, I supposed you would act according to the tenor of it. I was not aware, however, until yesterday that the people of your honourable nations had erected churches in other places in the prefecture of Sung-keang¹ in which they taught the Gospels, when my army being at the town of Sze-king fell in with a body of imps (imperialists), who resisted its progress, when my soldiers attacked and destroyed a number of them. Among these imps there were four foreigners, one of whom my soldiers killed, as they did not know to what country he belonged. However, in order to maintain my good faith to treat foreigners well, I caused the soldier who had killed the foreigner to be at once executed, thus keeping my word.

“Afterwards seeing that there was a church at Sze-king I then knew for the first time that the people of your honourable nations came there to teach the Gospel, and that although they had not hoisted a yellow flag, they had not been assisting the imps.

“But though the past is done with, precautions can be taken for the future. My army is now about to proceed directly to Shanghae, and in the towns or villages through which it will pass, should there be churches, I earnestly hope that you will give orders to the people of them to stand at the doors to give information that they are churches, so that there may be no mistakes in future.

“My forces have already arrived at Tseih-paen, and they will soon reach Shanghae. I therefore earnestly hope that you the honourable

between the relief of Nankin and capture of Soo-chow, and had since been commandant at the latter city.

¹ “The city of Sung-keang has been retaken by the rebels, and the infant Church there is scattered again.”—‘Missionary Magazine.’

Envoy will call the people of your nations before you, direct them to close their doors, remain inside, and hoist yellow flags at their houses, when they need have no fear of my soldiers, as I have already given orders to them that they must not, in that case, molest or injure any one.

“As soon as I myself arrive I purpose discussing with you all other business. In the mean time I send this hasty communication, and take the opportunity to inquire after your health.

“Tae-ping, Tien-kow, 10th year, 7th moon, 9th day (August 18th, 1860).”

In the mean time, measures had been taken by the European authorities at Shanghai for placing the city in a proper state of defence. The presence of a considerable force of English troops made this purpose comparatively easy. The gates of the Chinese walled city were placed respectively under the charge of detachments from the Royal Marines and Native Indian troops. The river running abreast of the city was commanded by some of our dispatch gun-vessels, the roads leading into the foreign settlements were carefully barricaded, and a considerable force of volunteers enrolled. As subsequent events proved, the preparations made were much more than proportionate to the danger incurred. It was supposed that the Taepings would have advanced with an overwhelming force, whereas nothing could be more wretched and inefficient than the handful of men who at last appeared before the walls.

On Saturday, the 18th August, the attack began. The rebels pressed close up under the city walls, having previously driven in the imperialist troops that had been encamped outside. Here, however, they were met by a severe fire of canister and shell from our howitzers ; our

PLAN OF
SHANGHAE

SCALE OF $\frac{1}{2}$ MILE

The map illustrates the early 20th-century layout of Shanghai, featuring the British Concession, French Concession, and the Chinese city. Key features include the American, Soochow, and Woosung creeks; the Bund; and various districts like the French Concession, Chinese City, and the surrounding low-lying areas. The map also shows the British Consulate, Jesuit College, and numerous small villages and orchards. A scale bar indicates distances up to 1/2 mile, and a compass rose is present.



Marines with their Enfield rifles, and the Sikhs with their old Brown Bess muskets, also inflicted considerable loss upon them. Finding their efforts hopeless, the "rebels" retired for the night out of range. During this night and following morning a large body worked their way through the suburbs, until they approached near to that part of the settlement occupied by the French. The latter, to prevent a recurrence of this movement, determined to destroy the whole suburb, and thus prevent its crowded houses and narrow streets remaining as a cover to the enemy's advance.

This destruction was carried into effect by the rapid means of a general fire. This suburb contained, as the editor of the 'North China Herald' truly stated, by far the richest and most important collection of native houses. It was here that the Chinese wholesale merchants lived; "an immense quantity of goods, especially sugar, was stored there, and as the conflagration in its rapid progress licked up a sugar-hong or soy-factory, the flames sprang up with fearful grandeur." During the whole of Sunday little else was done than dislodging, by means of our artillery, the men that had tried to place themselves under the cover of the crowded suburbs. When driven from their cover, and forced to retreat along the narrow paths skirting the city, they fell under the influence of the Enfield rifles, which inflicted no small loss upon them. On Monday the rebels again advanced towards the walls, by means of the above-mentioned footpaths, all moving in single file, each man carrying a flag. The murderous effect of our fire soon made them alter their line of march,

and they proceeded near the skirts of the English settlement. At this point a fire of rockets and shells from our Marine Artillery effectually ensured their retreat. During the night, the dispatch gun-boat 'Pioneer' proceeded up the river and dropped some thirteen-inch shell into their encampments. This last operation had the effect of completely deterring the Taepings from making any further attempt upon Shanghae, and they then broke up their camps, and gradually retired out of range.

The principal loss suffered by the Chinese of Shanghae on this occasion was that of their Water-suburb, where the conflagration raised by the French raged for some days, and destroyed an enormous amount of valuable property.

On the 21st of August, the Chung-wang sent the following letter to the foreign consuls:—

"Le the loyal Prince of the Heavenly Dynasty, &c., &c., addresses this communication to you, the Honourable Consuls of Great Britain, United States of America, Portugal, and other countries.

"That good faith must be kept is the principle which guides our dynasty in its friendly relations with other peoples; but deceitful forgetfulness of previous arrangements is the real cause of foreign nations having committed a wrong. When my army reached Soo-chow, Frenchmen, accompanied by people of other nations, came there to trade. They personally called upon me, and invited me to come to Shanghae to consult respecting friendly relations between us in future. Knowing that your nations worship, like us, God the Heavenly Father and Jesus the Heavenly Elder Brother, and are therefore of one religion and of one origin with us, I placed entire and undoubting confidence in their words, and consequently came to meet you at Shanghae.

"It never occurred to my mind that the French, allowing themselves to be deluded by the imps (the Chinese imperial authorities) would break their word and turn their backs upon

the arrangement made. Not only, however, did they not come on my arrival to meet and consult with me, but they entered into an agreement with the imps to protect the city of Shanghae against us, by which they violated their original agreement. Such proceedings are contrary to the principles of justice.

“Now supposing that the French take under their protection the city of Shanghae and a few li (a mile or two) around it, how will they be able, within that small space, to sell their merchandise, and to carry on conveniently their mercantile transactions?

“I have also learnt that the French have received no small amount of money from the imps of Hien-Fung (the emperor), which they have without doubt shared amongst the other nations. If you other nations have not received the money of the imps, why did several of your people also appear with the French when they came to Soo-chow and invited me to Shanghae to confer together? It is as clear as daylight that your people also appeared at Soo-chow and urgently requested me to come to Shanghae. Their words still ring in my ears; it is impossible that the affair should be forgotten.

“My army having reached this place, if the French alone had broken their engagements, coveted the money of the imps, and protected their city, how was it that not one man of your nations came to consult personally with me? You must have also taken money from the imps of Hien-Fung and divided it amongst you. Seeing, again, you committed a wrong, without taking into consideration that you would have to go to other places than Shanghae to carry on commercial business. You do not apparently know that the imps of Hien-Fung, seeing that your nations are of the same religion and family as the Heavenly Dynasty, used money to establish a connection; this is employing others to kill, and using schemes to cause separations.

“The French have been seduced by the money of the imps, because they only scheme after profits at Shanghae, and have no consideration for the trade at other places. They have not only no plea on which to meet me, but still less have they any ground on which to come before God the Heavenly Father, and Jesus the Heavenly Elder Brother, or even our own armies, and the other nations of the earth.

“Our Sovereign Lord was appointed by heaven, and has ruled now for ten years. One half the territory he possesses contains the rich lands in the east and south. The national treasury contains

sufficient funds to supply all the wants of our armies. Hereafter, when the whole face of the country is united under our sway, every part will be contained within our registers, and our success will not depend on the small district of Shanghae.

“ But with human feelings, and in human affairs, all acts have their consequences. The French have violated their faith, and broken the peace between us. Since they have, in advance, acted thus contrary to reason, if they henceforth remain fixed at Shanghae to carry on their mercantile business, they may so manage. But if they again come into our territory to trade, or pass into our boundaries, I, so far as I am concerned, may in a spirit of magnanimity bear with their presence and refrain from reckoning with them on the past. Our forces and officers, however, who have now been subjected to their deceit, must all be filled with indignation, and desirous of revenge ; and it is to be feared that they will not again be permitted, at their convenience, to repair to our territory.

“ On coming to Soo-chow I had the general command of upwards of one thousand officers, and several tens of thousands of soldiers, a brave army which has power to put down all opposition, and whose force is as strong as the hills. If we had the intention of attacking Shanghae, then what city have they not subdued ? What place have they not stormed ?

“ I have, however, taken into consideration that you and we alike worship Jesus, and that after all, there exists between us the relationship of a common basis and common doctrines. Moreover I came to Shanghae to make a treaty in order to see us connected together by trade and commerce ; I did not come for the purpose of fighting with you. Had I at once commenced to attack the city and kill the people, that would have been the same as the members of one family fighting among themselves, which would have caused the imps to ridicule us.

“ Further, amongst the people of foreign nations at Shanghae, there must be varieties in capacity and disposition : there must be men of sense, who know the principles of right, and are well aware of what is advantageous and what injurious. They cannot all covet the money of the impish dynasty, and forget the general trading interests in this country.

“ Hence, I shall for the present repress this day’s indignation, and charitably open a path by which to alter our present positions towards each other. I am extremely apprehensive that if my soldiers were to take Shanghae they would not be able to distin-

guish the good from the bad, in which case I shall be without grounds to come before Jesus the Heavenly Elder Brother.

“Out of a feeling of deep anxiety on your behalf I am constrained to make an earnest statement to you foreign nations, as to what is wisdom and what folly in these affairs, and as to the amount of advantage and injury of the different courses open to you. I beg you, foreign nations, again carefully to consider what course would be gainful, what a losing one.

“Should any of your honourable nations regret what has occurred and hold friendly relations with our state to be best, they need have no apprehensions in coming to consult with me. I treat people according to right principles, and will certainly not subject them to any indignities. Should, however, your honourable nations still continue to be deluded by the imps, follow their lead in all things, without reflecting on the difference between you: you must not blame me if hereafter you find it difficult to pass along the channels of commerce, and if there is no outlet for native produce.

“I have to beg all your honourable nations to again and again weigh in your minds the circumstances; and now write this special communication, and trust you will favour me with a reply.

“I beg to make inquiries after your health.

“Taeping, Tien-kow, 10th year, 7th moon, 12th day.”

Mr. Bruce, in commenting upon the above communication, writes:¹—“Of course I cannot presume to say what language may have been used by the individuals who sought them (the rebels) for the purpose of supplying them with arms, opium, &c., in exchange for the wealth acquired by the plunder of Soo-chow and other towns. But the missionaries who went among them, though they may have misled the rebels by ill-judged expressions of sympathy and deference, informed them distinctly that they would be opposed if they advanced on Shanghae, of which fact, indeed, they could not have been ignorant, after our proclamations, considering the

¹ ‘Correspondence respecting affairs in China, 1856-60,’ pp. 130.

accurate intelligence they possessed, through native and foreign agents, of everything that passed at Shanghae. . . . The attacking rebel force did not exceed three thousand men. Of these a small number only were tolerably armed, and belonged to the original Nankin force, the remainder consisting of desperadoes who join them for the sake of plunder, and of men taken from the villages and forced to serve in the ranks."

It seems evident, judging from the above-mentioned ill-armed and inadequate force, that the Taepings had counted upon assistance from within the walls; and it is unquestionable that if our troops had been withdrawn, the numerous ill-disposed residents would have risen and opened the gates to them. Shanghae has always been a great resort for many of the dangerous classes from Canton and other parts of the southern coast. The sudden occupation of the city by bands of these men, together with the adherents of the Triad Society in 1853-55,¹ and the total overthrow, for a period of eighteen months, of all government rule,—sufficiently prove how powerful they are, and how inefficient would be the power of the present rulers of the city if our aid was withheld from them.

During all the military operations of this year, the Tien-Wang, as at other times, remained shut up in his palace at Nankin, attended by his numerous establishment of women. He daily abstracted himself more entirely from all outward matters, and confined himself

¹ The city of Amoy (one of our treaty-ports) was captured and held at about the same period by a large force of local rebels, who for a time raised the Taeping standard although totally unconnected with the Taepings.

to his spiritual studies. The latter did not have a beneficial effect upon his mind, for he now began to issue edicts, in which he arrogated to himself the most extraordinary divine attributes. His long continuance of absolute power, together with the effect produced by constant perusal and literal interpretation of the Bible, appear to have turned his brain. To his young son was now confided the promulgation of most of the proclamations not referring to religion. To his followers honours were awarded with an open hand, and a considerable number of wangs or kings were in process of creation. A letter written by Mr. Holmes, an American missionary, who visited the heavenly capital in August, gives a history of an attempt made by him to obtain an interview with the Tien-Wang, and shows to what extent the pretensions of the latter had now reached. Upon his arrival at Nankin, Mr. Holmes was entertained by the Chang-wang (accomplished king), who at this time held a post answering to a certain extent to that of prime minister. The Tien-Wang, upon being informed of his intending visitor's arrival, expressed his gratification, and desired to see him on the following morning. Some discussion now took place between Mr. Holmes, the Chang-wang, and other officers, relative to the etiquette to be observed. Difficulties were raised, and the interview postponed. The account given of one of these discussions is most amusing. "The Chang-wang's chief-officer conferred with us again as to the etiquette to be observed when presented to the chief. 'Would I kneel?' 'No.' 'Would I put on a yellow robe and a hood prepared for me?' 'No; I would put

on my own clothes, such as I would wear when presented to my own country's wang, whom I had several times seen, and treat Tien-Wang as I did him.' 'Would I receive a title and rank, which Tien-Wang proposed to bestow?' This I explained 'would not be consistent with my calling,' and declined it. 'Would I bow to the Supreme when they all did?' 'I might, and might not; would not promise; that was not my duty to Tien-Wang, but to God himself.' I suggested the rule that every nation should use its own etiquette, as the only one that would always work without difficulty." Nothing could be got out of Mr. Holmes on these points; and at last an edict was sent from the Tien-Wang's son, the principal object of which was to inform the western nations generally that he and his father were willing to receive their reverend visitor. Mr. Holmes consequently prepared to go on the next morning, which happened to be also the morning of the Taeping sabbath. He writes:—"At daylight we started for the Tien-Wang's palace. The procession was headed by a number of brilliantly coloured banners, after which followed a troop of armed soldiers; then came the Chang-wang in a large sedan covered with yellow satin and embroidery, and borne by eight coolies; next came the foreigner on horseback, in company with the Chang-wang's chief officer, followed by a number of other officers on horseback. On our way several of the other kings who were in the city fell in ahead of us with similar retinues. Music added discord to the scene, and curious gazers lined the streets on either side, who had no doubt seen kings before, but probably never witnessed such an

apparition as that which accompanied them. Reaching at length the palace of the Tien-Wang, a large building resembling very much the best of the Confucian temples, though of much larger size than these generally are, we entered the outer gate, and proceeded to a large building to the eastward of the palace proper, and called the Morning Palace. Here we were presented to the Tsan-wang and his son, with several others. After resting a little while, during which two of the attendants testified their familiarity with, and consequent irreverence for, the royal place, by concluding a misunderstanding in fisticuffs, we proceeded to the audience-hall of the Tien-Wang. I was here presented to the Tien-Wang's two brothers, two nephews, and son-in-law, in addition to those whom I had before met at the 'Morning Palace.' They were seated at the entrance of a deep recess, over the entrance of which was written, 'Illustrious Heavenly Door.' At the end of the recess, far within, was pointed out to us his Majesty Tien-Wang's seat, which was as yet vacant. The company awaited for some time the arrival of the Western king, whose presence seemed to be necessary before they could proceed with the ceremonies. That dignitary, a boy of twelve or fourteen, directly made his appearance, and entering at the 'Holy Heavenly Gate,' took his place with the royal group. They then proceeded with their ceremonies as follows:—First, they kneeled with their faces to the Tien-Wang's seat, and uttered a prayer to the Heavenly Brother; then kneeling with their faces in the opposite direction, they prayed to the Heavenly Father, after which they

again kneeled with their faces to the Tien-Wang's seat, and in like manner repeated a prayer to him. They then concluded by singing in a standing position. A roast pig and the body of a goat were lying with other articles on tables in the outer court, and a fire was kept burning on a stone altar in front of the Tien-Wang's seat, in a sort of court which intervened between it and the termination of the recess leading to it. He had not yet appeared, and though all waited for him for some time after the conclusion of the ceremonies, he did not appear at all. He had probably changed his mind, concluding that it would be a bad precedent to allow a foreigner to see him without first signifying submission to him ; or it may be that he did not mean to see me after learning the stubborn nature of our principles ; but, anxious to have us carry away some account of the grandeur and magnificence of his court, had taken this mode of making an appropriate impression, leaving the imagination to supply the vacant chair which his own ample dimensions should have filled. We retired to the 'Morning Palace' again, where kings, princes, foreigner, and all were called upon to ply the 'nimble lads' upon a breakfast which had been prepared for us, after which we retired in the order we came.

" In the course of the afternoon, after our return, the Chang-wang invited me to see him privately. I was led through a number of rooms and intervening courts into one of his private sitting-rooms, where he sat clothed loosely in white silk, with a red kerchief round his head, and a jewel in front. He was seated in an easy-chair, and fanned by a pretty slipshod girl.

Another similar chair was placed near him, on which he invited me to be seated, and at once began to question me about foreign machinery, &c. He had been puzzled with a map with parallel lines running each way, said to have been made by foreigners, which he asked me to explain. He then submitted to my inspection a spy-glass and a music-box, asking various questions about each, evidently supposing every foreigner to be an adept in the construction of such articles. After this he became quite familiar, and was ready to see me at any hour. At the next interview, which occurred on the day following, I referred him to various passages in the New Testament, which conflicted with the doctrines of the Tien-Wang. Found it impossible to gain his attention on these matters. He was ready enough to declaim in set speech about all men being brethren, but it was easy to perceive that his religion, such as it was, had little hold upon his heart. He confessed carelessly that the revelation of Tien-Wang did not agree with the Bible, but said that of Tien-Wang being later was more authoritative. I found him but little disposed to have his faith tested, either by reason or revelation, or indeed to think about it at all when it was abstracted from public affairs.

“ The two days which yet elapsed before our departure were spent mostly in conversation with various persons connected with the establishment of the Chang-wang and other kings. These conversations, informal and desultory, gave me an opportunity to ascertain something of the practical working of Hung-siu-tsuen’s principles upon the masses of his adherents. I could not

perceive that there was any elevation of character or sentiment to distinguish them from the great mass of the Chinese population. . . . I went to Nankin predisposed to receive a favourable impression; indeed, the favourable impressions of a previous visit to Soo-chow led me to undertake this journey. I came away with my views entirely changed. I had hoped that their doctrines, though crude and erroneous, might, notwithstanding, embrace some of the elements of Christianity. I found to my sorrow nothing of Christianity but its names, falsely applied, applied to a system of revolting idolatry;¹ whatever they may be in their books, and whatever they may have believed in times past, I could not escape the conclusion that such is the system which they now promulgate, and by which the character of their people is being moulded."

During Mr. Holmes' residence in Nankin, the Tien-Wang issued an edict, which was apparently called forth by the circumstance of foreigners being in his capital. It was thus translated:—

"I, Tien-Wang, issue an edict for the information of such leaders of soldiers as there may be in the outer tribes. The ten thousand nations should submit to the Heavenly Father, Lord above, Supreme Father. The ten thousand nations should submit to the Saviour of the world, the Great Brother Christ; heaven, earth, and man, the past, the present, and the future are all then at peace. The Father formerly descended into the world and proclaimed his laws with reference to the present time. The Elder Brother formerly bore the sins of men, calling the knife to slay the evil spirits. The Elder Brother had previously said, 'The kingdom of Heaven comes near,

¹ The Taepings are such uncompromising iconoclasts, of which fact Mr. Holmes must have been aware, that it is difficult to understand his meaning when he ascribes to them a "system of revolting idolatry."

and it will surely arrive.' The Father and the Elder Brother have descended upon earth and established the heavenly kingdom, and have taken me and the Junior Lord¹ to regulate affairs appertaining to this world. Father, Son, and Royal Grandson are together Lords of the new heaven and earth. The Saviour and the Junior Lord are sons of the Heavenly Father; also the Great Brother's Christ's son, and my Son is Lord. The Father and the Elder Brother, together with me, three persons, constitute one. They have truly commanded the Junior Lord² to be the head of the ten thousand nations. Know, all of you, your Eastern and Western kings, and that the holy will of the Supreme and of Christ are given me through them, that I may from them thence take the people up to Heaven, and lead them to the Heavenly abode. In ancient times, and at present, heretofore and hereafter, all submit to the Heavenly Father. All 'neath Heaven are happy in ascending together to the Heavenly Capital³ and to the Heavenly Palace. The Father and the Elder Brother's precepts are obediently handed down through all ages. The Father laboured six days, and all should glorify the great Heavenly Supreme. In the year Tien-you⁴ the Father sent and took me up to Heaven. The Elder Brother and I will in person expel the serpent, the devil, and cast him into hell. In the year Yuh-shan⁵ the Father and Elder Brother descended into the world in order, through me and the Junior Lord, to establish endless peace. The Gospel has long been preached: you now behold true happiness and glory. The Father and Elder Brother, merciful and loving, are truly omnipotent. Let all rulers and people beneath the heavens rejoice and be glad."

This edict, translated by Mr. Holmes, and published in the local papers, created great dissatisfaction in the minds of the European community at Shanghae. The term "leaders of soldiers," by which were meant the heads of foreign nations, gave great offence to all officials acquainted with its true meaning.

"He" (the Tien-Wang), writes Mr. Bruce, "calls foreign nations 'outer tribes,' and their representatives

¹ Junior Lord—his son.

² He had transferred his temporal power to him.

³ Nankin.

⁴ Year Tien-you (1837).

⁵ Year Yuh-shan (1848).

‘leaders of soldiers’—terms, the depreciating meaning of which is well known to those who are conversant with the language of Canton in its most palmy days of arrogance and fancied superiority.”

The Protestant missionaries, on the other hand, united in regretting the lamentable change that had apparently taken place in the religious belief of the leader of the Taeping rebellion. The assumption of his position as one of the Trinity, the appointment of his son to divine honours, together with the general tone of arrogance shown throughout the edict, led them to despair of the hope hitherto cherished by them, that the rebellion, under his guidance, would be the means by which Christianity would be spread over China, and eventually become the religion of the state. It became even doubtful whether, under existing circumstances, it would not be unadvisable to send up resident missionaries to Nankin, as in all probability their teaching would so entirely clash with that of the Tien-Wang, as not only to injure the cause of the Protestant Church for the time being, but also to be detrimental to its prospects in the future, should the rebellion become triumphant over the government.

From this period may be dated the marked change that has taken place in the opinions of the Europeans in China with regard to the Taepings. When Lord Elgin returned from his expedition up the Yang-zte-kiang in 1858, his high-handed policy towards them at Nankin, Ngan-king, and elsewhere, was much disapproved of by a large section of the community, and it was thought that he had hardly done justice to them.

From then and until the attack on Shanghai, and visit of Mr. Holmes, nothing occurred of sufficient importance to modify in any way the conceptions generally entertained of them. But the two latter events, and what has since taken place, have so entirely altered the views held by Europeans of all classes, that at the present moment but very few will be found yet willing to uphold the Taepings and their policy.

As in other cases of a similar nature, this fluctuation of opinion may be traced to a misconception of the true rise and tendency of the rebellion. When the papers containing the proclamations and odes brought down in 1853, by H.M.S. 'Hermes,' were translated and made public, their contents led many people to hope that two great results would proceed from the successful progress of the Taepings. One was the establishment of Christianity, and the other the improvement of the commercial relations between China and the western nations. Both these hopes seem to have been based upon insufficient grounds. The religious opinions then held by Hung-siu-tsuen and his brother chiefs differed but very slightly from those now practised. At that time the Eastern and Western kings were believed to be under the immediate influence of the Supreme Being and his Son. Hung-siu-tsuen then, as now, believed that he had held some description of communion with the Father, and invariably maintained his assumption of a divine right to govern. The early religious odes as fully point out all his pretensions as any since published. The long continuance of power, and its action upon an already disordered brain, simply rendered his

edicts more presumptuous and on some points more incomprehensible.

The bestowal upon his son of the title of Junior Lord is one of the later acts that gave such umbrage to the missionaries. This, as I have already mentioned, is a most natural course, when the Tien-Wang's divine pretensions are impartially considered. He has chosen to rest his right to govern entirely upon the grounds of direct appointment from the "Heavenly Father," and in order to give some colour to this it became necessary that he should hold *some* relative position to Him.

To this point I shall refer subsequently, it being sufficient to remark here that the later religious edicts would not have assisted in any way towards the change in the opinions held by the members of foreign missions, if the latter had not been too hopeful in the first instance, and too anxious to torture the religious belief shadowed forth in the original odes, into a closer approximation with the Protestant faith than their reading warranted.

The arrogance of language towards foreigners, as displayed in the proclamations both of the Tien-Wang and his followers, and which is so much complained of, is nothing but what might be most naturally expected, as issuing from men who had been in most cases born and bred in Kwang-tung, a province above all others in China where foreigners are treated and spoken of with contempt, and especially so amongst that very labouring class from which the Taiping leaders sprang.

But perhaps the principal reason for the decline of the popularity of the rebellion amongst Europeans, may

be found in the great change that has occurred in our political relations with the Manchu government. At the time when the principles of the Taepings were first known, and Nankin had fallen into their hands, nothing could have been more unsatisfactory than the position of foreigners in China.

The interior of the country was closed to all, and none but the devoted Roman Catholic missionaries ever attempted to penetrate into it; and these travelled as Chinese, and went direct to their respective congregations of converts, where they obtained protection from insult. At Canton the governor refused to admit Europeans within the walls, and all the merchants who chose to come there to trade were obliged to live in the suburbs. But without enumerating the different disqualifications under which they suffered, the galling tone of superiority assumed to them on all occasions by government officials had become almost unbearable. It is to this that Mr. Bruce alludes, when he speaks of the "language of Canton in its most palmy days of arrogance." With this state of affairs existing, it was only natural that the fast-spreading rebellion should have been looked upon with favourable eyes, as a means through which it was probable that our relations, commercial and political, might be placed on a more satisfactory basis. The conduct of the governor at Canton in 1856 resulted in establishing this very alteration, hoped to have been brought about by the Taepings. The seizure of the lorcha 'Arrow' afforded a pretext for an appeal to arms, and the war that ensued led to the obtainment of a treaty, which was in all respects

most desirable. Two of its clauses,¹ noted below, not only made the further progress of the Taepings unprofitable, but absolutely made their simple existence most objectionable to all Europeans who hoped to open trade with those provinces lying adjacent to the upper waters of the Yang-zte. When Lord Elgin proceeded to Hankow, he evidently looked upon them as a mere body of rebels, sooner or later to be suppressed by government, and that they in the interval interfered with the due carrying into execution of the terms of his treaty. Consequently he was not inclined to show them much favour.

All these various causes combined have tended to render the Taeping government decidedly unpopular, both at home and abroad. The accounts received of the misery in those provinces occupied by its adherents,

¹ Treaty signed at Tientsin, June 26th, 1858 :—

Art. IX. "British subjects are hereby authorised to travel, for their pleasure or for purposes of trade, to all parts of the interior under passports which will be issued by their consuls and countersigned by the local authorities. These passports, if demanded, must be produced for examination in the localities passed through. . . . To Nankin, and other cities disturbed by persons in arms against the government, no pass shall be given until they shall have been recaptured.

Art. X. "British merchant-ships shall have authority to trade upon the Great River (Yang-zte). The upper and lower valley of the river being, however, disturbed by outlaws, no port shall be for the present opened to trade, with the exception of Chin-kiang, which shall be opened in a year from the date of the signing of this treaty. So soon as peace shall have been restored, British vessels shall also be admitted to trade at such ports as far as Hankow, not exceeding three in number, as the British minister, after consultation with the Chinese Secretary of State, may determine shall be the ports of entry and discharge."

The treaty of 1860 on these points is precisely similar with the above.

together with the cruelties committed by them, have unquestionably deepened this feeling. But as regards these two points, the imperialists have proved themselves equally to blame, and it would require a delicate balance to show to which side was attached the greater sum of barbarity.

CHAPTER XII.

State of the country between Nankin and Shanghae — Mr. Muirhead's visit — Letter from Mr. Roberts giving reasons for leaving Nankin.

In the previous chapter two communications are noticed, one from Mr. John, relative to the state of the country between Shanghae and Soo-chow, the other from Mr. Holmes, the American missionary, giving a history of his visit to Nankin. The latter returned to Shanghae, much prejudiced against the Tien-Wang and his followers, and in the summing up of his opinions about them, expresses himself in not very measured language.¹ Some months subsequently, Mr. Muirhead, a member of the London Mission, and a gentleman of much experience in all matters relating to China, spent some weeks at Nankin, and, in a letter to the secretary of his mission, gave an interesting and exhaustive account of the religious aspect of the Taepings, as judged from his somewhat, perhaps, too partial point of view. Another communication written shortly afterwards by Mr. Forrest, one of our consular staff in China, describes the country between Soo-chow and Nankin, thus supplementing the account of Mr. John. Mr. Forrest writes from Nankin in March, 1861, having arrived there by land from Shanghae. His letter gives most valuable

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1859-60.

information upon the political character of the Taiping system of government in those districts passed through by him that were under its rule. "Words cannot convey," he writes, "any idea of the utter ruin and desolation which mark the line of Taiping march from Nankin to Soo-chow. The country around the last unfortunate city will soon be covered with jungle, while the vast suburbs, once the wonder of even foreigners, are utterly destroyed; a few miserable beings are met with outside the gates selling bean-curd and herbs, but with these exceptions none of the original inhabitants are to be found, and we¹ actually flushed teal in the city moat, where, only a year ago, it was barely possible to find a passage from the immense number of boats actively engaged in commerce and traffic. The interior of the city is equally desolate; the whole of the house-fronts have been torn down, and the numerous water-courses are filled with broken furniture, rotten boats, and ruin. The same may be said of all cities on the canal, and as for the villages and places unprotected by walls, they have been burned so effectually and carefully that nothing but the blackened walls remain.

"A very large body of rebels was engaged in the erection of defences outside the Chang gate of Soo-chow. The forts have for object the protection of the entrance to the Grand Canal, which was crowded with boats laden with foreign arms, furniture, and goods of all sorts. Great preparations, we were informed, were being made for the storming of Hang-chow, against which place the Kan-wang and seventy thousand newly arrived

¹ Mr. Edkins of the London Mission accompanied him.

Cantonese had proceeded. The mass of boats, with the utmost civility and with infinite trouble, made a passage for our boats, and we entered on the Grand Canal.

“The same sad story everywhere suggested itself. Devastation marked our journey. The land on either bank was waste to the distance of a mile from the bank, while the towing-path, which is also the grand rebel highway, was like an upturned churchyard. Human remains were lying about in all directions. During the retreat of the imperialists after the fall of Woo-si,¹ the rebels followed them on horseback; no quarter was given to the fugitive troops, whose ranks were augmented by the frightened peasantry; they were slain as overtaken, and if the towing-path yet shows the signs of slaughter, the waters of the canal conceal the remains of by far the greater number of victims.

“Large numbers of Taeping soldiers were passed every day: in fact there was one continuous stream of these going from Nankin to Soo-chow and Chin-keang-foo, against which last place the insurgents are making great efforts. We heard the roar of the guns at and near Tam-yang, and the chief at that town told us that they should undoubtedly take the city very soon. We could see by the smoke of the burning houses in which direction Chin-keang lay, and remarked at the same time that the rebels had in no way changed their usual destructive habits.

“I had heard, and believe it true, that the Taepings are making such efforts to take the Yang-zte ports, in

¹ Fell when the Taepings burst out from Nankin, and were capturing the towns between that and Soo-chow, 1860 (May).

consequence of an idea that if a foreign consul once is established in any of them, the same protection will be given to the place as is given to Shanghai.

“I took some trouble to examine the foreign arms carried by the insurgents, and find that the purchasers have been, in almost every instance, the victims of foreign fraud. Most of the guns and all the pistols I looked at were very old and badly made,—useless weapons, with the detonating apparatus broken. A number of muskets that I saw at Soo-chow, recently bought (the soldier said) from American strangers, were of such a description that half-a-dozen shots will certainly destroy them, and probably their owners too. On the whole, I am convinced that the foreign arms, of which they have a very large quantity, are far more dangerous to the insurgents themselves than to their enemies.

“One characteristic of the Taeping movement is the employment of a vast number of boys in the army. Every chief has several, and although I never saw a rebel soldier who could be called old, where there is one grown-up man there are two or three boys from twelve to eighteen years of age. They have all been kidnapped at various places, but appear quite delighted with their profession, giving themselves the most insolent swagger and airs. These youths always saluted us as ‘devils,’ while their superiors and chiefs were very particular in calling us foreign brothers when they had occasion to talk to us.

“On leaving our boats at Pao-ying, we had more opportunity of getting among the people, who were not

alarmed at the sight of strangers, as were the few wretched people along the canal. In fact, much more confidence and safety was apparent around us. A large number of people had returned to their homes and former occupations. The proclamations, not few in number, of Tien-Wang's son and Chung-Wang prohibited the soldiers from carrying off men or women on pain of death.

The people gave us a melancholy history of the Taeping outbreak, and the treatment accorded to the newly conquered districts. A great deal of indiscriminate slaughter at first took place ; the young men and women were carried off ; all portable valuable property became the prize of the conquerors, and only the old men and women were left behind. Crowds of fugitives crossed the Great River (Yang-zte) to await better times ; they are now, I am glad to say, fast returning to their homes. The insurgents do not molest them much ; a certain number are compelled to attend on the chief to do the coolie work of the public service ; when their term is finished others take their place, and they themselves are permitted to return home. Of this class of men were those who carried our baggage and chairs ; they worked cheerfully and well, asked for no gratuity, and were very grateful for the little present we gave them when they left us.

The rebel authorities pay a visit to the rural districts once a month, and exact a tribute of cash or rice from the inhabitants of the villages. Regularly-appointed officers are stationed in all important places, in whom the people seem to have confidence ; and unless some new

military operations disturb Nankin, the villages around will soon become peopled, and the land resume its wonted fertile appearance.

“We arrived at Nankin soon after an edict had been passed prohibiting trade in the city. The reason given was, that as Tien-kiang (Nankin) was the imperial residence, it should not be disturbed by the clamour of the tradesfolk, and that bad characters had come in as traders. Fourteen unfortunates, who tried to make a little gain in spite of the edict, were at once executed; a brisk trade has consequently sprung up outside the several gates. The market at the south gate is particularly busy and crowded, nor are there houses enough in the suburbs to meet the demand. I should estimate the population of the city and suburbs at about seventy thousand men. . . . Building is going on in the city, and people who have known the place before, say that marked improvement is taking place. A good deal of wealth exists among the people, and it is not a little curious that the Taepings have a silver currency of a very convenient size and value. The common coin is of the size of a shilling, but worth rather more; it is exactly like a copper cash, and has an inscription engraved on it. A large silver coin of the value of a sovereign, exists, but I have seen none. Imperial cash is used in preference to their own Taeping copper coins, and, of course, sycee is taken.

“The authorities assert, and with some show of truth, that the rulers are now giving their attention to the formation of a fixed order of government, and to the improvement of the condition of the people; measures impossible

before because of the imperialist army. Only one king, the Chang-wang, is in the city at present, to wait upon Tien-Wang, and all his work is done by his son. I saw this son twice, once in his palace, when he volunteered an account of Tien-Wang's visions, and once when he was preaching to the public with his robe and crown on. His sermon had but little to do with religion, and was merely a collection of orders to the people."

At and near Soo-chow several soldiers, who had been lately pressed into the service, were seen with the Chinese character for the Taeping dynasty pricked into their cheeks. One of our native Protestant converts who visited that city shortly after its capture noticed the same thing.

The paper in which he gave an account of his journey was read at one of the meetings of the "China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society" at Shanghae. The reason therein assigned for this branding was, that it was done in order to prevent desertion; the soldiers so branded being men who, having attempted to escape, had been recaptured.

In January, 1861, Mr. Muirhead left Shanghae for Nankin, for the purpose of pursuing his missionary duties in the insurgents' territory. To enable missionaries to do this without hindrance had been the object of a visit to Nankin in the previous November. On that occasion Mr. John obtained from the Tien-Wang an Edict of Religious Toleration. This, issued by the Tien-Wang's son, is thus translated:—¹

¹ The reason given by the Kan-wang, explaining why the Tien-Wang's son issued a religious edict, was that the Tien-Wang was anxious that his son should feel an interest in missionary work.

“Having received the decree of my Heavenly Father (God), of my Heavenly adopted Father (Christ), and of my father (the celestial king), I command all the king’s officers, both civil and military, and all the brethren to be acquainted with it. The true doctrine of my Father (God), and of my adopted Father (Christ), is the religion of Heaven. The religion of Christ (Protestant religion), and the religion of the Lord of Heaven (Roman Catholic religion), are included in it. The whole world, together with my father and myself, are one family. Those who lovingly and harmoniously observe the regulations of the heavenly religion are permitted to come and visit (us). Now, from the memorial presented to us by my uncles, Kan, Tsan, Chung, and others, I learn that the foreign teacher, G. John, and his friend, esteeming the kingdom of Heaven, and reverencing and believing in my Father (God), and my adopted Father (Christ), to whom be thanks for the bestowment upon us of authority, power, and wonders, of which those who are far and near have reverentially heard, have come for the express purpose of seeing the light, of beholding God and Christ, and of requesting permission to spread abroad the true doctrine. Seeing, however, that the present time is a time of war, and that the soldiers are scattered abroad in every direction, I am truly afraid that the missionaries might be injured by following the rabble soldiery, and that thus serious consequence might ensue. Still, I truly perceive that these (missionaries) are sincere and faithful men, and that they count it nothing to suffer with Christ; and because of this I esteem them very highly.

“Let the kings inform all the officers and others that they must all act lovingly and harmoniously towards these men, and by no means engender contention and strife. Let all know that the Father (God), my adopted Father (Christ), my father and myself, are one family; and let these men (missionaries) be treated exceedingly well.”¹

This edict was considered by our missionaries in the north as a sufficient authority to ensure their safety and freedom from molestation of all kinds while proceeding through the country in the performance of their special

¹ The capital letters and the bracketed explanations are given according to the translation communicated by Mr. John.

vocations.¹ Mr. Muirhead states that, in addition to these, his intention was to be able to form some just

¹ When I was at Shanghai, early in the year 1861, Mr. John had then lately returned from Nankin. The narrative of his journey was published in the 'Friend of China,' but in a pamphlet, which he was good enough to present to me, I find that he has summed up his experiences of the Taepings under the heading of "General Conclusions." These chiefly refer to the questions much mooted at the time regarding the edicts of the Tien-Wang, which were generally looked upon as most blasphemous writings, and as containing the most arrogant pretensions. Mr. John steers a middle course, and concludes that the opinions commonly entertained were erroneous, that the chief did not receive divine honours as was affirmed, and that his assumption of divinity might be looked upon as metaphorical. "When he speaks of God, Christ, and himself as one family and one person, he simply means to say that they are one in sympathy, interest, aim," &c. One portion, however, of the pamphlet is devoted to the examination of the system of government. "Its real form," he writes, "I was told by Chun at Tan-yang, is monarchical. The rank of king is a temporary expediency. They are mere generalissimos. When peace is restored they will become governors, and governors-general, and Hung-siu-tsuen alone will be acknowledged king. Though each of the kings governs the territory which he himself has conquered, and has his civil and military officers, over whom he exercises the sole jurisdiction, still they are all amenable to the Celestial king. He scrutinises their actions, and watches over their movements, with great care and vigilance, and keeps them completely under his power and control. . . .

"At Nankin there are the six boards corresponding with those of Pekin. The Kan-wang is president. Some of the members are very respectable scholars. They have civil as well as military officers in the cities, who watch over the interests of the country-people. The whole of the insurgents' country is under a regular system of taxation, which is somewhat more moderate than the old.

"The system of community of goods still continues. At Nankin it is carried out to its fullest extent. Everything is common; they have no salary; the Celestial king supplies all the chiefs, kings, and soldiers with their respective portions of food, money, and clothing: of course the kings and officers who go out to fight do not depend solely on the allowances assigned to them by the chief. The Chung-wang is probably richer than the Celestial king himself.

"From the chiefs, Lin and Chun, I learned what I did not know before, namely, that the people are not *permitted* to live in the cities at present. (This is written in answer to a question that Mr. John supposes put to

and correct idea of the great movement going on around him: he travelled first to Soo-chow. "Here," he writes, "under the guidance of a servant from his (the governor's) office, I commenced the work of preaching and distributing. There is no native population in Soo-chow: the whole is a vast camp, and none are allowed to reside or enter the gates except such as are connected with it. On passing along it was painful of course to observe the change that had come over the million-peopled city, but the same is the effect of ruinous war everywhere. At many different points I preached, and was pleased to see the knowledge and appreciation of the truth that prevailed among my hearers. The great things I declared to them appeared to be familiar themes, and required only to be impressed upon their hearts by the Holy Spirit in order to produce their appropriate results. Besides this there was every respect and attention manifested by the audience, so as to afford me much satisfaction. There was one novelty everywhere met with: over and at the side of all the doors there were papers bearing remarkable inscriptions; some were

him—"Why do not the people return into the cities?") They say that whilst the dynastic change is going on the cities must for the most part belong to the soldiers, and the country to the people; and that in this they do not deviate from the policy adopted by every other dynasty, the Manchú not excepted. To throw open the gates of the captured cities to the people, whilst surrounded by the enemy, would, they say, be a most suicidal course; they would soon be filled with imperialist soldiers in the shape of shopkeepers and coolies, who would render their case desperate in the event of an attack."

Mr. John thinks that the Taepings have the elements for good organization and government. His opinion, being based upon personal observation and intercourse, commands consideration, although differing from that commonly entertained.

in honour of the king on his birthday,¹ but most of them either singly or in connection therewith, were descriptive of 'the exceeding grace of God.' The same was the case with the numerous proclamations on the walls, all bringing before the readers the name, attributes, and providential goodness of the Heavenly Father, together with the work of Christ. In this way it was evident that the main truths of our holy religion could not fail to be communicated to the people at large; while on stated occasions there were also special solemnities observed, and special instruction imparted, in every household or public office. This was the course appointed by the 'Celestial king' for the enlightenment of his subjects, and from which no deviation could possibly be made. The mention of his name, however, suggests in one point of view grounds of lamentation: the authority which he has arrogated to himself, and the corruptions he has introduced into his scheme of religion, make us anxious as to the result; still the *régime* he has brought to bear upon his countrymen is so far calculated to spread the knowledge of Christianity, and thus lay the foundation for a purer and more spiritual church than he is attempting to establish."

On his journey from Soo-chow to Nankin Mr. Muirhead travelled over nearly the same ground as did subsequently Mr. Forrest, and vividly describes the distress of the people and the deserted remains of the towns and villages. He "entered a number of temples and ancestral halls on the road-side, and the work of destruction was complete, especially in the case of the

¹ This day happened to be the birthday of the Tien-Wang.

former. The idols had been torn down from their thrones, and were lying around in the utmost confusion: it appeared as if they had been treated with indignant contempt, while what had once been large and magnificent temples were now unroofed." Upon his arrival at Nankin he writes: "I was received into the house of Mr. Roberts, the American, who is residing here. Shortly after I saw the Kan-wang, and had a cordial welcome from him. I remained with him about an hour: he seemed glad to renew an old friendship, and talked in a pleasant manner about himself and the work of christianising the people under him. I stated that my single intention in coming was to preach in the country round about, and that I would have been satisfied to do so in other parts of the territory if I could have the opportunity. I wished, therefore, to know where I might conveniently go for a week or ten days, and by what means: he approved of the object as such, but reserved it for after consideration. The next day he called on me, and said that the state of things at present in the city and the neighbourhood rendered it scarcely suitable for foreigners to engage in public preaching. It would require him to issue proclamations informing the people, calming their apprehensions, and prohibiting their saying improper things: were it a time of peace he would order his under-officers to use their influence in promotion of the object, but he was just now busy in preparing to lead out an army, and he was not sure that the king would consent to the requisite arrangements; altogether he advised delay, and specially that preaching might not be carried on in the capital. At

subsequent interviews the matter was brought fully up. He then stated that the desire of his royal master was to evangelise the country ; and when I asked if that was their mutual intention, he at once replied, 'Most certainly it was ; the thing had been contemplated from the first, and would be strenuously followed out. But it was necessary to observe,' he added, 'that the king intended to prosecute this object in his own way.' 'In what way?' I asked. 'By native means,' he said. 'Examinations would be held annually, at which all the public officers would be present. The text-book on such occasions would be chiefly the Bible, and according to the attainments of the writers in Scriptural knowledge would their respective positions in the empire be determined. The successful essayists would be appointed to certain offices, and in each, large and small, would regular instruction be communicated to all around.' I observed that something more than that was required in view of ascertaining the religious character of the candidates, and for promoting the ends and objects of a spiritual kingdom. He replied that such was the scheme contemplated by the 'heavenly king,' and that it was supposed by him to be a complete one.' 'Well, then,' it was asked, 'what position would foreign teachers have in the case?' He stated that, 'at first they would be useful in diffusing among the scholars and people a general knowledge of Christianity ; but the fact was, that the king did not like the idea of depending on foreign aid in the matter. He thought that the thing could be done by the Chinese themselves, who were naturally proud, and not disposed to accept the Gospel

at the hands of foreigners. He was desirous of being friendly with us, but there was such a variety of sentiment among us,—and the simple fact, our being what we are, determined him to follow his own course. I spoke further to the Kan-wang on the subject of missionaries coming to reside at the capital. He answered in a friendly way that he would not advise it, at least in the mean time: the place was nothing else than a camp. Though he would be glad to see a few of his special friends now and then, yet he could not encourage the idea of the metropolis being made the centre of missionary operations.

“I was introduced to many persons that had long been connected with the movement, and particularly to one who was the keeper of the palace gate. His position and the title belonging to it were in consequence of the high idea entertained of his religious sentiments. I had many pleasing interviews with this man. Though illiterate, he is well instructed in the religious principles of the insurgents. I asked him to tell me how it was that he became connected with the ‘heavenly dynasty.’ He said that one day he was labouring in his field in Kwang-si, when the ‘heavenly king’ came up and told him that he was commissioned by the Heavenly Father to preach the Gospel, and to command him no longer to worship wicked spirits, such as he had been accustomed to do, but to worship the true God and the Heavenly Brother. He destroyed his idols and became an adherent of the religion of the Heavenly Father. His story as to the origin of the rebellion corresponded entirely with Kan-wang’s previous account as detailed in

the work entitled the 'Visions of Tae-ping-wang.' He thoroughly believes in all these, and as carried out at subsequent times both in the case of the chief and his subordinate kings. To these visions and revelations as coming from the Heavenly Father, and as clothed with His authority, he ascribes all their proceedings. When I spoke to him about the extreme use of fire and sword, in the course of their career, he told me that at the outset of their history there was no such plundering and burning as afterwards. But, on one occasion, when in great straits, the boys connected with them said they had received a mandate from a heavenly angel, to act as they were now doing, and, under the inspiration, even youths like these were led to achieve wonders. At the same time, he laments in common with many others the barbarities and cruelties perpetrated by recent conscripts Notwithstanding the advice of Kan-wang not to set about public preaching in the city, being hindered from going into the country I commenced the work in the most open manner. Mr. Roberts has long had service in his own house, but from his not knowing the Mandarin dialect, he had been prevented from more public labours. Going about sometimes for several hours a day I have been abundantly encouraged by the number and attention of the audiences. It seems as if there was a foundation to go upon, from the amount of religious knowledge diffused among the people. There is a response, if not in their hearts, at least in their thoughts, to the tidings of mercy. They are made familiar at every step with the name and compassion of

the Heavenly Father by the unprecedented practice of recording the fact over every door.

“ Yesterday Mr. Roberts and myself were walking out and he took me into a large hall, over which were inscribed these words, ‘The Hall or Chapel of the Heavenly Father.’ Here we readily collected a good congregation, to whom Mr. Roberts preached in Canton and I in Mandarin.

“ A proclamation has been issued to the effect that eighteen chapels or churches are to be established at the capital, and a number of others in every district suited to the number of inhabitants. On inquiring from Kan-wang as to the nature of these places, he said, they were all called by the same general name, though their object was very different. They were simply public offices, hospitals, asylums, and such like, which should be presided over by appropriate officers, whose work it would be both to fulfil the duties specially connected with them, and to attend to the religious instruction of those around them. They were not to be considered as separate buildings designed for the purpose to which their name would correspond in our view.

“ Two days ago was the first of the rebel new year, and there was much in the ceremonies connected with it to interest a stranger. In one part of the city there is the Palace of the Heavenly King. It is a new erection, and is yet far from finished; however, it is in imitation of the imperial as much as possible. At first sight it is very imposing. Over the outer gate there is this inscription: ‘The sacred heavenly gate of the true God;’

and over the second, 'The royal heavenly gate.' All around there is a profusion of strange figures, dragons, phœnixes, &c. On the above day, the kings, chief men, and under officers, went to pay their respects to his majesty. The assemblage was large. Every one had a number of civilians and soldiers in attendance convoying him to the palace. The kings came in yellow-coloured chairs borne by sixteen men, and those in authority in chairs of different colours, carried by eight bearers, while before and after them there was an immense variety of silken flags and streamers, covered with strange devices, or recording the names and titles of their respective owners, and headed by the inscription 'The peaceful heavenly kingdom.' The kings and chief men went into the inner court where the 'celestial king' was seated, while the others, in number at least three hundred, remained in the outer court. I was among the latter and witnessed their proceedings, which corresponded with those going on from inside, though imperfectly seen from my position. At twelve o'clock all in the outer circle fell on their knees after a given signal, in a direction towards Tae-ping-Wang. They then sang his praises, or wished him a long life in imperial style of 'ten thousand years, ten thousand years, ten thousand times ten thousand years.' Turning in a different direction they were told to worship the Heavenly Father, when they knelt again in front of a table, on which were several basins of food and two lamps that were intended for sacrifice. At the head of the worshippers was a man with a paper containing a prayer to God, which he read and then burned. The assembly

rose up, but very soon were summoned to fall down in the direction of the king once more, and in that attitude remained a considerable time. Nothing was said, yet, with a few exceptions, much decorum was observed during the service. At about half-past twelve o'clock the whole was over, and the chief men returned into the outer court. Their appearance in dress and manner, was certainly much superior to the class of outside worshippers, and the prevailing colour of the long robes worn on the occasion was yellow, while the caps worn by all were different from those of the reigning dynasty. The assembly dispersed in a very quiet manner. As to the claims which the 'celestial king' makes they are outwardly conceded for the present, as Kan-wang says he is indispensable to the work that is going on. Without him, it was observed, the whole would fall to the ground. He is believed to be a man of sound mind and surpassing ability. He keeps all his ministers at a distance, and they stand in awe of him, while his pretensions and domestic *régime* are too much imitated by themselves to admit of their throwing a stone at him. Though the great truths of our holy religion are acknowledged by them, and in their view acted out in daily life, by the overthrow of idolatry and the establishment of divine worship, yet such is the effect of general manners, that even where piety seemed once to prevail among any of the leaders, it has deteriorated. Those at the head of the movement ascribe their limited success of late years to the impiety of recent adherents; but it were well for them to remember their own departures from the truth. While ever ready to attri-

bute their rise and progress to the Heavenly Father, they are not insensible to the evil influence at work around them, and to which they have too easily given way. Even Kan-wang has not proved safe from the contagion. Though he is about the best among his compeers, and is well aware of his religious duties, his piety has suffered from the circumstances in which he is placed. I alluded to this in a serious manner. He felt it. He acknowledged that he had already yielded to the 'celestial king' in the matter of polygamy, and was now being urged by him to add two more to his circle of four wives, but he had positively refused to do it, and would continue to do so. He informed me that he had baptized his four wives and two officers in attendance upon him, that he had diligently instructed them, and supposed them qualified for the ordinance. In view of Tae-ping-wang's authority, the rite of baptism is to be performed when the affairs of the state are properly arranged. Like all the other chiefs the Kan-wang has family worship. Notice is given morning and evening for his household to assemble, and at special seasons he preaches to them, I believe with great propriety. Even now, though he has gone to the country, the same intimation is heard, and his wives have a service among themselves together with the female domestics."

Mr. Muirhead goes on to detail some of his conversations with the people, and expresses his satisfaction with the general tenor of their belief. He concludes by drawing up a summary of his opinions upon the Taepings, with regard to the attitude to be maintained

towards them by missionaries, and the course to be followed by the directors of his mission. He says: "We cannot but acknowledge that by means of the Taeping chiefs a gratifying amount of Bible truth has been diffused among their numerous adherents. True, it is limited, and mingled with much that is erroneous and blasphemous; still, the continued and extensive employment of the same means, would tend much to spread a knowledge of the cardinal truths of Christianity."

"We cannot but believe that the rebellion, even if ultimately unsuccessful, has inflicted a death-blow on idolatry and superstition in many parts of the country.

"I cannot but regard this city and its neighbourhood, and the rebel territory generally, as an unsuitable sphere for the establishment of a mission at present. It is not desired by such as are at the head of affairs, and their unwillingness is different from that of mere heathen rulers in respect to the same thing. The grounds of their dissent I have already alluded to."

The following is an edict¹ of the Tien-Wang, issued in March of this year (1861); intended for the information of foreigners:—

"I decree to the several kings, &c., &c. (the names and titles are given at length), the keepers of the palace, protectors of the city, and presidents of the six Boards, to all merchants, native and foreign, and the one great family of the world, that all the officers and people may know it.

"The Father, Brother, myself, and the Young Lord, reign over the Heavenly dynasty. Do you all be bold, and utterly exterminate the imps.

¹ 'Correspondence respecting the Opening of the Yang-zte-kiang to Foreign Trade,' P.P. 30.

“Already I have decreed in law No. 5, respecting putting to death, that the old, sick, women and children, with all persons not having arms, should not be slain. Now, I make another decree that every one who does not assist the imps are by great favour pardoned. If those that assist them are slain, it cannot be wondered at.

“Foreign merchants, buying and selling, are to be regarded as brethren, and any one killing them must suffer death.

“Let all officers obey the law, and excuse none.

“In my former edict it was ordered that all foreign criminals should be handed over to Mr. Roberts, who, with the consuls, should judicially examine the facts, and decide according to justice, and should then ask for my decision to determine the case, that peace and harmony might reign for a myriad autumns.

“I now decree that there be also a judge, who, with Mr. Roberts, shall inquire into offences; and that foreigners unite and recommend such an officer, and request me to issue an edict and appoint him, so that partiality may be wholly avoided.

“The Father, the Brother, I, and the young Lord, are the one great Lord. Through the whole world love and grace are extended.

“The Father descended in a dream, and made a revelation to my wife, and commanded that I should not attend to common things from this time forth; therefore obey my decree on all points, and give harmonious faith to it.

“I now decree with regard to foreign parts, that the Foreign Secretary of State, Roberts, shall direct all foreign mercantile affairs, and that every nation may appoint its Consul, who, with Mr. Roberts, shall attend to foreign transactions; besides which they should openly choose a just and impartial man to be judge. This officer, with Mr. Roberts, shall look into difficult cases, and refer to me for final decision. He shall be under Secretary of the State, and the title on his seal shall be Generalissimo of the Nine Gates, Judge for the Foreign Affairs under the Celestial Dynasty, which is the kingdom of God. Let all the officers of the Board of Offices issue the seals of the Foreign Minister, the Judge, and the Consuls.”

It will be remembered that a few days after the capture of Nankin the Tien-Wang wrote a letter to Mr. Roberts, who was then at Canton, thanking him for the instruction received by his means, and inviting him to come to Nankin, together with any other of his

missionary brethren who might feel inclined to accompany him. Again in 1858, the proclamation he sent to Lord Elgin contained an inquiry about Mr. Roberts, and requested that if he was attached to the expedition he would come to court and speak with him.

Mr. Roberts, upon the receipt of the first letter in 1853, prepared to join the Tien-Wang, and proceeded up to Shanghae for that purpose ; but from various retarding causes—the difficulty of getting to Nankin from that city, being the principal one—it was not until after the fall of Soo-chow that he was enabled to reach the Taeping territory. About the end of October, 1860, having previously resided a few weeks in the latter city, he finally installed himself in Nankin. Here he was at once treated with marked consideration by his old pupil. He was invested with the yellow robes and crown, denoting his high rank, and was assigned a suitable residence and such attendants as his purposes required. As is seen in the above edict, the Tien-Wang showed a desire to nominate him to a post of considerable trust and power, but Mr. Roberts invariably declined this honour, although frequently pressed upon him. With such Europeans as about this time visited Nankin, the American Baptist missionary, arrayed in his dirty yellow robes and high-peaked crown, was a fruitful subject for comment. It was thought that his constant residence in the capital, together with his peculiar position relative to the Tien-Wang, would have some decided beneficial influence, but events proved otherwise. He, by adopting a course in all respects most unwise, split upon a rock which his long experience

should have taught him to avoid. Perhaps, as a missionary, he deemed himself bound to point out to the Taeping chiefs the glaring errors in their leader's creed ; but he must or should have known, that it was not probable that the Tien-Wang would, upon his exhortations, acknowledge all pretensions to divine inspiration to be untrue, and thus cut from under his feet the base upon which his power rested. However, Mr. Roberts, acting upon what he considered a right course, chose to follow a system of vacillation, and partly yielded to the Tien-Wang's assertions, and partly protested against them. The result will be seen by the perusal of his letter, in which he gives his reasons for leaving Nankin.

“ From having been the religious teacher of Hung-siu-tsuen in 1847, and hoping that good—religious, commercial, and political—would result to the nation from his elevation, I have hitherto been a friend to his revolutionary movement, sustaining it by word and deed, as far as a missionary consistently could without vitiating his higher character as an ambassador of Christ. But after living among them fifteen months, and closely observing their proceedings, political, commercial, and religious, I have turned over entirely a new leaf, and am now as much opposed to them, for good reasons, I think, as I ever was in favour of them. Not that I have aught personally against Hung-siu-tsuen ; he has been exceedingly kind to me. But I believe him to be a crazy man, entirely unfit to rule without any organised government ; nor is he, with his coolie kings, capable of organizing a government of equal benefit to the people

with even the old imperial government. He is violent in his temper, and lets his wrath fall heavily upon his people, making a man or woman 'an offender for a word,' and ordering such instantly to be murdered without judge or jury. He is opposed to commerce, having had more than a dozen of his own people murdered since I have been here, for no other crime than trading in the city, and has promptly repelled every foreign effort to establish lawful commerce here among them, whether inside of the city or not. His religious toleration, and multiplicity of chapels, turn out to be a farce, of no avail in the spread of Christianity—worse than useless. It only amounts to a machinery for the promotion and spread of his own political religion, making himself equal with Jesus Christ, who with God the Father, himself, and his own son, constitutes one Lord over all. Nor is any missionary, who will not believe in his divine appointment to this high equality, and promulgate his political religion accordingly, safe among these rebels, in life, servants, or property. He told me, soon after I arrived, that if I did not believe in him I should perish, like the Jews did for not believing in the Saviour. But little did I then think that I should ever come so near to it by the sword of one of his own miscreants, in his own capital, as I did the other day. Kan-wang, moved by his coolie elder brother—literally a coolie at Hong-kong—and the devil, without fear of God before his eyes, did on Monday, the 13th inst., come into the house in which I was living, and with malice afore-thought murder one of my servants with a large sword in his own hand in my presence, without a moment's

warning, or any just cause. And after having slain my poor harmless, helpless boy, he jumped on his head most fiend-like, and stamped it with his foot, notwithstanding I besought him most entreatingly from the commencement of his murderous attack to spare my poor boy's life. And not only so, but he insulted me myself in every possible way he could think of, to provoke me to do or say something which would give him an apology, as I then thought, and think yet, to kill me, as well as my dear boy, whom I loved like a son. He stormed at me, seized the bench on which I sat with the violence of a madman, threw the dregs of a cup of tea in my face, seized hold of me personally and shook me violently, struck me on my right cheek with his open hand. Then, according to the instruction of my King for whom I am an ambassador, I turned the other, and he struck me quite a sounding blow on my left cheek with his right hand, making my ear ring again ; and then, perceiving that he could not provoke me to offend him in word or deed, he seemed to get the more outrageous, and stormed at me like a dog to be gone out of his presence. 'If they will do these things in a green tree, what will they do in the dry ?' If to a favourite of the Tien-Wang's, who can trust himself amongst them either as a missionary or a merchant ? I then despaired of missionary success among them, or any good coming out of the movement—religious, commercial, or political—and determined to leave them, which I did on Monday, January 20th, 1862."

The above letter was written from H.M.S. 'Renard,' which vessel was at the time lying off Nankin, ten

days after his departure. Mr. Roberts does not choose to give any explanation that would account for the apparently causeless massacre of his servant, and thus he unfairly leaves it to be inferred that the Kan-wang committed a most brutal murder upon an unoffending boy. But it has been stated that this boy, a considerable time back, had been guilty of some offence for which he was liable to be punished by death; and that Mr. Roberts, having by chance picked him up, shielded him from his impending decapitation by taking him under his protection, and thus standing between him and the due observance of the law. To save this boy's life, and to bring him up as a Protestant convert, was doubtless considered by Mr. Roberts as a most praiseworthy act. The Kan-wang differed in opinion, and after a certain lapse of time, the affair was settled in the conclusive manner detailed.

Nothing can extenuate the conduct of the Kan-wang, as described in the letter, either to the boy or Mr. Roberts, but it is only fair to remove the implied imputation of his having been guilty of murdering in cold blood a blameless lad. If the latter deserved the punishment of decapitation, the censure that attaches itself to the Kan-wang, refers, not to the so-called murder, but to the manner in which the boy's sentence was carried into execution.

Mr. Roberts has returned to the scene of his former labours in the south, and thus the principal link that connected our Protestant missionaries with the Taeping movement is now broken.

CHAPTER XIII.

Opening of the Yang-zte-kiang to foreign trade—Proceedings of the Taepings—Siege of Ngan-king—Capture of Ningpo—Extent of country at present under the Taiping rule.

AT the beginning of the year 1861, the Taepings were governed, exclusive of the Tien-Wang, by the following wangs or kings. The Kan-wang (Shield king) was at Nankin. The Chung-wang (Faithful king), the man who captured Soo-chow and made the attempt upon Shanghae, was governor at the former city. The Ying-wang (Heroic king), a young Cantonese who had distinguished himself by his bravery in action, commanded an army in the province of Ngan-hwui. I-wang (the Assistant king), was in Sz-chuen at the head of a large force. I-wang is Shih-ta-kae, the last surviving chief of those that accompanied the Tien-Wang from Kwang-si. In addition to the above, and holding various posts, principally over civil departments, were the Shi-wang (Attendant king), the Foo-wang (Auxiliary king), the Tsan-wang (Waiting king), the Chang-wang (Accomplished king), and Si-wang, the young son and successor of the old Western king.

The extent of country under their rule was very considerable. On the south bank of the Yang-zte their territory may be loosely defined as embracing a space, above Nankin, one hundred miles in length and fifty miles in breadth. This includes the cities of Tai-ping and Woo-hoo.

On the north bank they held the city of Nganking and the greater portion of the intermediate country as far as Luh-ho, a small town situated a few miles north of Nankin. East of the latter city, all that part of the province of Kiang-su lying south of the Yang-zte-kiang was mainly under their command, Chin-keang and Shanghae, with the districts immediately adjoining, excepted.

The occupation of this region was the result of the defeat of the imperialist army at Nankin in May, 1860, and must be deemed the most important move made of late by the Taepings. It has given them possession of the valuable city of Soo-chow, and consequently the command of the Grand Canal at that point. It also affords a good base for all operations directed against the adjacent seaports.

In estimating the strength of the rebel forces, it is impossible to adopt any determinate statement, for as their armies proceed on their march they gather up all the lawless vagabonds in their path; and thus their force increases in numbers as a rolling snowball increases in bulk. It, however, fortunately happened that in the month of March a series of contemporary letters, giving an approximate estimate of the Taeping force at different points, enables their total number to be fixed with tolerable precision. In that month the Ying-wang states his army in Ngan-hwui to be one hundred thousand. In Sz-chuen, Shih-ta-kae was said by the Kan-wang to command seventy thousand men. The garrison at Ngan-king was estimated by the officers of the Yang-zte expedition to be twenty thousand.

Seventy thousand insurgents from Kwang-tung and

Kwang-si joined the Taepings at the end of February. On his journey from Soo-chow to Nankin, Mr. Forrest estimated the number of soldiers he met with to be forty-five thousand. In addition to these, fifteen thousand were advancing upon Chin-keang. Thus, exclusive of the garrisons of Nankin, Woo-hoo, and Soo-chow, it may be stated that in the month of March the total Taeping army numbered not less than three hundred and twenty thousand; of these, one-third must be counted as boys, that being the proportion generally observed to exist in all their armies.

The Yang-zte expedition above referred to was so important, in all respects, to Europeans, imperialists, and Taepings, that before proceeding with the military movements of the latter, it is necessary to give a slight sketch of its formation and action.

The treaty obtained by Lord Elgin in 1858, was practically rendered nugatory through the refusal of the Chinese to allow the English and French representatives to proceed to Pekin by way of the Peiho when they presented themselves at the mouth of that river in June, 1859. The convention signed at Pekin in October, 1860, adopted the Tien-tsin treaty of 1858, and simply supplemented it by the addition of a few clauses relative to emigration, cession of Cowloon,¹ &c. The articles touching on the right of travel in the interior and trade on the rivers remained the same as before,

¹ A promontory of the mainland of the Kwang-tung province, close to and immediately opposite Hongkong. The possession of this land is invaluable, as great additional space is thereby obtained for the erection of barracks, store-houses, hospitals, &c.

but they were now brought forward into more general notice through the arrangements made by Mr. Bruce and Prince Kung for opening two of the principal cities on the Yang-zte-kiang to foreign trade. It was determined that these should be Hankow and Kiu-kiang, and, accordingly, English consuls were appointed to them. In addition to these, Chin-keang, below Nankin, was fixed upon as a consular station. These three places being in the hands of the imperialists, nothing further was required than to send up a squadron and install the consuls at their respective posts. Difficulties however existed with regard to the Taepings, and it became necessary to form an agreement with them, by which means our merchant-vessels might safely navigate those portions of the river under their command. It was also advisable to come to a satisfactory understanding with them with respect to their course of action towards our consuls and traders in the event of their capturing any of the above-named cities.

In reply to a communication sent to them referring to the latter point, the Taeping authorities at Nankin said that they would respect British persons and property; and that, should they determine on attacking any of these places, official notice would be given to us if possible. To avoid all possibility of molestation on the river, a system of passes was adopted. The master of each merchant-vessel obtained a pass, granting permission to navigate and trade, from the senior British naval officer stationed at Nankin. A copy of this was to be sent to the Taeping authorities, who, on their part, guaranteed that the ship carrying the pass should

not be interfered with by them or their officers. To carry out these regulations, it became necessary to station one of our ships of war at Nankin. To this the Taepings did not offer any objection ; the only proviso they made was to the effect that nothing but the reasons assigned should influence us in taking that step.

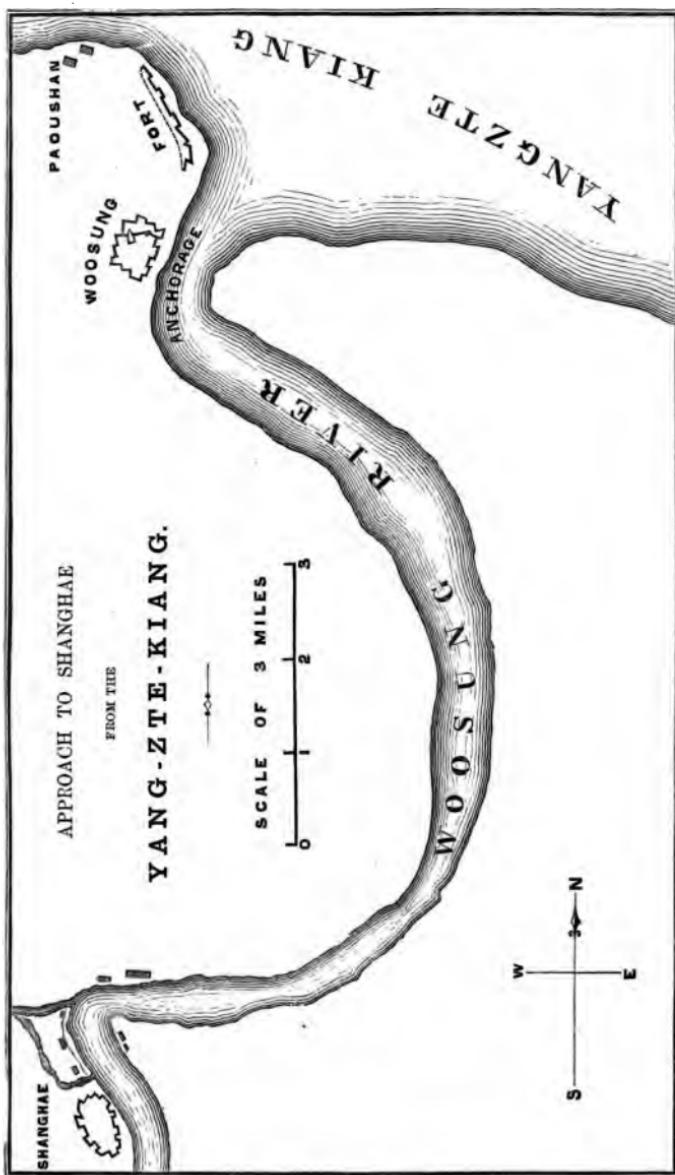
The expeditionary squadron,¹ under the personal direction of the commander-in-chief,² and accompanied subsequently by Mr. Parkes,³ then holding the appointment of consul at Canton, left Woo-sung, near Shanghae, on the 12th February, 1861. At Chin-keang a consul was located and a gun-boat stationed. At Nankin, the 'Centaur' was left for the purpose of putting into execution the trading regulations, and communicating with the chief rebel authorities. Kiu-kiang, on the borders of the Poyang Lake, was the next city where a consul was installed, and a gun-boat was also, as at Chin-keang, left to represent our power and protect British subjects.

At Hankow the despatch gun-vessel 'Snake' was stationed, her commander acting as consul until the arrival of the proper officer appointed to that city. From Hankow the admiral pushed on as far as Yoh-chow, a town situated at the entrance of the Tung-ting Lake, one hundred and sixty miles higher up the river. This is the farthest dip yet made into the interior of China by any vessel of war, the distance from the

¹ Consisted of 'Coromandel' (tender to Flag), 'Centaur' (paddle-wheel sloop), 'Snake' (despatch gun-vessel), 'Bouncer,' 'Havoc,' and 'Banterer' (gun-boats), 'Cowper,' 'Attalante,' and 'Waterman' (steam tenders to flag-ship).

² Vice-Admiral Sir James Hope.

³ Since created a Knight Commander of the Bath.





mouth of the river being not less than seven hundred and fifty miles. It will be remembered that Yoh-chow was taken and ransacked by the small army of "God-worshippers" early in 1853, and that from this point they turned eastward and burst down the Yang-zte upon Hankow, Han-yang, and Wu-chang, and, eventually, Nankin. The admiral returned to Shanghae on the 30th March.

Seldom, perhaps, has any expedition been attended with such important consequences to any nation as this one has been to China; not only with regard to the present and future prospects of that country, but also on account of its beneficial bearing upon the commercial relations with Europeans. A deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, embarked on board the 'Cowper,' were by its means enabled to give most valuable information upon the trading capabilities of the river and its ports. The presence also of our consuls, merchants, and missionaries living so far in the heart of the country, and protected by the gun-boats anchored in the stream, will tend very much to accustom the Chinese to European manners and ideas, and thus facilitate all future political intercourse. But the results of this expedition cannot be better shown than in the following remarks of a gentleman who accompanied it in 1861, and has lately returned (April, 1862), from the upper waters of the river. "The aspect," he writes, "of the Yang-zte-kiang is now very different from that which it presented when traversed by the squadron of Admiral Hope. Short as the time is which has since elapsed, where all was silent as the grave is

now, if not full of life, at least showing unmistakable signs of awakening vitality. Fleets of native vessels under foreign flags, laden with merchandise the property of foreigners, are now everywhere met with. Some dozen steamers are now in the habit of plying on its waters, and more are daily expected. Immense rafts of timber, with houses upon them looking like floating villages, are to be seen drifting down the river, to supply at Shanghae the ever-increasing demand for building materials. It is in fact through the commerce on the Yang-zte-kiang, if at all, that China, now feeble and tottering, will be restored to health and stability."¹

Much of the now flourishing state of the river-trade must be attributed to the circumstance that the Tae-pings have withdrawn from almost all that part of the river which was held by them at the time when the squadron passed up.

The three cities then (March, 1861) in their possession above Nankin, were Ngan-king, capital of Ngan-hwui, on the north bank of the Yang-zte, and Woo-hoo and Tai-ping on the south bank.

Ngan-king was found to be closely invested by the imperialist troops, under the command of Tsang-kuoh-kui. By the means of a series of entrenched camps, each containing about five hundred men, a complete cordon was formed round the city on its land face. On the river a strict blockade was enforced by the imperialist fleet, under the Admiral Yang, an officer who had already gained great credit by his conduct in previous

¹ The river from Chin-keang to Hankow was declared open to all British ships on the 9th March, 1861.

actions with the Taiping squadrons. The total besieging force, by land and water, was estimated at fourteen thousand men—ten thousand on shore and four thousand afloat. The garrison consisted of between twenty and twenty-five thousand, exclusive of boys. The siege had lasted already nearly twelve months, and they were becoming much straitened from want of provisions. They said that they refrained from attacking the imperialists, as they were only expected to defend the city ; they trusted to the Ying-wang, who was then in the province, at the head of a powerful army, to disperse the attacking force. The presence, within the walls, of four or five thousand females added considerably to the general scarcity of means of subsistence. Mr. Parkes, who landed and visited some of the rebel leaders, states¹ that the principal of them was an intelligent, active man, but that the others were all of a low type. “They come from Kwang-si, while the bulk of their followers are from Hoo-nan and Hoo-peh ; they appear to keep their city in very good order, though this, in the utter absence of trade or traffic, is probably not a work of much difficulty. Many of the faces of those we saw wore a sunken, pallid look, as if pinched for want of provisions, but they appeared cheerful and amenable to control. They were dressed like ordinary Chinese, with the exception of their long hair ; but their appearance gave no evidence of their military character, and I did not see a weapon in the hands of one of them. The few pieces of artillery with which the de-

¹ Correspondence respecting the opening of the Yang-zte-kiang to foreign trade.

fences are armed, seemed to be of a very inferior description."

The city of Woo-hoo was found to be almost obliterated; the walls and most of the houses had been completely destroyed, and the bricks with which they had been built had been used for the construction of a number of small walled camps that spread along the river banks. These were connected on the water face by a curtain, and on the land side by numerous lanes and streets, all in a most wretched condition. Among the few troops that were seen were some Canton men, who said that they had joined the Taepings the preceding year; others had come from the distant provinces of Hoo-nan and Kiang-si. The reason why such an insignificant force of soldiers were met with, was explained by a notice which stated that the chief in command had a few days before taken the field.

Of the city of Taeping little else than the site remained; all the building-materials had, as at Woo-hoo, been taken to construct similar walled camps on the river side. In the town that was situated on the inside of the camp,¹ some moderate amount of trade was being carried on; this was also the case to a less degree in those

¹ It is very common in China for the walled cities that are built adjacent to a navigable river to lie two or three miles back, and a large trading village or town springs up on the banks; sometimes when the city is nearer than usual this village becomes a long straggling suburb; but it has generally happened in those cases that have come under my own notice that a considerable tract of cultivated land separated the two. Taeping and Woo-hoo are instances of this: the walled cities being nearly two miles from their trading villages. In earlier and more prosperous days the latter formed an unbroken line of houses from the walls to the river.

at Woo-hoo. In both places tobacco was seen to be freely sold and smoked. The surrounding country was sadly desolated; the poor peasants suffered equally from imperialists and Taepings, and but little distinction was drawn by them with regard to the miseries inflicted by either side.

The terror felt by the peaceable inhabitants of the cities on the Upper Yang-zte on any rumoured approach of the Taeping forces, could not have been more clearly exemplified than in the case that occurred at Hankow in March, during the time that a small portion of our squadron was lying there. The Ying-wang, who with his army was under orders from Nankin to effect the relief of Ngan-king, instead of marching straight upon that city, proceeded in a north-westerly direction past the imperialist lines, and then, suddenly turning towards the south, made a rapid march upon Hwang-chow, taking several towns on his road. This city he captured on the 17th. A glance at the map will show the object he had in view, which was that of harassing the Imperialist forces on their western flank; and, by that means, trusting to draw them from the siege. Hwang-chow is situated on the north bank of the Yang-zte, and is distant about forty-five miles from Hankow. Reports reached the latter city that the Ying-wang purposed to detach a part of his army to occupy it; and immediately the entire population commenced, in the most wild and frightened manner, to prepare for flight. The authority of the magistrates was not of the slightest avail in stopping the general exodus, and for two days the shore was crowded with

men, women, and children, who, with all the furniture and valuables that they could carry or convey, were pressing into the boats, and escaping to the opposite side. The panic at one period was increased by some designing robbers, who ran about the place declaring that the rebels were close at hand and entering the city. The consequence was, that the fright of the terror-stricken people overcame all other feelings, and valuables of all kinds were strewn in the streets to become the prey of the plunderers. The annoyance of our merchants may well be imagined who thus, in a few hours, seemed to have lost all hopes of the fair prospects for trade that had so lately been looked forward to with such confidence.

When the admiral left Hankow on his downward course, the city was absolutely emptied of its inhabitants. The shops were closed and the streets deserted; and the immense number of trading-junks and passage-boats that had previously crowded the Han river, had all disappeared. The want of confidence displayed by the people in their imperialist protectors is very remarkable. The number of troops at and near the city were estimated at nearly ten thousand men, and yet, apparently, it never occurred to the minds of the fugitives that these would be of any use in checking the rebel advance.

When all the rumours proved to be without foundation the people returned to their homes, and since that period trade has been steadily increasing; and now the commercial activity at Hankow receives no check, except that which is caused by marauding bodies of

braves,¹ who at intervals infest all the surrounding country.

Some most interesting information respecting the circumstances of the Taeping army was obtained by Mr. Parkes, who, with two members of the deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, visited the city of Hwang-chow a few days after its fall.

On the morning of the 22nd of March they arrived in one of our gun-boats, and on landing were surrounded by crowds of rebels, who came running from the suburbs and entrenchments where they were at work, to look at them. "The suburb through which we passed," states Mr. Parkes in his report, "was full of rebels, who were busy foraging in the houses, which already bore the appearance of having been gutted, and were entirely deserted by the people; while other parties were engaged in demolishing all the buildings near the city wall, in order to clear the approach to the latter, and to obtain timber for a triple barricade, which they were throwing up around the walls. At the gate by which we entered I observed a proclamation in the name of the Ying-wang, assuring the people of protection, and inviting them to come and trade freely

¹ Whenever Chinese generals take the field they usually increase their forces by means of enrolling volunteers from the adjoining provinces. These obtain better pay and rations than the regular troops, and are discharged at the close of the operations. They have been commonly termed "braves" by Europeans. As the "braves" are generally lawless, ill-disciplined men, subject to very slight control, their presence in any part of the country is looked upon by the peaceful inhabitants as a curse from which there is no escape. They form themselves into bodies of marauders, and spread, like a blight, upon the villages and hamlets. Pay and plunder being their only object, it frequently happens that they are found willing temporarily to join any side—government or rebel.

with the troops. Another proclamation addressed to the latter prohibited them from that date from wandering into the villages and plundering the people. A third notice, appended to the heads of two rebels, made known that these men had been executed for robbing the people of their clothes, while engaged in collecting grain for the troops. The very motley garb of those rebels who surrounded us suggested the idea that many among them must have shared in the same offence; few of them wore any distinguishing dress, and while most of them had allowed their hair to grow, they all appeared to have preserved their tails. In reply to the inquiries I put to them, I found them to be men collected from at least six or eight provinces: those from Hoo-nan and Hoo-peh probably predominated, and the large proportion of young lads attracted our attention.

“Following the main street we soon came to the building which had been the yamun of the prefect, where we found preparations being made to give us a formal reception. We were saluted with music and three guns, and were received by several officers dressed in yellow gowns, who conducted us through two large courts lined with troops, armed for the most part with spears or halberds, and carrying a large number of very gaudy flags without any definite emblem. The doors of the principal hall, which usually stand open, were kept closed until we put foot upon the steps, when they were suddenly thrown back, and we saw, seated in state in the middle of the hall, a young-looking man, robed in a yellow satin gown and hood

embroidered with dragons. A number of officers dressed in long yellow gowns, with yellow handkerchiefs on their heads, stood by him; but the crowd of men in coolie or menial garb who pressed into the hall interfered somewhat with the theatrical effect that it appeared intended these arrangements should produce.

“The young-looking man proved to be Ying-wang, who at once entered into conversation, and detailed his proceedings from the time that he had left Nankin on his mission to relieve Ngan-king. It appeared that in carrying out this object, he had taken three cities and marched two hundred miles in eleven days, and was then in a position either to attack the rear of the imperial force, which he had lately turned, or to postpone that operation and occupy Hankow. He said, however, that he felt some hesitation in marching upon the latter place, since he had heard that the English had established themselves there.

“I commended his caution in this respect, and advised him not to think of moving upon Hankow, as it was impossible for the insurgents to occupy any emporium at which we were established, without seriously interfering with our commerce, and it was necessary that their movements should be so ordered as not to clash with ours. In this principle he readily acquiesced, and said that two of his leaders, who had pushed on beyond Hwang-chow, should be directed to take a northerly or north-westerly course, and go towards Ma-ching or Tih-ngan, instead of towards Hankow.”¹

¹ Report.

The Ying-wang gave Mr. Parkes a most complete sketch of the plans intended to be put into execution by the Taeping leaders in the approaching campaigns. Very few, if any, of these have been carried out. Apart from the adverse circumstances that have occurred to account for this, it is probable that the Ying-wang himself was not over well informed upon these points. He repeated the report that then existed that Shih-ta-kae was undertaking a movement in Sz-chuen, and said that the force with him was principally composed of marauding bodies from Yunnan and Kwei-chow.

"I was favourably impressed with the modest manners and the intelligence of the Ying-wang, and he appeared to be respected by those around him. His literary attainments are probably limited, though his pronunciation of Mandarin (the court language) is better than that I have hitherto heard spoken by Taeping leaders. He gave his age at twenty only, but this is probably five or six years under the mark.

"Every house (in the city) was now filled with rebels, of whom we saw in all probably from 20,000 to 30,000. Working parties swarmed outside the walls, engaged in the construction of the triple row of stakes above-mentioned, and in which they had made considerable progress. Other parties, whom we saw arriving, seemed greatly fatigued with their march, and many of the men threw themselves down in the streets and slept, without taking the trouble to remove their burdens. These consisted chiefly of clothes and provisions of all kinds, as rice, pork, poultry, &c., obtained on the line of march. Many of them seemed also in a sickly and

diseased state, and appeared to be of the mendicant class. Their strength may have been tried by their long and hurried march, or their force may have been joined by the poor and destitute of the country through which they passed. We saw few weapons but knives and spears upon them, and these only on the persons of the parties just arriving. Those who had already been quartered, or were at work on the defences, had already returned their arms (as we were told) into store. They did not seem to possess a single piece of artillery, but had a considerable number of ponies, those in the best condition having belonged to the Tartar camp they recently surprised, and they stabled these animals in the houses they themselves occupied.¹ They had no females with them, and stated that they had left all their women at Nankin. The general appearance of the whole force was that of a mob, or probably that of a Pindaree host; but while no discernible steps were taken for preserving order among them, they all appeared on the best terms with each other; and although engaged in the exciting work of the division of plunder or of accommodation, no instance of fighting, dispute, or drunkenness came under our observation, nor did we see any of them indulging either in gambling or in smoking tobacco."²

In the course of the interview with the Ying-wang,

¹ Shortly before the capture of Hwang-chou, the Ying-wang surprised a camp of Amoor Tartars; the men were all killed, and their horses seized. Ponies were also numerous in the Taeping camps at Woo-hoo and Tai-ping.

² Report.

the latter, when detailing the probable movements of his army, alluded to some northern insurgents that had joined his standard. These he called "roving bodies of marauders." This expression was significant, and proved the distinction drawn by the Taeping leaders between their own regular troops and those malcontents who join them from the neighbouring provinces.

Our intercourse with the Taepings at this time was marked on their side by a strong desire to act courteously, and, by all means in their power to adopt such conciliatory measures as would gain our goodwill. This was shown by their willingness to accede on all points to our wishes relative to the navigation of the river. The scruples of the Ying-wang about attacking Hankow while our merchants were residing there is another instance. But the strongest proof exists in a decree promulgated by them in April.

It was found by the squadron on its upward course that the Yang-zte below Chin-keang had altered considerably since the survey taken many years previously ; new banks had formed and were in course of formation, and it was deemed necessary in order to facilitate navigation, that beacons should be placed on the river side. A communication was sent to the Taeping authorities at Nankin to request that they would give orders to their adherents not to destroy or injure these beacons. At the same time it was stated also that our government would cause any attempt of the Taeping army to enter Shanghae or Woo-sung to be repelled, and that, therefore, it was advisable that their troops should not advance within two days' march of those

cities. The following answer was sent from Nan-kin :—

“Mung, the Tsan-sze-Renn (successor elect to the Prince Tsan) of the heavenly Taeping kingdom, issues the following urgent orders to the Ching Tsin, Kwan, Ai-Teene, and Moh-hun-te (names of certain high officers), for their information :—

“Whereas, officers deputed by the Admiral of Great Britain have come to the palace of the Tsan-sze-Renn and stated that, as Shanghae and Woosung are dépôts of their commerce, they have undertaken the protection of those two places, in order that the safety of all classes of the people living there may be secured. They therefore request that the forces of the Celestial Dynasty may not go to those two places, the same being unnecessary, and not likely to be attended with any material advantage. The Tsan-sze-Renn accordingly issues these urgent orders to his younger brethren, in order that they may direct the troops composing the different divisions, that, whenever they arrive in the vicinity of the places named, they must not approach nearer to them than 100 li,¹ an arrangement which will conduce to the advantage of both parties. They are also to understand that the capture of those places is to form no part of the plan of campaign for the present year.

“The officers of Great Britain have further represented that, with a view to facilitate the navigation at the entrance of the river between Fuh-shan and Lang-shan, they intend to lay down beacons on certain shoals in that neighbourhood, so that vessels, seeing the positions of these dangers, may be able to avoid them. Be it known, therefore, that these beacons must not be injured or destroyed by any of the officers or soldiers of the Celestial Kingdom who may be in that neighbourhood ; and those who commit any act of violence, or do not conform to this order, may be arrested by the officers of Great Britain, who will produce (this paper as their) warrant, and will deliver the offenders so arrested to the authorities of the Celestial Kingdom for punishment. If, however, these beacons should be disturbed by people personating officers of the Celestial Kingdom, no responsibility will attach to the latter in that case.”

This decree proves a strong wish to act in accordance

¹ Three li equal, approximately, one mile. By careful calculation one li has been estimated as representing 1826 English feet.

² Translated in ‘Correspondence respecting Yang-zte, 1861,’ P. P., 33.

with our desires, and perhaps it was hoped that it might tend to establish a better feeling than then existed. Nothing could be more natural than for the chiefs to endeavour to obtain our concurrence to their views. It is strange that during the nine years they have held Nankin, more trouble should not have been taken by them to gain this end, considering that they must have in a great measure comprehended the extent of our power, and seen what immense advantages would accrue to them through having our co-operation.

The military operations of the Taepings from the opening of the year 1861 until the present time are all that now remain to be noticed. In the first pages of this chapter a slight summary is given, showing the extent of country under their control, together with the approximate number of their troops at that period.

In the spring the four principal armies in the field were thus distributed:—that under the command of the Ying-wang was in the province of Hoo-peh; the Chang-wang had a large force in Ngan-hwui, south of the river; the Shi-wang was in Kiang-si, also with a considerable force; and lastly the Kan-wang was away on the borders of Kwei-chow, where he had been joined by a body of seventy thousand insurgents from Kwang-tung. In addition to these there were smaller armies in Fo-kien and Che-kiang. In Sz-chuen Shih-ta-kae (the I-wang) commanded an army and was reported to be making successful progress; but, in considering the force actually serviceable to the Tien-Wang, this must be omitted from the strength, for both then and since Shih-ta-kae appears to have acted upon his own autho-

rity, and has not been, in any way, serviceable towards the common interest of the Taepings. Judging from the statements of the Ying-wang, and the positions of the four first-named armies, it is probable that it was intended to make a combined movement upon Hankow and its adjoining cities, and also obtain the command of the Yang-zte to the westward as high as the Tung-ting Lake. From the absence of reliable data there are no means of concluding to what extent this plan may have been put into execution. It is, however, known that in an action that took place near Hankow the Taepings were defeated with great loss by the imperialist troops, who, following up their advantage, forced the former steadily back upon Nankin, regaining possession of their captured cities, and clearing the intervening country of all remains of the Taeping rule. The garrison of Ngan-king, no longer able to trust to the Ying-wang for relief, were forced, after the most terrible privations, to surrender the city into the hands of the besiegers. This event occurred about the 5th September. One of the local Shanghae papers,¹ in giving the sum of the accounts received relative to the above, states: "Information has reached us from Ngan-king reporting the capture of that city by the imperialists, after a stubborn resistance of many months on the part of the rebels and inhabitants. As far as we can gather from the scanty intelligence forwarded, it would appear that the city was impregnable to the attack of the besieging force, so they resolved to starve the rebel horde within the walls into submission. This had its usual effect when the besieged are determined to resist, and the horrors of famine

¹ North China Herald.

raged within the devoted city until it merged into cannibalism of the most frightful description. After every catty of ordinary food was consumed, and the most loathsome animals devoured, they resorted to eating human flesh, which was vended at eighty cash per catty,¹ or about fourpence per pound. It is reported also that three regiments or separate bands of rebels gave themselves up to the imperialists as prisoners of war under the impression that their lives would be spared, but they were slaughtered to a man and their bodies thrown into the river. They were seen in hundreds floating down the stream by those on board the steamers 'Governor General' and 'Carthage.'"

Later information has corroborated the above account in all its particulars, and thus a glimpse is afforded us of the deadly animosity existing between the contending parties in this civil war. The ferocity which invariably characterizes all Central Asiatic feuds is here proved to exist in those of the less impressionable inhabitants of Asia's eastern slope,² in the latter instance deepened by those numerous minor tortures so prevalent over all China.

The loss of Ngan-king completed the overthrow of the power of the Taepings on the Yang-zte, and the limits of their rule west of Nankin became circumscribed within a space of little more than fifty miles.

¹ A catty is a Chinese measure of weight equalling 1.333 lbs. avoirdupois.

² The grand plateau of Central Asia is estimated to have an average altitude above the sea-level equal to fourteen thousand feet. From its eastern limit, which abuts upon the western frontier of China, a gradual slope extends down to the eastern seaboard.

The ill fortune attending their movements on that side was in some degree compensated by the results of their campaigns to the eastward. The moveable force at their disposal around Soo-chow and in the adjacent province of Che-kiang numbered about one hundred thousand men and boys. Towards the close of the spring an attempt was made to capture Hang-chow (provincial capital of Che-kiang). Here they met with a decisive repulse. Retreating from this city they attacked and captured Cha-poo, together with a number of the lesser towns and villages that crowded the populous districts bordering upon the bay. During the summer they confined themselves to some unimportant incursions on the surrounding country. It is remarked by some Europeans who happened to travel at this time near Cha-poo, that the misery suffered by the poor peasantry through the rebel occupation was, as a matter of course, very great, but that it was much increased in consequence of the treatment they received from the boys attached to the marauding parties. These lads in most cases acted as slave-drivers, forcing the labouring people to carry heavy burdens and toil at various works that the leaders required to be executed. In August a large army from Soo-chow approached Shanghae. Deterred, probably, from making an attack by the evident intention of the British to hold the city, the direction of their march was altered, and the whole force rapidly burst upon Hang-chow and attacked that city with great vigour. For several weeks a severe struggle ensued, and numerous actions occurred without any decided success on either side. Dissatisfied, apparently, with this comparative failure, the Chung and

Shih wangs, who were in command, organized a military movement which, looking at the result, was of the highest importance. They detached a large portion of their force under the command of the subordinate generals Hwang and Fang, with instructions to attack and capture Ningpo. Hwang, with an army estimated to have been about seventy-five thousand strong, arrived within a few miles of his destination at the latter end of November, having previously taken several towns situated near his line of march. The European consuls at Ningpo, alarmed at the imminent danger that threatened the city, and foreseeing the stagnation of trade and general anarchy that would ensue after its capture, met together for the purpose of coming to some resolution with regard to their proper course of action, and it was decided that the rebel generals should be made acquainted verbally and by letter with various subjects relating to the foreign residents, such as the position of the missionaries, the general desire that all unnecessary bloodshed should be avoided, and the lawlessness of the soldiers suppressed, together with a warning to refrain from injuring any Europeans, &c.

For this purpose a deputation embarked on board an English gun-boat and proceeded up the river to Hwang's head-quarters at Yu-yaou. Hwang, who is stated to be a native of Kwang-si and an illiterate man, received his visitors courteously, but, as he was not able to converse in the Mandarin dialect, the conversation was conducted by his secretary. The interview was in all respects most satisfactory, and assurances were given by Hwang to the effect that the requisitions submitted to him

should be attended to. He also forwarded the following written answer to them :—¹

“ From the foundations of the heavens and the earth the world has been divided into the central kingdom, China, and the external kingdoms, foreign countries. Each kingdom, whether China or those of foreign countries, has been ruled over by men of its own nation. (This has been the universal practice.)

“ But in the time of the Ming dynasty, the Tartar imps, originally serfs from beyond the northern frontier, stole into China, and usurped the emblems of royalty, making unclean and polluting the land to a degree that no tongue can tell of.

“ Even till now, and during a period of more than two hundred years, they have been going on in their wickedness, until at last their cup of iniquity is filled to the overflowing.

“ At these their sins the Heavenly Father, being exceedingly wroth, would have destroyed the world; then Jesus, the Heavenly Elder Brother, out of his mercy and loving-kindness towards mankind, sent down the true and holy Lord, the Heavenly King, to wash out the stains of the northern serfs, and to set up anew the house of Han, (*i.e.* to re-establish a purely native dynasty).

“ These, then, are the times for changing the dynasty and reforming the kingdom prescribed by Heaven and submitted by man.

“ The command of the valiant troops of this great army has been conferred upon me by royal commission, with the allotted task of rooting out of the earth all that is unholy (*lit.*, of destroying in the east and exterminating in the west—part of a complete sentence, signifying a thorough eradication of evil from all the four quarters of the globe), and of visiting on the heads of their rulers the afflictions of the people.

“ The highest object of my mission is none other than the foundation and establishment of the dynasty; subordinate to that my aim is the welfare of the people (*lit.*, the black-haired multitudes), that I may weed out from among them those that oppress, and give peace to such as are true of heart.

“ Hence it is that throughout the whole of my onward course ‘there was none’ (as it is written) ‘that came not forth with meat and drink to welcome the soldiers of the king.’

“ Our great army having at this time invaded the province of

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1862.

Che'-kiang, and the representatives of your several countries stationed at Ningpo having come this day to my head-quarters at Yti-yaou to deliberate about maintaining amicable relations with us, on the understanding of mutual non-interference, and having requested me to order my troops to abstain, on their arrival at Ningpo, from injuring the persons or property of your respective countrymen at that place, I hereby promise to issue the above orders to my troops, and to command them to respect the terms of the agreement.

“In case any of my troops should dare, contrary to my orders, to molest any of your countrymen or to injure their property, I will, on your arresting and handing over to me the offender, at once behead him.

“In the same way, if any of the subjects of your respective countries should, contrary to your orders, take upon themselves to assist the imps in repelling our advance, you will in your turn direct them to refrain from so doing.

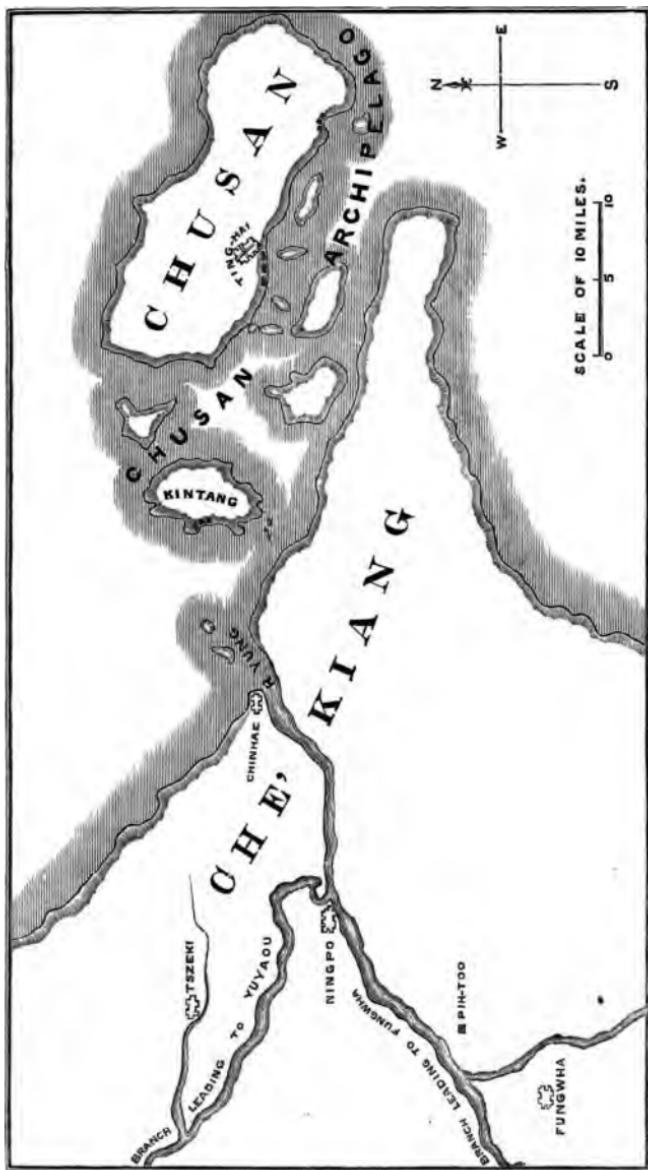
“From and after this date the friendly arrangement now agreed upon is to be binding on both parties.

“Sincerely trusting that you will not allow yourselves to feel anxious about this matter, and with wishes for your good health, I beg to forward this special communication.

“19th day of the 10th month of the 11th (‘Sin-yew’) year of the Heavenly Kingdom of Universal Peace, (November 29th, 1861).”

The head-quarters of Fang, the other general, whose force was encamped at Pih-too, ten miles from Ningpo, were also visited by the Deputation. The author of the letter to Consul Harvey, detailing what had passed at the interview that ensued, writes:—“We put ourselves in communication with the leader Fang, a man of only twenty-five years of age, and a native of Kwang-si. We hastened to represent to him the serious injury to trade that must ensue on the capture of Ningpo by his forces, and the consequent loss that would accrue to foreign interests, besides the danger—in reality no slight one—to foreign life and property, to be apprehended both from lawless characters in his own ranks, and

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equally so from the bands of unruly Cantonese and Chin-chow men at Ningpo, ever on the look-out for an opportunity of indiscriminate plunder. We ended by eagerly dissuading him from advancing on Ningpo.

“To our two objections Fang replied by assuring us that his party were most anxious to keep well with foreigners, who, indeed, were no other than their brothers, inasmuch as both worshipped one God and one Jesus, and that as for trade that would be allowed to go on as formerly ; while he begged us to feel quite at ease as to the persons and property of our countrymen, any molestation shown to whom would be followed by instant decapitation. Their object being the overthrow of the present dynasty they could not allow Ningpo to remain in the hands of the imperialists. It was with difficulty that we succeeded in persuading Fang to delay his attack on Ningpo for one week ; another day was to have seen him there, he said, had we not interposed.

“One could not help feeling struck with the earnestness and apparent sincerity of this young leader. Whilst alive to the dangers attending the cause in which he was engaged, he seemed to be confident that the support of heaven would carry them through all their difficulties, and that, so aided, they must prevail. He told us that nearly the whole province was in their hands, or would be before long ; and that Hang-chow, the provincial capital would fall, ‘as soon as Heaven should see fit to give it into their hands.’ ”

The following reply was given by Fang in answer to the requisitions received by him on this occasion :—

“The Almighty God, the Supreme Lord, the Heavenly Father, and Jesus the Heavenly Elder Brother, sent our true and Holy Lord, the Heavenly King, down into the world, and ordained him to be Ruler over the central kingdom; to destroy imps, to deliver the people, and to rescue the central empire: these are the chief objects of his desires.

“The special task of chastising the nation (*i.e.*, those of the nation who do not submit), with a view to the establishment of the dynasty, has now been conferred upon me by royal commission. My mission is simply to show compassion to the people, and to punish the crimes of their rulers.

“The troops of my great army have now entered the department of Ningpo, and I fully purpose capturing the departmental city, and making it revert to the king to serve as a basis from which we may give peace to and console the four estates of the nation (scholars, husbandmen, mechanics, and traders).

“I have this day received your letter, and informed myself completely of its contents; all the requisitions there contained I promise to comply with. I will therefore order my troops to frame their conduct after the Divine pattern, and to abstain from tumult and acts of aggression.

“Wherefore I beg of you to set your minds at rest.

“Good faith, as a principle of action, being a most important desideratum, no retraction must be made in respect of the number of days conceded prior to our advance on the city.

“With reference to the persons and property of your respective countrymen, I will issue the strictest orders, forbidding either the one or the other to be injured in the very least degree. Trade shall be allowed to continue as usual, with the additional advantage of being conducted on a fairer footing. On no account will acts of violence or robbery be permitted.

“One word from the superior man is sufficient to settle any affair: he is true, he is sincere, and hence no mistake or misunderstanding can arise.

“Whilst forwarding this in reply, I beg to express my wishes for your happiness.

“22nd day, 10th month of the 11th (‘Sin-yew’) year of the Heavenly Kingdom of Universal Peace (2nd December, 1861).”

The Taepings, acting faithfully upon their promise, allowed the specified time of one week to elapse before

proceeding to take any hostile measures against Ningpo, but immediately after its expiration they advanced upon the city walls, and on the morning of the 9th of December, and within an hour of the planting of their scaling-ladders, the whole city was entirely in their possession. The garrison and inhabitants seem to have been paralyzed by fear, and totally incapable of defending themselves, and thus the rebels were permitted to complete their capture with hardly the slightest opposition. The entire population, with the exception of a few of the poor, fled from Ningpo immediately previous to its fall; and consequently the besiegers found the city desolate and almost deserted. In a memorandum written by Consul Parkes, relative to the attack, some modified amount of praise is given to the Taepings for their conduct to foreigners upon that occasion.

“The Ningpo rebels,” he writes,¹ “have shown the utmost desire to be on friendly terms with foreigners. Outside the south gate, which formed the point of attack, stands the establishment of the Sisters of Charity, which, if occupied, would form excellent cover for an assaulting force, as its upper windows commanded the city walls: yet, although they crouched underneath its inclosures, as they collected for their rush on the gate, they did not trespass for a moment within the premises. Another large Roman Catholic establishment was one of the first buildings they had to pass as they poured into the city, flushed and excited with their success; but they only stopped to welcome a small knot

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1862.

of foreigners who were standing underneath the porch, and to charge their people to offer them no harm. Roman Catholics and Protestants they hailed indiscriminately as being of the same religion and fraternity as themselves. They swarmed into four of the residences of Protestant missionaries and three of their churches, and, when not checked, carried off some trifles and several of the people who had crowded round the missionaries for protection, but on the demand of Captain Corbett (senior English naval officer) most of these things and the people also were returned. The house of one of the principal Chinese of Ningpo, who is well known at Shanghae from his wealth and the prominent support he has always given to the government, remains untouched, simply because he has hired a Frenchman to live in it, and give his name temporarily to the premises. These facts speak well for their intentions to foreigners, and fairly also for their discipline and military organization ; but further than this there is but little indeed to be said in their favour. The chiefs at Ningpo may be superior in point of manliness and courage to the mandarins they have displaced, but they are evidently men of a low class, very ignorant and illiterate, one of them being unable to read."

The Taepings lost no time in placing Ningpo in, according to Chinese ideas, a creditable state of defence. Stockades were erected with great rapidity outside the walls, and such of the old inhabitants as remained were employed in storing large quantities of grain. Proclamations were issued, enjoining the growth of long

hair and permitting the prosecution of trade and the opening of shops outside the walled city.

With respect to this latter subject, and also to an interview that had taken place between the European and rebel authorities, the following communication¹ was sent to the English consul from the two chiefs, Hwang and Fang :—

“ We have to acknowledge the goodwill you have displayed towards us in having done us the honour of a visit, and to claim your indulgence for the breach of etiquette we have been guilty of in having omitted to come in person to your office to return your call, and to make inquiries after your welfare ; pressure of military business has alone prevented our doing so.

“ At the interview of yesterday it was quite apparent that the feelings of both parties were those of mutual good understanding and friendship.

“ It is with the Tartars that we are contending for the empire, and our object and intention in that struggle is the recovery of our territory and the welfare of the people ; our troops in their advance from place to place will not interfere with your countrymen, with whom it is proper that we should maintain friendly relations and carry on trade.

“ So large an army as that under our command contains, of course, a mixture of both good and bad, and it is to this fact that we must attribute the molestation offered the other day by one or two lawless soldiers to some of the English missionaries. The offenders have been arrested and beheaded as a warning to others, and we are of opinion that this warning will be sufficient to deter other insubordinate soldiers from attempting such acts, and to prevent the English missionaries being molested again in the same way.

“ We have issued proclamations in all directions inviting the people to return and recommence trade, on fair and equitable terms, outside each of the four principal gates of the city ; and as soon as matters connected with the defence of the city are definitely arranged we shall give passports to all families whose place of residence is inside the city, permitting them to come in and carry on, every one, his usual business.

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1862.

“To prevent confusion and tumult, the soldiery and people will be kept apart.

“With wishes for your happiness we forward this special communication.

“3rd day, 11th month of 4th (‘Sin-yew’) year, &c.”

To the European community in China the capture of Ningpo had a special interest. Hitherto, great doubts had existed upon the question relating to the policy that the Taepings would be likely to pursue with regard to commerce, in the event of the rebellion becoming triumphant, and it was thought that their actions whilst in possession of a city with such magnificent commercial capabilities would be a fair test of their future intentions.

The result was decidedly unsatisfactory. The Taepings made many promises to advance the interests of trade, but, nevertheless, during their occupation of Ningpo nothing but a small local trade sprang into existence, and commerce, in the full extent of the word as understood by European merchants, remained stagnant.

The real question at issue is, however, yet unsolved, for although the rebels had the command of a fine city with good water communication, still the surrounding country was in terrible confusion, and Ningpo itself, in consequence of the better-class residents’ disinclination to return to it, remained little else than a huge walled camp. The English consul, after waiting some months in order to form an opinion upon the subject, came to the conclusion that no administrative capacities whatever had been shown, and that there was no probability, even under favourable circumstances, of trade becoming

restored, and in a letter addressed to Mr. Bruce he expressed most strongly his aversion to the Taepings, and his total disapproval of their conduct since they had held the city; and this adverse verdict has met with very general, though far from universal, concurrence. In the mean time the main body of the Taeping army prosecuted with unabated vigour the siege of Hang-chow. The Chung-wang, whose army was stated by Hwang to be very nearly five hundred thousand strong, finding that he could not successfully storm the city, determined, by surrounding it and cutting off all supplies, to starve the garrison into submission.

The descriptions of the sufferings undergone by the besieged, as day by day the provisions became more scanty, are most sickening. After consuming their dogs, cats, horses, and every animal of any kind that was to be obtained, they became reduced to subsist for several days on the bark of trees and the roots of grass; when this supply failed, leather, cut into narrow strips and boiled, was eagerly swallowed. At last nothing whatever remained, and then, driven to man's final resource by pure desperation, human flesh was openly offered for sale in the public streets at a certain fixed sum per pound, and was there hastily and readily bought and devoured.

On the 29th of December the inhabitants, unable any longer to hold out, threw open their gates to the besiegers, who, maddened by the long opposition that had been offered to them, rushed wildly in, and poured like a devastating torrent through the streets of the devoted city. The majority of the Manchu garrison, perfectly

aware of the fate that awaited them, laid trains of gunpowder and blew up that part of the town where they were principally congregated, and perished in the ruins; others committed suicide by the sword; none were spared. The Taepings massacred to a man all of them that were found alive.

The scenes here enacted were, reversing the respective positions of the combatants, precisely similar to what had previously taken place at Ngan-king: equal ferocity, ruthlessness, and hatred were displayed on both occasions. After the surrender of Ngan-king the murdered bodies of the Taepings swept down the stream of the Yang-zte, and were cast in putrid heaps upon the slopes of its banks. At Hang-chow the ditches surrounding the city walls were absolutely choked with the corpses of the Manchus and their auxiliaries, who had been either killed in action or murdered in cold blood by their relentless opponents.

The capture of Hang-chow concluded the military proceedings of the Taepings in 1861. Looking back upon the events of that year it may be said that, on the whole, they had unquestionably gained ground, for although defeated and driven back along the shores of the Yang-zte, the successful result of the campaign in Che-kiang more than compensated for their losses. The possession of such important positions as Ningpo, Chapoo, and Hang-chow Bay was of special importance to them, as they were thus afforded great advantages towards centralising their power.

The demonstration made before Shanghae early in 1862 is a proof of their anxiety to command the whole

of the country between Nankin and the Che'-kiang sea-board. If Shanghae, and consequently Woosung, fell under their control, they would hold the finest commercial position in China ; with Nankin as an apex the area included in a triangle, the limits of whose base are Shanghae on the north and Ningpo on the south, would comprise a territory in every respect unequalled for its resources by any other equivalent space in the whole world.¹

¹ It is only by figures that any adequate conception can be given of the resources of those provinces now under the influence of the Taepings. Che'-kiang, with Hang-chow for its capital and Ningpo as its commercial port, contains an area of 39,150 miles, and a population of 26,256,784. This gives an average of 671 per square mile. In proportion to its acreage Che'-kiang, with one exception, yields a larger revenue than any other province in the empire. Its soil is wonderfully fertile, and produces cotton, tea, rice, barley, silk, &c., in great quantities. The world would indeed be populous if every acre respectively supported one human life, and yet this is the case in the agricultural districts of Che'-kiang. It will be recollected that China proper averages over her whole eighteen provinces 288 per square mile, and from this some idea may be formed of the teeming population that must crowd that one now under notice.

The one exception is Kiang-su. This province, besides its long extent of sea-board, is watered by the two magnificent rivers, Yang-zte and Hoang-ho (Yellow River). The Grand Canal also cuts through its entire length. Two considerable lakes and innumerable small streams add their quota towards its fertility, and consequently it cannot be a matter for surprise that this province should be the richest and the most populous in China. Its inhabitants number 37,843,501 souls, and nearly approach the extraordinary amount of 800 on the square mile. The capital is Nankin, and the principal commercial port is Shanghae. Kiang-su may be looked upon as an immense alluvial plain, and the land is productive to a degree almost inconceivable. It yields several kinds of grain, together with rice, silk, tea, and a large supply of cotton.

These two provinces, although only one-fourteenth the area of China, yet contain a population equal to one-sixth of the whole, and give a revenue that amounts to no less than one-fourth of all that is collected throughout the provincial empire. I have, as yet, only noticed the self-productive power of these provinces. The map will clearly point out

During the present year the Taepings have been brought into more prominent notice among Europeans than at any previous period, on account of the hostile measures that have been taken against them by the governments of Great Britain and France. When, in January last, a considerable rebel force approached Shanghae, and sent a communication to the inhabitants informing them of their intention to occupy that city, it was resolved by the English and French authorities to give such aid to the imperialists as should enable them to repel the threatened attack, and also, in accordance with an intimation that had been sent to Nankin in the preceding year, steps were taken to prevent the rebels approaching within a radius of thirty miles.

The frequent skirmishes that have lately taken place are the result of this plan of action, and have for their aim the expulsion of the Taepings from certain villages occupied by them within the boundary.

The determination of the latter, if possible, to capture Shanghae, is fully shown by a letter written by Ho, one of their principal generals, to the "British Military Commanders," and which gives a detail of the successes of the Taepings in 1861, together with a sketch of their intentions with regard to future operations.

their advantages in all geographical respects. Hereafter, when coal from the interior of China forms one of the main elements of the trade of that country, as will unquestionably be the case when the commerce between China and the Pacific arrives at that point of extension to which it is evidently now tending, and the Yang-zte becomes the river by which all this coal, together with other products, will be transported, then these provinces will command the grandest commercial position in the universe.

“The Tartar imps,” writes Ho, “have oppressed the Chinese for two hundred years and more, committing every enormity. But the cycle has come to an end, and God’s Majesty is angered; wherefore He has sent down the true Lord to reign at Nankin for ten years and more past: victorious in all his battles, successful in all his assaults, innumerable as they have been and surpassing men’s power; such being the will of God.”

The letter, after detailing the numerous operations of the past year, and the late success in Che’kiang, proceeds:—

“The South being thus finished with, Chung-wang has arrayed himself and has set in motion five armies to take Shanghae.

“For Shanghae is a little place, and we have nothing to fear from it; while now we own the whole Soo-chow and Che’kiang provinces, we must take Shanghae to complete our dominions. It is so; it is not boasting.

“Now the sea-board is frequented by foreigners for trade, and if troops are sent to exterminate the people there, the friendly feeling between us would, we fear, suffer.

“Considering this, therefore, we send you this warning not to interfere at places belonging to the imps. By this means the foreign hongs will escape injury. But if you play the fool, and think only of gain, not only will Shanghae be ours, but the whole world will be reduced to dependence.

“If, on the contrary, you do not listen to the imps, but repent and submit, you will not only be able to trade, but will get silk and tea in great abundance, and all will reap the benefit. Think of this, therefore.”¹

This letter, which, although arrogant in its tone, sets forth most clearly the advantages to be gained by acting upon its suggestions, had not the slightest weight in influencing the conduct of those to whom it was addressed. In the spring of the year a most momentous step was taken against the Taepings. It was deter-

¹ Parliamentary Papers.

mined to effect the recapture of Ningpo, and give that city back into the hands of the imperialists. This resolution was carried into execution with marvellous success. A small force of English and French seamen landed from the vessels lying in the stream, planted their ladders, scaled the walls, and, meeting with but very little resistance, found themselves, within an hour, masters of the place.¹ The Taepings quietly retired, and encamped a few miles outside the walls. The imperialists were then put in possession, and, thus with an ease which, considering the importance of the interests at stake, appears almost incredible, the enormous city of Ningpo again reverted to the rule of the government.

This act, on the part of the allied forces, at once practically put an end to all discussion with respect to the policy of non-intervention. The question which the British and French governments had to consider was, whether it was advisable for the furtherance of their interests to allow the Taepings to possess Shanghae or any other treaty-port. The Taepings had always evinced a desire to be on friendly terms with foreigners, and had promised faithfully to forward commercial interests. They had an overwhelming force commanding the surrounding tea and silk districts, and were likely, if opposed, to use their power to the detriment of our trade. On the other hand, an advantageous treaty had lately, after an expensive war, been concluded with the imperial government, trade was generally in a very satisfactory

¹ The allies were aided in the attack by the presence and action of a considerable imperialist fleet, lying in the river, under the command of A-pak, a man previously well known for his piratical exploits.



condition, a minister was resident at Pekin, consuls were stationed at the new ports, and altogether the position of foreigners with regard to the ruling power, as represented in the person of Prince Kung, was all that could be desired. Before coming to a decisive conclusion respecting the policy to be adopted, the allies had to give due weight to the grave consideration of the question, whether the advantages gained by assisting the imperialists would compensate for the danger incurred by exasperating the leaders of a powerful rebellion, and who had hitherto professed friendly intentions towards them ; also if it was to the interest of the Chinese nation that the Tartar government should be upheld, and aid given to it to quell internal revolts ; and lastly, whether, granting the advisableness of so acting, it was possible, without entering into hostilities on a very extended scale, to carry that policy into execution with any hope of ultimate success.

In this particular case the responsibility that attaches itself to the system of intervention is especially great, because it is impossible to predict the full extent of the complications that may ensue, and it remains to be seen whether the result will justify the course of action that the allies have deemed it advisable to follow.

Practically the whole subject resolves itself into a simple question of opinion. With those who look upon the Taepings as a huge body of marauders, capable of no higher acts than these of indiscriminate slaughter and desolation, the policy which protects the treaty-ports from their destructive rule will be thought wise and just ; with that minority who regard the Taiping re-

bellion as a grand national movement, which is destined to prepare the way for the political and moral regeneration of China, it must be considered not only prejudicial to European interests, but in every respect most unadvisable: all, however, will unite in regretting that it should have been deemed necessary for the protection of foreign interests to intervene in a civil war of such magnitude as that which is now desolating the Chinese empire.

The state of affairs at Nankin remains much the same as at the beginning of 1861. The Tien-Wang has now almost totally withdrawn from taking any active part in whatever relates to the organization of his armies. Secluded in his palace, and surrounded by his numerous wives and female attendants, he is seldom heard of except at those intervals when he promulgates some new edict relating to religious observances, or upon those occasions when all the principal officers residing in the capital assemble in the courts of the "Heavenly Palace" for the purpose of paying him homage. His son, now a lad of nearly fourteen years of age, is given jurisdiction over all temporal matters, and such proclamations as refer to these are issued in his name. Subordinate to, and assisting him in the government, are the respective wangs whose titles have been already noticed.

It is stated that the I-wang (Shih-ta-kae) has dissociated himself, together with the army under his command, from the Tien-Wang's rule, and has set up his own standard in Sz-chuen. If this report is true, a severe blow will thereby be given to the Taeping power, not on account of the loss sustained in men, &c.,

but because Shih-ta-kae is the only remaining chief of the five who were appointed to lead the God-worshippers in Kwang-si, and has always been supposed to be a man in intellect and personal influence far above the average of the other chiefs. If he is successful in the measures he adopts in the disorganized province through which he is proceeding, it is not unlikely that he will become the head of a rebellion as powerful, and as threatening to the Tartar government, as that of the Taepings.

The extent of country under the immediate control of the Tien-Wang so constantly varies, that it is useless to attempt to define it with exactness. At present, a half-circle, drawn from Nankin towards the south-west, with a radius of fifty miles, will include all that his followers are known to possess towards the interior; and sixty miles on both sides of a line drawn from the same city, through Soo-chow and ending at the sea near Ningpo (a linear distance of above two hundred miles), will include all that they possess in the direction of the sea-board.

Thus the total amount of land, so entirely under the Tien-Wang's authority as to enable him to force the inhabitants to comply with his regulations and to pay taxes, is not less than thirty thousand square miles.¹

At the close of the year 1861, the entire fighting force at the disposal of the Taeping generals was, according to their own statements, above six hundred thousand

¹ It is rumoured that the Taepings have lately been successful in their movements in Hoo-nan and Hoo-peh, but nothing definite is yet known on the subject.

men and boys; of these eighty thousand were employed as garrisons for the cities of Nankin and Soo-chow. As far as can be gathered from the reports of their opponents, and from the estimates of those Europeans who have lately visited their camps, there is good reason to believe that the above computation is not much exaggerated.

The Taeping armies are too subject to sudden increase or decrease in their numbers to admit of any fixed statement of their strength. But, for the purpose of drawing conclusions respecting the relative powers of the imperialists and Taepings, a close approximation to the truth will be obtained, by supposing the force at the disposal of the latter to average four hundred thousand men.

CHAPTER XIV.

Remarks on the Prospects of the Rebellion.

I HAVE, in the preceding chapters, traced the Taeping rebellion from its first outbreak in Kwang-si to the present time, and it is now my purpose to devote a few concluding pages to the examination of its bearing with regard to the future of China and the reigning dynasty.

In the event of this particular rebellion becoming triumphant, the empire will be revolutionized on a point of the highest moment, not only to itself, but also to other nations ; the success of the Taepings will ensure the fall of Buddhism, and the normal religious belief of the Chinese will become totally changed. It is this exceptional speciality that marks its distinction from the ordinary insurrections, for, in other respects, the end aimed at by all is identical, viz., the subversion of the Tartar rule, and the reconstruction of a government similar to what existed at the time of the Mings, the emperors being, as then, natives and not aliens.

That out of all the rebellions, great or small, now existing throughout the empire, one will be ultimately successful, is more than probable. The annals of China unmistakably give strong grounds for this presumption. In this, as in other deductions of a similar nature, the

past history of a country is the only trustworthy guide towards judging of its future. All the principal dynastic changes that have taken place during the last ten centuries have been preceded by internal revolts, together with severe famines and inundations. In the eleventh century, the northern provinces were lost by the Sung emperors, more through the insurrection of local malcontents than by the Tartar forces. In the fourteenth century the Mongols, who had maintained, for a long period, a most powerful sway over the whole country, were totally overthrown by a man named Chû, a servant in a Buddhist monastery, who, becoming the head of an army of revolters, kept up a constant struggle against the government for twenty-three years, which ended in his own elevation to the throne. Chû was the first emperor of the Ming dynasty; the tactics followed by him appear to have been, in many cases, adopted by the present Taeping chief. It is remarkable that during the early years of the Ming rebellion, their leader confined himself to the possession of the central provinces, and it was not until his march northwards, with his whole army, that the Tartars were overcome, and their emperor forced to fly into his Mongolian territory. The reign of the last of the Mings was marked by a continuous series of insurrections, robberies, and famines. The overthrow of this dynasty, in the seventeenth century, was, as in the previous instance, occasioned by a number of local revolts that had merged into a considerable rebellion. A native of the name of Li, who commanded the principal rebel force, seized the throne, and would have retained it, had not the

Chinese general called the Manchu Tartars to his aid, the result of which step was the usurpation of the reigning dynasty, whose emperors very soon obtained complete mastery over the entire empire. The present circumstances of China offer so many points of resemblance to its state at the periods of these changes, that it would be unreasonable to overlook them when judging of its political future. At no time has the country been more rife with revolt, and more subject to privations caused by famine and flood, than during the last twenty years. The Pekin Gazettes have been filled with reports from the provincial governors relative to these events.

There are at this moment so many independent bodies of insurgents unconnected with the Taepings that it is necessary to enumerate some of them separately. In Honan the latest returns state that there are not less than one hundred thousand men up in arms against the authorities. These appear to be little better than common marauders, and are chiefly composed of the populations bordering on the Yellow River, who have been rendered homeless through that stream overflowing its banks. During the operations of the Taepings in Nganhwui the armies of the latter were frequently increased by large bodies of these "Honan thieves." In the province of Shan-tung the local rebels present a more important mass and have shown themselves to possess some degree of organization. The imperialist troops, even under their best generals, have found it a matter of great difficulty to overcome them, and many of the actions fought during the last year in the eastern

districts have been severe and well contested. In Sz-chuen, in addition to numerous petty bands of malcontents, Shih-ta-kae, a Taeping chief, is at the head of an army of seventy thousand men, and is said to be obtaining a series of successes. It is probable that he will set up his own standard and separate himself from his proper leader.

Yunnan is also in great commotion; but the outrages in this province are mainly committed by the Mahometan population, and there is no organized rebel force.

Kwang-si and Kwang-tung are in their normal state of disaffection. In the former province, besides the constant troubles occasioned by the Miao-tze, the country is overrun by very considerable armed bodies of insurgents. Some notion may be formed of their strength by the fact that, early in 1861, above seventy-five thousand of them, unable to overcome the government troops and set up their own independent rule, formed themselves under one general and marched three hundred miles north to join the Taepings. The greater portion of the Si-kiang (Western River), the most important commercial river in the south of China, is entirely under rebel control; and many of the cities on its banks are the ever-recurring scenes of capture and recapture. From other provinces there are reports of numerous revolts, but, without alluding to these, enough instances have been brought forward to evidence the terribly disorganized condition of the country.

Not the least extraordinary circumstance connected with the present government is that it has been able, with but very few exceptions, to levy the taxes and

carry on the provincial administration during this period of troubles and wars, both internecine and foreign, with the most perfect and systematic regularity ; the exceptions were only in those instances where the people, rendered desperate by misery, refused to pay the demands of the tax-gatherers. The government found itself frequently obliged to remit the taxes in Hoo-peh and Hoo-nan on this account.

It is customary among Europeans to decry the Chinese administrative system : the ministers are presumed to be rapacious and selfish, commonly working for private ends ; and the provincial governors, with their subordinates, are supposed to represent a gigantic system of fraud. The acknowledged facts do not seem to me to coincide with this view. The means adopted to ensure the fidelity of officials are those of checks and censorates, each officer acting as a check upon another. It is no part of the question to find fault with the method followed ; nothing can be more degrading to European notions than this plan of espionage, and it might naturally be supposed that this distrustful policy would lead to every description of jobbery. Such information as can be gleaned from the *Gazettes* and from the letters lately found in the *Yuen-min-yuen* Palace point to a different result. Many of those residents in China who have had the best means of judging of the working of the provincial government are of opinion that it would be difficult to devise any better method ; and, lastly, if any unprejudiced mind will consider for a moment the enormous extent of territory governed, it will afford subject for thought to conceive how the government of

such an empire can be carried on with even the faintest hope of confidence in the integrity of the officers appointed to rule over the distant provinces; and yet, at Canton, twelve hundred miles away from Pekin, it has been acknowledged that nothing could be more perfect than the administrative machinery in all its branches, and the regularity of the revenue returns.

That money is frequently obtained by the magistrates from rich land-owners and merchants by means of unlawful pressure, and that, in order to avoid punishment, it is common for offenders, and even innocent people, to offer bribes, are facts patent to everybody; but these irregularities would doubtless exist in any Asiatic country however governed. That the taxes both in money and kind should have been duly forwarded to the imperial treasury and granaries during the late wars is an unquestionable evidence of the efficacy of the administrative system.

It does not follow from this that the government itself is strong. If any rebel obtains such power as to enable him to regulate the distribution of offices, there can be no doubt but that, in a very short time, he would be considered by all the Chinese as the legal authority to whom all obedience should be paid. The competitive examinations are the principal cause of this feeling. Whoever has the power to order these, appoint examiners, and distribute rewards, is substantially emperor. The natural bent of the Chinese mind tends towards subserviency, and so long as appointments are obtained by competition, the awarder of them will be the principal personage in the empire. The Taeping chief well

understood this, and in his proclamations issued before the capture of Nankin he especially drew the attention of the people to his power and intentions on these points. This explains the indifference of the main body of the population to a change in their rulers. One dynasty falls and another succeeds, and but little interest appears to be felt by the masses. The fact is, that to them it is a question of unimportance, provided the one grand element remains unaltered. Tartar emperors succeed Chinese, and Chinese succeed Tartars; it matters not: the conqueror or the usurper immediately merges into the broad unvarying stream of uniformity.

The competitive system elucidates the vexed question concerning the unchangeableness of the nation in character and institutions. Had not these unlimited examinations existed, the empire must have collapsed long before the present time. Looking at the enormous area of its provinces, and recollecting that in the majority of instances the common language spoken by the inhabitants of one province is all but unintelligible to those of another, and that a native of the south is in all respects, save written characters and costume, an absolute stranger in the north, it is wonderful that such antagonistic elements should have remained combined for such long periods.¹

¹ During one of the late expeditions to the north of China, I was an eye-witness of a scene that fully exemplified the remarkable dissimilarity of the dialects spoken in the different provinces. At the mouth of the Yang-zte-kiang a native pilot came on board to take the ship up the river as far as Woosung. It happened that some Chinese from Hong-kong and the adjoining mainland of Kwang-tung had come up with us in the capacity of servants; one of these was sent for to explain to the pilot some necessary instructions, and also to ask for news about Shanghae,

It is by no means an easy task fully to comprehend the immense influence that the examinations and their results have upon the Chinese character. In every district, in every village, they form the principal topic of conversation, and the chief aim for the ambition of all the aspiring inhabitants. The titles obtained by the successful candidates prove this. A youth leaves his village home and repairs to the district town to undergo his trial, and if fortunate his name is placarded, and he is then said to "have a name in the village;" success at the next examination entitles him to a "name in the department." The parents and neighbours discuss in the quiet evenings the failures or fulfilments of their children, and the prospects of advancement open to them. Of what moment is to them who it is that rules, provided that he has power to

&c. When the two men were brought face to face and began to converse, they found themselves totally unable to comprehend each other in the slightest degree: the remaining Chinamen were then called up, one after the other, and tried, but with no better result. At last, ludicrous as it may appear, the Shanghai pilot and the best spokesman of the Kwang-tung men suddenly burst into an animated chatter in the peculiar and most extraordinary jargon known by the name of "Pigeon English," and it was into this *dialect* that all our subsequent communications had to be translated.

In this instance an inhabitant of a southern province was brought into contact with one of a central province.

A few months later I landed at a large village in the harbour of Che-foo (north-eastern province of Shantung) in order to make inquiries about provisions, wells, trade, &c., and took with me, as an interpreter, a very intelligent man born and bred near Ningpo, in the central province of Kiang-su. I soon found that he was all but useless. Beyond a few of the most elementary words, such as fish, water, or salt, he was utterly at a loss in explaining my wishes to the villagers, neither could they, on the other hand, make themselves clearly understood by him.

This case is more remarkable than the former because the commercial intercourse between Ningpo and the north is very considerable.

distribute rewards, and the good faith to make merit alone the test for qualification?

It follows from this that anything that interfered with the regular sequence of these events (such as would occur if there happened to be an interregnum) would have a most fatal effect; and thus it can be understood why, in all cases that have taken place, the new emperor has at once been able to enforce his orders and receive the taxes throughout the provinces. In no other country would the acknowledgment of the authority of an usurper follow so rapidly upon the overthrow of the pre-existing government.

But there are other causes which explain the general apathy and absence of patriotism among the people. In judging the Chinese, it ought never to be forgotten how fearful is the struggle for daily subsistence. The entire produce of the land is but just capable of maintaining the population. Millions have no other thought save that of obtaining by toil sufficient to ward off starvation to themselves and families. The life of the agricultural and maritime classes is passed in constant labour, as also are the lives of the majority of the inhabitants of the cities. The incessant hurry which so characterises all Chinese thoroughfares denotes their feverish anxiety to prepare against evil days. The timidity of nature ascribed to them is only what naturally results from the consciousness of ever treading upon the edge of calamity. Can it be supposed for a moment that these poor, toiling, and yet most fortunately light-hearted, people can take interest in any question except what bears immediate reference to their

own wants? and ought their general indifference and want of public feeling to be made a subject for reproach to them? I think not; and I may add that in the homes of these labourers I have witnessed gentleness of nature, family affection, and kindness of heart, such as would be found difficult to parallel. It should be borne in mind, that these people have no such institution as parliamentary representation; there are no country landlords with large domains supporting numerous tenantry, for them to rally round and obey; there are no poor-laws to relieve, no workhouses to shelter, those who are suddenly brought low by famine or flood. The wealthy oppressor's treatment must be silently suffered, for there is no appeal save to a magistrate, whose decision is too often affected by bribery; then follows the punishment by blows from the bamboo, the dread of which is alone sufficient to deter the poor from the courts of justice; and lastly, the main restraint over wrong and disorder is absent, for in no single district throughout the empire is there to be found an efficient body of police.

That insurrections should be so frequent and universal, is not a subject for surprise. With an overwhelming population, and such liability to distress from causes out of human control, China must always be the theatre of revolt, and no government, however powerful or wise, will ever be able to maintain internal peace.

I have already noticed the probability of one of the existing rebellions becoming ultimately triumphant: as that of the Taiping is in all respects the most important, combining greater force and better organization

than the others, and is therefore more likely to obtain supreme authority, it becomes expedient to examine the tenets and actions of the chief and his adherents. The first step to be taken is entirely to discard the idea, once so prevalent, that the Taepings represent Christianity, *i.e.* the Christianity as believed by the Protestants of the Church of England. With the faith of the Roman Church their creed is so thoroughly irreconcilable, that no greater disaster could happen to its mission than the accession of Hung-siu-tsuen. The Catholic form of worship presents so many points of similarity with that of Buddhism as followed in China—particularly in the external ceremonial, the system of priesthood and the homage to idols—that should ever the iconoclastic tendencies of the Taepings obtain full sway, these, together with their known fanatical hatred to all Buddhist priests, would lead to this result, *viz.*, that every vestige of Roman Catholicism would be swept from the empire.

The Catholics full well comprehend this, and by no people are the Taepings so hated as by the French. The slaughter of the Jesuit priest at Si-ka-wei¹ will never be forgotten or forgiven by them. The link of sympathy that has hitherto bound Protestants with the fortunes of the rebels does not exist in their case, and

¹ Si-ka-wei was and is the site of a Jesuit college for the instruction of young Chinese converts. A portion of the Taiping forces on the occasion of one of their approaches to Shanghai, near which city Si-ka-wei is situated, took possession of this college, and, among other atrocities, murdered in cold blood an unoffending priest. The general commanding in vain explained that this had occurred through error; the mischief was done, and the French residents in China were highly exasperated.

were it in their power they would crush this rebellion with the deepest gratification.

Excepting some minor observances, remains of the Buddhist rites, the creed of the Taepings retains many points of affinity with that of the English Church. They believe in God as taught by the Bible; Christ is also believed in, but not in the whole sense conveyed by the New Testament; Hung-siu-tsuen seems to look upon Him as the elder son of God, who was sent down in ancient times to teach mankind the errors under which they were labouring, and to bring them to a proper knowledge of the truth; there His mission ended. The doctrine of the Atonement is evidently either misunderstood, or has never been explained. The fulfilment of the visions in Kwang-si has led Hung-siu-tsuen to imagine himself to be in a similar manner divinely appointed to convert the Chinese. It must always remain unknown to what extent he believed his divine direction to reach. As far as can be gathered from the wording of his Proclamations, it is evident he does not assume that he is absolutely a son of God, but that he holds a mystical relation of that degree, and is under His immediate guidance. Although many of his later edicts point to a greater assumption of divinity, much of what is found in these must be attributed to the aberrations of a disordered brain. Constant seclusion, combined with great power and extreme fanaticism, has undoubtedly conduced to this result.

But whatever may be the opinions held now or in the future by Hung-siu-tsuen, they are not any longer of influence in changing the belief of his followers, and

are only interesting for the purpose of those who wish carefully to examine the career of this extraordinary man, and trace out to their limits the effects produced upon his intellect by the peculiar circumstances of his life. Granting to all a perfect right to pronounce a condemnatory judgment upon the character of this enthusiast, there can be no question with regard to his position as the leader of a great religious convulsion ; in this point of view he is as remarkable as was Mahomet twelve centuries earlier,—and perhaps in some respects even more so, for the latter had under his guidance a people far more easily swayed, far more prone to fanatical fervour, than the comparatively unimpressionable, apathetic inhabitants of Southern China.

Hung-siu-tsuen, in giving his son a divine relationship in conformity with that he supposes himself to hold, adopts, to Chinese minds, a necessary corollary ; but it is more than doubtful whether his followers really place much credit in such pretensions. In the earlier years of the rebellion, the revelations of Yang and Siau were deemed absolute, and met with unquestioning faith ; but this phase has passed away. Even the Assistant king, one of the original Worshippers, has signified his disapproval of many of the late celestial assertions.

Only a very small proportion of the Taepings can have any clear conception of the meaning of their religious observances. The masses composing their army, being all recruited from the dregs of the population of the surrounding provinces, are merely capable of simple concurrence with the regulated forms. These

consist of the Morning and Evening Prayer, the repetition at stated times of the Decalogue, and the setting apart of one day in the week in some kind of accordance with the Jewish Sabbath. The sacrifice of fowls and pigs as offerings to the Supreme Being, together with the burning of the slip of paper containing the written prayer, are precisely similar customs to what takes place at the daily worship before the altars of the Gods of the Grain and Land, throughout the agricultural districts.

But although the majority of the rebels can have but a very vague impression of their own faith, yet they all unite in their hatred to whatever is connected with Buddhism or Taoism; and thus it is clear that in the event of their becoming successful, the existing religion of the empire, and even much of the Confucianism, must be overthrown. Supposing that any *one* of the Taeping chiefs obtains undisturbed supremacy over the whole—or, as is more likely, the half—of China, it seems probable that the worship of the One Active Supreme Being (Active, as distinct from the Passive now believed in by the mass of the population), will become prevalent; also that one day in every week will be acknowledged, not perhaps as is the Sunday in European countries, but yet in such a comparative degree as will create a break in the weekly toil, and thus present a marked improvement upon the existing system of incessant labour.

Viewed under this aspect the rebellion is of lasting importance; putting aside all questions regarding its political bearing, and even granting that it (in that sense) becomes extinct, the certainty remains that

by means of its influence the religious belief of four hundred millions of people (nearly half the population of the whole world) will be gradually brought into harmony with that of the fast-spreading Anglo-Saxon race.

The small end of the wedge is beginning to penetrate, and unless the lessons taught by all previous great schisms are in this particular instance found erroneous, this movement will have for its result a revolution unparalleled in the immensity of its field of action, both mental and physical. Centuries hence, when Australia and the western borders of North America are densely inhabited, and the commerce in the Pacific Ocean becomes multiplied tenfold, the sea-board of China will witness numberless fleets exporting and importing the vast natural produce of the three continents; and those ports situated at the mouths of the magnificent rivers which communicate with the interior will present a scene of incalculable commercial activity and wealth. That the religion of a country has much influence over its foreign policy is an axiom whose truth is too self-evident to be questioned; and it is unnecessary to point out how much more is even such a faith as is likely to be resultant from the rebellion, conducive to energy and the promotion of comprehensive views, than that now prevailing.

In estimating the character of the Taepings as evinced by their deeds, it is difficult to maintain strict impartiality. The disturbance to our trade occasioned by their proximity to and action upon those treaty-ports lying adjacent to the Yang-zte, gives cause for much bitterness of feeling, and consequently their con-

duct has been commented upon too severely. One of the principal charges against them is that although in possession of a large tract of country for nearly ten years, they have not shown any policy from which it might be deduced that they would foster commerce or improve the condition of the people; another charge is that they display no organization whatever, and are little else than an undisciplined rabble, incapable of higher acts than those of mere plunder and destruction.

Much of all this is undoubtedly true, but upon looking at the circumstances under which the chief and his followers have been hitherto placed, it does not appear that it would have been easy for them to have adopted other measures. A rebel to all recognized authority, Hung-siu-tsuen is unable to pay his troops in the ordinary way out of the taxation of the empire; and therefore, when it becomes necessary to obtain supplies, his armies are detached with instructions to attack the populous cities and plunder the granaries. All the rebels—men, women, and children—are dependent upon what is gathered in provisions and money during these raids. Stringent orders are issued, to the effect that all the spoils are to be yielded up by the captors, for the purpose of being placed in a common fund. This regulation is probably often infringed, although with respect to grain or other food it is strictly adhered to, and all receive equal rations, which are provided from regular stores.

The idea of men little better in appearance or education than the commonest coolies, stalking about in silk gowns and wearing gorgeous crowns (as was the

case at Soo-chow), has always afforded much amusement to Europeans acquainted with that class of Chinese; but the ludicrous impressions produced by this incongruity must always be discarded when the immense influence of the cause represented by them is remembered.

It has never yet been in the power of Hung-siu-tsuen, or his subordinates, to show their intentions with regard to trade. Usually surrounded in their cities by a large besieging force, it has been their policy to expel all non-combatants, and the reasons given for this practice are unexceptionable. Treachery from within would be the certain result of any other plan. In those instances where they have been temporarily free from the imperialist attack, a moderate amount of trade has sprung into existence, as is evidenced by the reports of the country between Soo-chow and Nankin, and also by the accounts received from Ningpo during their occupation.

Judging, however, from the characters and origin of the present leaders, it is not probable that they would be inclined to promote commerce on any extensive scale; still it is unjust to presume that they would be absolutely opposed to all foreign trade, for, as matters now stand, there are no precise grounds upon which to base an opinion one way or the other. Perhaps, once in undisturbed possession of some sea-board cities, they may prove the general impression of their views in this particular to be incorrect.

Their anxiety to hold Shanghai admits of several explanations. They are desirous to obtain all the benefits

that would accrue to them through receiving the proceeds of the Customs duties, and they feel the importance of having the power of the Europeans to aid them in the retention of that city, as they suppose that the same protection would be afforded to them as is given to the present occupants. In many senses, geographical and political, it is of the greatest moment to them to carry into execution this purpose, as otherwise their position must be insecure and unsatisfactory. Through its situation, Shanghae, whilst held by the imperialists, will always prevent the Taepings from following any settled policy or consolidating their power; and as long as they remain in that part of the empire where they now are, it is certain that no effort will be spared by them to ensure its capture.

One praiseworthy feature connected with the conduct of their wandering armies is the care taken by the generals to prevent irregularities on the march. The published regulations on this subject are clear and well devised. It is also usual, when occupying or passing through towns, to issue proclamations, prohibiting theft, murder, or violence of any description towards the inhabitants, especially that particular form of ill-usage that consists in the exaction of forced labour. This is only allowed when sanctioned by authority. The punishments for any infractions of these orders are summary and severe. At Hwang-chow, shortly after its capture by the Ying-wang, a notice was seen, appended to the heads of two men, stating that they had been beheaded for robbing the people of their clothes.

The composition of their forces has, from the beginning, been peculiarly singular. When at Yung-gnan, in Kwang-si, and on their march northwards, one-fourth, at a moderate estimate, were women, many of whom held military rank and were in charge of companies.

“Let the male and female officers,” writes Hung-siu-tsuen, in an Ode published on the occasion of breaking through the imperialist troops, “all grasp the sword. As for your apparel, one change will be sufficient. Unitedly rouse your courage together and slay the fiends.”

This state of affairs ceased with the fall of Nankin, after which the women were employed in the erection of defences and excavation of ditches, &c. At present their forces are remarkable through the large proportion of boys contained in them, and also for the general youthfulness of the whole mass. They are wretchedly armed, the usual weapon being an iron spike fastened to the end of a bamboo. Besides this, they have in a less extent, gingalls, bows and arrows, knives, and the common short Chinese sword.

It will be interesting some time hence, when this miserable civil war is concluded, to note the returns of the population and revenue of those provinces which have been suffering from the presence of the devastating troops of the imperialists and Taepings, and compare them with those of the previous years. The agriculturists must have, in many cases, been utterly ruined, and much of the land left uncultivated. No distinction can be drawn between one side or the other with

respect to the cruelties and ravages committed. Both are equally undisciplined ; perhaps the Taepings are, if possible, recruited from a lower class ; this, together with the addition of so many reckless boys, might be deemed sufficient reason for presuming that their actions would be more pitiless than those of the regular troops. The accounts given by the sufferers do not, however, warrant any such deduction.

The Trade Reports from Shanghae, during these troubles, present an anomaly which does not readily admit of a clear explanation. Any person deliberately stating that the presence of numerous bodies of armed men, wandering over the land, sacking the cities, and spreading desolation in all directions, was of no influence in arresting the progress of commerce in the country occupied by them, would not usually be considered worthy of the slightest attention, and yet such a statement could be proved to be based upon good grounds by referring the incredulous to these most satisfactory Reports.

It is an absolute fact that, although the Taepings or other rebels have at different periods, since the year 1854, spread their forces over the greater portion of the tea and silk districts, fought many battles, and captured and lost many cities, a stranger unacquainted with these circumstances might carefully peruse the annual Shanghae Reports, and not find a single item that would lead him to suspect the existence of the slightest deviation from the ordinary routine of peaceful and progressive commercial intercourse.

From this it may be inferred that the Taepings have

been careful to avoid destroying or doing injury to any of the various plants by whose culture the labouring people obtain their subsistence. They have, however, lately threatened, in the event of the European powers continuing to oppose them, to destroy the tea-plant. Such an action would lead to the most deplorable results, and it is to be hoped that something may occur to prevent the execution of this menace.¹

It may well be asked by those who interest themselves in Chinese affairs, whether this wretched struggle is to last for ever, and these fertile provinces and wealthy cities to be the continuous theatre of rapine and bloodshed,—or if there are any hopes of an approaching termination of this state of disorder.

In the present condition of the empire, it is not possible to give any definitive answer to such questions, and the only course to adopt is that of giving an opinion formed upon such data as would justify its having some considerable degree of probability.

I have long since come to the conclusion that this rebellion will finally result in the division of China proper into two independent sovereignties. In order to clear the way for the explanation of this belief, I must draw attention to the political distribution of China at periods long anterior to the present. The impression is very prevalent, that this great country has always been united under the authority of one monarch,

¹ It is stated that the Taepings are preparing to attack Foo-chow, another of our treaty-ports. If they are successful, the occupation of this city will give them complete command over the intervening tea-districts as far as Ningpo, and it would be in their power to inflict a tremendous blow upon our tea and silk trade.

and that it has for thousands of years presented an instance of centralization unparalleled in extent of territory and in the mass of human beings governed. Nothing can be more erroneous than this conception; upon examining the Chinese Annals within a period admitting of historic truth—viz., at any time subsequent to the last century B.C.—it will be found that the empire was usually divided into two, three, or even four parts, each having its own monarch. From the second century until the sixth, the provinces lying northwards of the Yang-zte-kiang were ruled over by the emperors of the north, and those situated to the south were under the regularly constituted emperors of China.¹ From the province of Sz-chuen this river formed for eight hundred miles the common boundary of these two empires, which were completely distinct from, and independent of, each other.

At the close of the sixth century the north and south were united under one head, and although subject to frequent temporary divisions, this was the normal condition of the country until the year 1127, about which time the Tartars began to rule over the northern provinces. The Chinese emperors maintained a separate empire of the south until A.D. 1280, when the Mongols obtained entire supremacy. Since that period, notwithstanding the frequent revolutions and dynastic changes, China has always been subject to one monarch.

¹ The Chinese in their history invariably record as emperors of China those who were in possession of the southern provinces, and who commonly held their court at Nankin. It frequently happened that they also governed the northern provinces, and the capital was sometimes situated in Honan, or Sz-chuen; in later times the court was generally held at Pekin.

The geographical distribution of mountains and rivers is clearly favourable to a division ; the Yang-zte forms a natural water-frontier, and the hills that spread away from its borders in Ngan-hwui, rising westward until they become mountains in Tibet, are equally available as land boundaries.

In a political sense there cannot be a question with regard to the desirableness of halving the empire ; the population is too enormous and the territory too extensive for any single government, however constituted. There now remains another point to be noticed. It does not require any special pleading to show that it is obviously unjust, and therefore unadvisable, for the Tartars to rule over a conquered nation, whose feelings and customs are in many respects entirely alien, and who in numbers exceed them in the proportion (within the Great Wall) of one hundred to one ; and yet not only is this the case at the present moment, but, until great changes occur among the tribes in Central Asia, it must always be so unless the Northern provinces are separated from the Southern, or until the Chinese are sufficiently strong and warlike to repel all invasion on their Tartar frontier—a possibility, under existing circumstances, exceedingly remote. The close proximity of restless nomadic hordes must always preclude any Chinese monarch from the hope of governing in peace,¹ and,

¹ There is a very general opinion existing among the European community in China, and also at home, that if Nankin was taken out of the hands of the Taepings and given into the possession of the imperialists, the rebellion would be, if not immediately crushed, yet so shaken, that it would rapidly become extinct. Now, the war being one where no quarter is given on either side, and as there is a certainty that no pardon would

similarly, the turbulence of the southern inhabitants of China will ever render the rule of any Tartar conqueror one of constant troubles and civil wars.

Let it be granted that the Taepings, or any other body of rebels, become sufficiently powerful to drive the reigning emperor and his followers outside the limits of China proper, and that enough time is given to enable them to organise a government, and for their authority to become generally acknowledged, what would be the result? It cannot be supposed that the Tartars would be content to pass their lives in their Mongolian or Manchurian wastes, whilst the fertile land so lately occupied by them remained close to their grasp. They would pour in their forces, ravage the Northern provinces, and ultimately oblige the Chinese emperor to vacate his capital of Pekin, and fly for shelter to the south of the Yellow River or the Yang-zte. And on the other hand, granting that the present government remain in power, it is equally evident that all China must be in a continual state of distress and revolt.

The sole remedy seems to be that of separation. If

be granted to any of the rebels, it is evident that the hundreds of thousands that compose the rebel armies would not yield without a severe struggle. So far from considering that the possession of Nankin would be beneficial in propping up the authority of the government, I am of opinion that no more disastrous blow could be given to it.

It is the *quiescence* of the Taepings that has been the reason for their not having hitherto become more influential. As long as their chief can idly pass his time at Nankin, and dream that he governs an empire, the rebellion will not make much advance; but once forced from their present position, it is probable that the whole body of Taepings, rendered desperate by adversity, would spread like a torrent over the Northern provinces, and, combining upon Pekin, force the emperor and his court to fly into Manchuria, and thus, if sufficiently organised to form a government, become masters over the whole of China.

it were possible for all Turkestan, Tibet, and Northern China to remain in the possession of the Tartars, and the country south of the Yang-zte to be under a Chinese emperor, with a native government and native troops, there would then exist some hope for peace, and the policy to be adopted by European governments become much simplified.

There are doubtless very many impediments attending the execution of this step, not the least of which would be the regulations concerning the western boundaries, and the passes into Central Asia; but as things now are, the whole subject is beset with difficulties, and it is impossible to predict upon any certain grounds what will be the result of the existing state of disorganization, and especially that degree of it represented by the Taeping rebellion.

Nothing can be more melancholy than the unhappy condition of China: hundreds (I might almost say thousands) are perishing daily from want or by slaughter. Fortunately the mind cannot grasp, in its fullest extent, the fearful accumulation of misery contained in it. Any act on the part of the principal European Powers that would tend to mitigate this state of anarchy would be undoubtedly most praiseworthy; but it should be well understood that intervention in Chinese affairs is accompanied with grave responsibility, and must have an abiding effect for good or for evil upon the happiness and future prospects of the people.



APPENDIX I.

PRECEPTS AND ODES PUBLISHED BY HUNG-SIU-TSUEEN IN THE SECOND AND THIRD YEARS OF THE TAEPING REBELLION. (A.D. 1852-1853.)¹

DECALOGUE.

THE TEN CELESTIAL COMMANDS WHICH ARE TO BE CONSTANTLY OBSERVED.

THE FIRST COMMAND.

THOU SHALT HONOUR AND WORSHIP THE GREAT GOD.

Remark.—The great God is the universal Father of all men, in every nation under heaven. Every man is produced and nourished by him : every man is also protected by him : every man ought, therefore, morning and evening, to honour and worship him, with acknowledgments of his goodness. It is a common saying, that Heaven produces, nourishes, and protects men. Also, that being provided with food we must not deceive Heaven. Therefore, whoever does not worship the great God breaks the commands of Heaven.

The Hymn says:—

Imperial Heaven, the Supreme God is the true Spirit (God):
Worship him every morning and evening, and you will be taken up;
You ought deeply to consider the ten celestial commands,
And not by your foolishness obscure the right principles of nature.

¹ Translated by Dr. Medhurst.

THE SECOND COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT WORSHIP CORRUPT SPIRITS (GODES).

Remark.—The great God says, Thou shalt have no other spirit (gods) beside me. Therefore all besides the great God are corrupt spirits (gods), deceiving and destroying mankind ; they must on no account be worshipped : whoever worships the whole class of corrupt spirits (gods) offends against the commands of Heaven.

The Hymn says :—

Corrupt devils very easily delude the souls of men.
If you perversely believe in them, you will at last go down to hell.
We exhort you all, brave people, to awake from your lethargy,
And early make your peace with your exalted Heavenly Father.

THE THIRD COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE GREAT GOD IN VAIN.

Remark.—The name of the great God is Jehovah, which men must not take in vain. Whoever takes God's name in vain, and rails against Heaven, offends against this command.

The Hymn says :—

Our exalted Heavenly Father is infinitely honourable ;
Those who disobey and profane his name, seldom come to a good end.
If unacquainted with the true doctrine, you should be on your guard,
For those who wantonly blaspheme involve themselves in endless
crime.

THE FOURTH COMMAND.

ON THE SEVENTH DAY, THE DAY OF WORSHIP, YOU SHOULD PRAISE
THE GREAT GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS.

Remark.—In the beginning the great God made heaven and earth, land and sea, men and things, in six days ; and having finished his works on the seventh day, he called it the day of rest (or Sabbath) : therefore all the men of the world, who enjoy the blessing of the great God, should on every seventh day especially reverence and worship the great God, and praise him for his goodness.

The Hymn says :—

All the happiness enjoyed in the world comes from Heaven ;
It is therefore reasonable that men should give thanks and sing ;
At the daily morning and evening meal there should be thanksgiving,
But on the seventh day, the worship should be more intense.

THE FIFTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT THY DAYS MAY BE PROLONGED.

Remark.—Whoever disobeys his parents breaks this command.

The Hymn says:—

History records that Shun honoured his parents to the end of his days,
Causing them to experience the intensest pleasure and delight :
August Heaven will abundantly reward all who act thus,
And do not disappoint the expectation of the authors of their being.

THE SIXTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL OR INJURE MEN.

Remark.—He who kills another kills himself, and he who injures another injures himself. Whoever does either of these breaks the above command.

The Hymn says:—

The whole world is one family, and all men are brethren,
How can they be permitted to kill and destroy one another ?
The outward form and the inward principle are both conferred by Heaven :
Allow every one, then, to enjoy the ease and comfort which he desires.

THE SEVENTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY OR ANY THING UNCLEAN.

Remark.—All the men in the world are brethren, and all the women in the world are sisters. Among the sons and daughters of the celestial hall the males are on one side and the females on the other, and are not allowed to intermix. Should either men or women practise lewdness they are considered outcasts, as having offended against one of the chief commands of Heaven. The casting of amorous glances, the harbouring of lustful imaginations, the smoking of foreign tobacco (opium), or the singing of libidinous songs must all be considered as breaches of this command.

The Hymn says:—

Lust and lewdness constitute the chief transgression,
Those who practise it become outcasts, and are the objects of pity.
If you wish to enjoy the substantial happiness of heaven,
It is necessary to deny yourself and earnestly cultivate virtue.

THE EIGHTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT ROB OR STEAL.

Remark.—Riches and poverty are determined by the great God; but whosoever robs or plunders the property of others transgresses this command.

The Hymn says:—

Rest contented with your station, however poor, and do not steal.
Robbery and violence are low and abandoned practices.
Those who injure others really injure themselves.
Let the noble-minded among you immediately reform.

THE NINTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT UTTER FALSEHOOD.

Remark.—All those who tell lies, and indulge in devilish deceipts, with every kind of coarse and abandoned talk, offend against this command.

The Hymn says:—

Lying discourse and unfounded stories must all be abandoned.
Deceitful and wicked words are offences against Heaven.
Much talk will, in the end, bring evil on the speakers.
It is then much better to be cautious, and regulate one's own mind.

THE TENTH COMMAND.

THOU SHALT NOT CONCEIVE A COVETOUS DESIRE.

Remark.—When a man looks upon the beauty of another's wife and daughters with covetous desires, or when he regards the elegance of another man's possessions with covetous desires, or when he engages in gambling, he offends against this command.

The Hymn says:—

In your daily conduct do not harbour covetous desires.
When involved in the sea of lust the consequences are very serious.
The above injunctions were handed down on Mount Sinai;
And to this day the celestial commands retain all their force.

Note.—The expression “corrupt spirits” in the remarks upon the second commandment, rendered by the translator “gods,” refers probably to the numerous malevolent spirits whom all uneducated Chinese believe to have power over all things noxious to the human race. The gods of thunder, lightning, wind, &c., are the principal of these, but there are also hundreds of inferior spirits whom poor householders believe to be abroad at night, with power, if they so will, to spread pestilence, disaster, and fire, and who consequently receive daily and nightly offerings of prayer and incense from the timid and trembling poor, who dread the exercise of their malevolence.

THE TRIMETRICAL CLASSIC.

EACH LINE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINING THREE WORDS, AND
EACH VERSE FOUR LINES.

THE Great God
Made heaven and earth,
Both land and sea,
And all things therein.

In six days
He made the whole ;
Man, the lord of all,
Was endowed with glory and honour.

Every seventh day worship,
In acknowledgment of Heaven's favour ;
Let all under Heaven
Keep their hearts in reverence.

It is said that in former times
A foreign nation was commanded
To honour God ;
The nation's name was Israel.

Their twelve tribes
Removed into Egypt ;
Where God favoured them,
And their posterity increased.

Then a king arose
Into whose heart the devil entered ;
He envied their prosperity,
And inflicted pain and misery.

Ordering the daughters to be preserved,
But not allowing the sons to live ;
Their bondage was severe
And very difficult to bear.

The Great God
Viewed them with pity,
And commanded Moses
To return to his family.

He commanded Aaron
To go and meet Moses ;
When both addressed the king,
And wrought divers miracles.

The king hardened his heart
And would not let them go ;
Wherefore God was angry
And sent lice and locusts.

He also sent flies,
Together with frogs,
Which entered their palaces
And crept into their ovens.

When the king still refused,
The river was turned into blood !
And the water became bitter
Throughout all Egypt.

God sent boils and blains,
With pestilence and murrain ;
He also sent hail,
Which was very grievous.

The king still refusing,
He slew their first-born ;
When the king of Egypt
Had no resource.

But let them go
Out of his land ;
The Great God
Upheld and sustained them.

By day in a cloud,
By night in a pillar of fire ;
The Great God
Himself saved them.

The king hardened his heart,
And let his armies in pursuit ;
But God was angry
And displayed his majesty.

Arrived at the Red Sea
The waters were spread abroad ;
The people of Israel
Were very much afraid.

The pursuers overtook them,
But God stayed their course ;
He himself fought for them,
And the people had no trouble.

He caused the Red Sea
With its waters to divide ;
To stand up as a wall,
That they might pass between.

The people of Israel
Marched with a steady step
As though on dry ground,
And thus saved their lives.

The pursuers attempting to cross,
Their wheels were taken off,
When the waters closed upon them
And they were all drowned.

The Great God
Displayed his power,
And the people of Israel
Were all preserved.

When they came to the desert
They had nothing to eat ;
But the Great God
Bade them not be afraid.

He sent down manna,
For each man a pint ;
It was as sweet as honey,
And satisfied their appetites.

The people lusted much,
And wished to eat flesh,
When quails were sent
By the millions of bushels.

At the Mount Sinai
Miracles were displayed,
And Moses was commanded
To make tables of stone.

The Great God
Gave his celestial commands,
Amounting to ten precepts
The breach of which would not be
forgiven.

He himself wrote them,
And gave them to Moses ;
The celestial law
Cannot be altered.

In after ages
It was sometimes disobeyed,
Through the devil's temptations
When men fell into misery.

But the Great God,
Out of pity to mankind,
Sent his first-born Son
To come down into the world.

His name is Jesus,
The Lord and Saviour of men,
Who redeems them from sin
By the endurance of extreme misery.

Upon the cross
They nailed his body,
Where he shed his precious blood
To save all mankind.

Three days after his death
He rose from the dead,
And during forty days
He discoursed on heavenly things.

When he was about to ascend
He commanded his disciples
To communicate his gospel
And proclaim his revealed will.

Those who believe will be saved
And ascend to heaven ;
But those who do not believe
Will be the first to be condemned.

Throughout the whole world
There is only one God,
The Great Lord and Ruler
Without a second.

The Chinese in early ages
Were regarded by God ;

Together with the foreign states
They walked in one way.

From the time of Pwan-koo,¹
Down to the three dynasties,²
They honoured God,
As history records.

T'hang of the Shang dynasty,³
And Wan of the Chow,⁴
Honoured God
With the intensest feeling.

The inscription on T'hang's bathing-tub
Inculcated daily renovation of mind ;
And God commanded him
To assume the government of the
empire.

Wan was very respectful
And intelligently served God ;
So that the people who submitted to
him
Were two out of every three.

When Tsin obtained the empire⁵
He was infatuated with the genii,
And the nation has been deluded by
the devil
For the last two thousand years.

Suen and Woo of the Han dynasty⁶
Both followed this bad example,
So that the mad rebellion increased
In imitation of Tsin's misrule.

When Woo arrived at old age,
He repented of his folly,
And lamented that from his youth up
He had always followed the wrong
road.

Ming of the Han dynasty⁷
Welcomed the institutions of Buddha,
And set up temples and monasteries
To the great injury of the country.

But Hwang of the Sung dynasty
Was still more mad and infatuated,
For he changed the name of Shang-te
(God)
Into that of Yuh-hwang (the pearly
emperor).⁸

But the Great God
Is the supreme Lord
Over all the world,
The Great Father in Heaven.

His name is most honourable,
To be handed down through distant
ages ;
Who was this Hwuy,
That he dared to alter it ?

It was meet that this same Hwuy
Should be taken by the Tartars,
And together with his son
Perish in the northern desert.

From Hwuy of the Sung dynasty
Up to the present day,

¹ Pwan-koo, the first man, was, according to Chinese mythology, the offspring of Chaos, and the creator of the earth, sun, moon, and stars.

² The period of the three dynasties began B.C. 2207, and ended B.C. 247.

³ B.C. 1766.

⁴ B.C. 1121. Both these emperors (T'hang and Wan) are stated by Du Halde to have worshipped Heaven.

⁵ B.C. 247.

⁶ B.C. 74—A.D. 25.

⁷ A.D. 58. The emperor Ming, having heard that the true religion was to be found in the west, despatched (A.D. 66) ambassadors into Northern India, who, finding the majority of the people in that region to be worshippers of Fo, brought back with them several Bonzes in order to spread the faith ; and thus Buddhism was introduced into China.

⁸ This emperor (Hwuy) was a firm believer in the superstitions of the Taoists. A.D. 1101-1126.

For these seven hundred years
Men have sunk deeper and deeper in
error.

With the doctrine of God
They have not been acquainted,
While the king of Hades
Has deluded them to the utmost.

The Great God displays
Liberality deep as the sea ;
But the devil has injured man
In a most outrageous manner.

God is therefore displeased
And has sent his Son¹
With orders to come down into the
world,
Having first studied the classics.

In the Ting-yen year (1837)
He was received up into Heaven,
Where the affairs of Heaven
Were clearly pointed out to him.

The Great God
Personally instructed him,
Gave him odes and documents,
And communicated to him the true
doctrine.

God also gave him a seal,
And conferred upon him a sword
Connected with authority
And majesty irresistible.

He bade him, together with the elder
brother,
Namely Jesus,
To drive away impish fiends
With the co-operation of angels.

There was one who looked on with envy,
Namely, the king of Hades,
Who displayed much malignity
And acted like a devilish serpent.

But the Great God,
With a high hand,
Instructed his Son
To subdue this fiend.

And having conquered him
To show him no favour,
And in spite of his envious eye
He damped all his courage.

Having overcome the fiend
He returned to Heaven,
Where the Great God
Gave him great authority.

The celestial mother was kind
And exceedingly gracious,
Beautiful and noble in the extreme
Far beyond all compare.

The celestial elder brother's wife
Was virtuous and very considerate,
Constantly exhorting the elder brother
To do things deliberately.

The Great God,
Out of love to mankind,
Again commissioned his Son
To come down into the world.

And when he sent him down
He charged him not to be afraid ;
I am with you, said he,
To superintend everything.

In the Mow-shin year (1848)
The Son was troubled and distressed,
When the Great God
Appeared on his behalf.

Bringing Jesus with him
They both came down into the world,
Where he instructed his Son
How to sustain the weight of govern-
ment.

God has set up his Son
To endure for ever,
To defeat corrupt machinations
And to display majesty and authority.

Also to judge the world,
To divide the righteous from the
wicked,
And consign them to the misery of
hell,
Or bestow on them the joys of heaven.

¹ Hung-siu-tsuen.

Heaven manages every thing,
Heaven sustains the whole,
Let all beneath the sky
Come and acknowledge the new monarch.

Little children
Worship God,
Keep his commandments,
And do not disobey.

Let your minds be refined,
And be not depraved,
The Great God
Constantly surveys you.

You must refine yourselves well,
And not be depraved,
Vice willingly practised
Is the first step to misery.

To ensure a good end
You must make a good beginning,
An error of a hair's breadth
May lead to a discrepancy of a thousand li.

Be careful about little things,
And watch the minute springs of action;
The Great God
Is not to be deceived.

Little children
Arouse your energies,
The laws of high heaven
Admit not of infraction.

Upon the good blessings descend,
And miseries on the wicked;
Those who obey Heaven are preserved,
And those who disobey perish.

The Great God
Is a spiritual Father;
All things whatever
Depend on him.

The Great God
Is the Father of our spirits,
Those who devoutly serve him
Will obtain blessings.

Those who obey the fathers of their flesh
Will enjoy longevity,
Those who requite their parents
Will certainly obtain happiness.

Do not practise lewdness,
Nor any uncleanness;
Do not tell lies,
Do not kill and slay.

Do not steal,
Do not covet;
The Great God
Will strictly carry out his laws.

Those who obey Heaven's commands
Will enjoy celestial happiness;
Those who are grateful for divine
favours
Will receive divine support.

Heaven blesses the good
And curses the bad;
Little children!
Maintain correct conduct.

The correct are men,
The corrupt are imps;
Little children!
Seek to avoid disgrace.

God loves the upright,
And he hates the vicious;
Little children!
Be careful to avoid error.

The Great God
Sees everything;
If you wish to enjoy happiness,
Refine and correct yourselves.

It will be observed that the author of the Trimetrical Classic has divided his subject into four distinct parts:—

In the first he gives a summary of the principal acts of God, with respect to man, from the time of the creation until the ascen-

sion of our Saviour, according to those versions of the Old and New Testaments that had fallen into his possession.

In the second part he proceeds to point out to his followers the religious history of their own country, and draws their attention to the circumstance of some of the early Chinese monarchs having been, similarly with the foreign nations spoken of in the Testaments, worshippers of one God. The sketch given of the decline from this faith into a belief in genii, and subsequently into Buddhism and other grave errors, proves in a remarkable degree the author's knowledge of Chinese history—for all the facts stated in the Classic accord with the historic Annals.

The subject of the third part relates principally to his own divine powers; and the description of the visions and ascent to heaven will be found to coincide on all points with the narrative of his friend Hung-jin (*vide* chap. iv.). In one part of this narrative is given a speech of Hung-siu-tsuen which throws considerable light upon the various causes that led him to assume divine inspiration. When at his home in Hwa-hien shortly after he had begun to study Afah's tracts, and six years later than the date of his sickness and visions, he is reported to have said:—"These books are certainly sent purposely by heaven to me, to confirm the truth of my former experiences; if I had received the books without having gone through the sickness, I should not have dared to believe in them, and on my own account to oppose the customs of the whole world; if I had merely been sick, but had not also received the books, I should have had no further evidence as to the truth of my visions, which might also have been considered as the mere productions of a diseased imagination. . . . I have received the immediate command from God in his presence; the will of Heaven rests with me. Although I should meet thereby with calamity, difficulties, and suffering, yet I am resolved to act. By disobeying the heavenly command I should only rouse the anger of God; and are not these books the foundation of all the true doctrines contained in other books?"

"Under this conviction," states Mr. Hamberg, guided by Hung-jin's information, "Siu-tsuen, when preaching the new doctrine to others, made use of his own visions and the books, as reciprocally evidencing the truth of each other. He revered the books highly, and if any one wished to read them he urgently told him not to alter or mark them in any manner, 'because,' said he, 'it is written therein (Psalm xxxiii. 4) Jehovah's word is correct.'

"The books contained many portions of the Holy Scriptures,

which though translated certainly in a faithful manner, yet had so much of foreign idiom, and were so often without any introduction and comments, that Siu-tsuen and his friends, being left wholly to themselves, of course made many mistakes as to the meaning. They found, for instance, in these chapters many pronouns, 'I, we, you, he,' &c., introduced. These they were at a loss how to apply, and when they asked Siu-tsuen to whom these pronouns referred, he kept silence; but his friends clearly understood that he often applied the pronoun 'you,' or 'he' to himself, when the meaning suited his views, as he considered the whole of these tracts specially written for him, and given him from heaven. Often when he observed the word Tsuen (whole, all, complete) he thought his own name was referred to. He liked exceedingly the 19th and 33rd Psalms, which he and Hung-jin used to recite in a loud voice. The third verse of the 19th Psalm he would understand, 'Their voice is gone out to the whole world (country of Tsuen);' the ninth and tenth verses he would read, instead of 'altogether righteous,' 'Tsuen is righteous, more to be desired than gold.' The twelfth verse, again, he would read, 'Who can understand, so as Tsuen, his errors?' and so on."

Throughout the third part Hung-siu-tsuen arrogates to himself the attributes of a son of God.

The last part of the Classic consists of an exhortation to his followers, under the title of "Little Children," to act in accordance with the teaching of the Commandments, and to endeavour to be in all respects honest, moral, and truthful, and so obtain future happiness.

ODE ON THE ORIGIN OF VIRTUE AND THE SAVING OF THE WORLD.

[The Explanatory Notes are by the Translator.]

THE great origin of virtue is from Heaven.

Let us now reverently allude to Heaven's ways, in order to arouse
you worthies.

The way of Heaven is to punish the abandoned and bless the good.
Repent therefore without delay, and get the first start in the race.
Virtue has one general root and origin, which is none other than
correctness.

Successive generations, whether early or late, come to but one con-
clusion.

Aim to enjoy celestial bliss ;

Free yourselves from worldly considerations.

Be not dragged away by the host of common feelings.

Abandon, at once, the whole mass of vicious views.

The true Spirit who opened out the universe is God alone ;

He makes no distinction between noble and base : he must be
reverently adored.

God, our Heavenly Father, is the one common parent.

From of old it has been said that the world consists of but one
family.

From the time of Pwan-koo down to the three dynasties,
Both princes and people together honoured one Heaven.

During that period the sovereign honoured God.

The nobles, scholars, and plebeians all did the same.

It might be compared to children among men honouring their father ;
When both well and ill informed followed the domestic law.

One feeling pervaded Heaven and men, there were no two principles,
And monarchs were not allowed to follow out their private views.

Let God be worshipped ;

In this let all unite,

Whether west or north,

Whether south or east.

Every fibre and thread depends on God ;

Every drop and sap comes from the Heavenly Majesty.

It is your duty every morning to adore, and every evening to worship him.

Reason demands that you should praise him for his goodness, and sing of his doings.

Should men neglect this duty, or worship any other,

Let them prostrate themselves without end, it would be all in vain.

Not only would it be without benefit, it would also be injurious.

And by thus deluding your own mind, you would incur endless guilt.

If men did not obliterate their natural conscience,

They would know that every breath they draw depends on Heaven.

He created the elements of nature and all material things.

No other spiritual being interferes with his arrangements.

Let us then depend on God alone for assistance,

And never ascribe to idols the honour of creation.

If any should say that creation depends on idols,

We would just enquire how things went on before they were set up?

He warms us by his sun, he moistens us by his rain,

He moves the thunderbolt, he scatters the wind;

All these are the wondrous operations of God alone.

Those who acknowledge Heaven's favour will obtain a glorious reward.

Do not worship corrupt spirits;

Act like honest men.

Heaven abhors that which is wrong,

And loves whatever is right.

Of all wrong things, lewdness is the chief;

When men thus become fiends, Heaven's wrath is aroused.

Those who debauch others debauch themselves, and they become fiends together.

Far better to sing of the footprints of the gentle deer, and to celebrate a virtuous posterity.¹

Depraved manners overturn men; who under such circumstances can stand?

The only way is to reform your habits, and seek renewal of mind.

Yen-hwuy loved learning, and did not repeat his faults,

His four cautions against improprieties are fit to arouse the mind.

¹ There is an allusion here to the Book of Odes, one of which contains the following stanza:—

“ Like the footprints of the gentle deer
Are a virtuous posterity.
Oh, the gentle deer ! ”

He who can reform his errors will soon be free from errors :
 These are the instructions which the ancients repeatedly inculcated.
 From of old princes and teachers had no other duties
 Than merely to proclaim the truth in order to arouse the people.
 From of old good government had no other end in view,
 Than to induce men by means of right doctrines to improve their
 conduct.

Let all who possess bodily vigour and mental intelligence
 Avoid outraging the common virtues and confounding the human
 relations.

Whoever is over-topped by Heaven and stands erect on this earth,
 Should instantly return to the honest and revert to the true.

Let him resist his devilish inclinations
 And cultivate filial feelings.

The second kind of wrong is disobedience to parents.
 This is a great offence against Heaven, therefore reform yourselves.
 The lamb kneels to reach the teat; the crow returns the food to its
 dam.

When men are not equal to brutes they disgrace their origin.
 The dweller at Leih-san lamented, and all nature was moved;
 The birds aided him in weeding, and the elephants in ploughing his
 ground.¹

Though exalted to the rank of emperor, and rich in the possession of
 the four seas,
 His filial piety was such as to move Heaven ; how could it be viewed
 lightly ?

Our fathers they have produced us ; our mothers they have nursed
 us ;
 The pains and anxieties endured in bringing us up are not to be
 described.

Benevolence like this reaches to the azure heavens ; it is difficult to
 repay it.

How can we, by all our filial piety, fully display our sincere gratitude ?
 The man of true filial piety regards his parents all his life long ;
 He discovers their wishes where not expressed by sounds or gestures.
 In obeying your parents you show obedience to God.

By adding mould to your own roots you cause your own plant to
 flourish.

In disobeying your parents you show your disobedience to God.

¹ There is an allusion here to the great Shun, who dwelt at Leih-san, when, not being able to win over his parents to virtue, he cried and lamented in such a way as to move all nature.

By cutting and maiming your own roots you make your own tree to fall.

Read the ode on the luxuriant southernwood,
And expand the feeling of brotherhood and sympathy.
The third kind of wrong is killing and maiming people.
To slay our fellow-men is a crime of the deepest dye.
All under Heaven are our brethren.
The souls of us all alike come from Heaven.
God looks upon all men as his children.
It is piteous, therefore, to behold men destroying one another.
Hence it was that, in former days, men delighted not in murder.
In virtuous feeling they agreed with Heaven, and Heaven regarded them.
In cherishing and tranquillizing the four quarters they aided the Supreme;
Therefore they were able to superintend the whole, and enjoyed the protection of Heaven.
Yu of the Hea dynasty wept over offenders, and Wan surrendered the Loh country.¹
Hence Heaven accorded, and men reverted to him without hesitation.
Those who take delight in killing people, abandoned robbers,
How can they expect to escape misery in the end?
Pih-ke and Heang-yu, after all their murders, were themselves slain,
As for Hwang-tsaou and Le-chin, where are they now?²
From of old those who have killed others have afterwards killed themselves.
Who will say that the eyes of Heaven are not opened wide?
From of old those who have saved others have thereby saved themselves;
And their souls have been taken up to the heavenly courts.

¹ There is an allusion here to Wan-wang, who gave up the territory of Loh to the tyrant Chow, in order to induce him to discontinue his cruel punishments.

* Pih-ke was a general of the Tsin country (B.C. 230), who, after killing four hundred thousand men, was at length killed himself.

Heang-yu, after devastating the metropolis of China, put an end to his own existence (B.C. 200).

Hwang-tsaou, in the time of He-tsung (A.D. 874), having failed to obtain a degree at the literary examinations, rebelled and caused the death of many thousands, but was afterwards slain.

Le-chin, in the latter part of the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1628), rebelled, and slew so many that the very heavens were clothed in blackness; he was, however, himself slain by the Tartars.

From of old those who have benefited others have benefited themselves.

Happiness is of one's own seeking, and is easily obtained.

From of old those who have injured others have injured themselves.

Misery is of one's own causing, and is with difficulty avoided.

Do not say that you will not gratify an enemy, and reward none but the virtuous.

Do as you would be done by, and you will always do right.

Follow that which is faithful and kind,

Cultivate that which is modest and unassuming.

The fourth kind of wrong is robbery and theft.

That which is contrary to justice and benevolence do not practise.

Those who form cabals and act disorderly, Heaven will not protect.

When iniquities are full, misery will surely follow.

A good man, meeting with wealth, does not disorderly grasp it.

Yang-chin, though in the dusk of evening, would not be deluded by a bribe,

Kwan-ning, seeing the tendency of Hen's regards, cut connection with him,

And solitarily roamed the hills and valleys without changing his mind.

E and Tse, resigning the throne, willingly died of hunger.¹

And Show-yang hill handed down their names to posterity.

From of old the honest and good have cultivated virtuous principles. Riches and honours are but fleeting clouds, not fit to be depended upon.

If by killing one innocent person, or doing one act of unrighteousness, They could obtain empire, they would not allow themselves to practise it.

If men would but reverently fear God,

And rest contented with the decree of Heaven, what further need of anxiety?

¹ Yang-chin had a friend who brought him a bribe, saying, "It is now evening, take it, and no one will know it." Yang-chin replied, "Heaven and earth know, and you and I know it; how can you say no one will know it?" Whereupon he refused it.

Kwan-ning, when young, had a friend whose name was Hwa-kin; the latter, whilst digging his garden, found some gold, whereupon the former cut connection with him.

Pih-ke and Shuh-tse were the sons of a prince, who, on the death of their father, resigned the government to each other, and, neither being willing to accept the same, they retired to Show-yang hill, where they died.

How can you bear to kill men and plunder their goods ?
That which you take does not after all belong to you.

In trade principally regard rectitude ;

In learning be careful to live by rule.

The fifth kind of wrong is witchcraft and sorcery ;
Magic arts deceive the multitude, and are a breach of Heaven's
commands.

Life and death, sickness and calamity, are all determined by Heaven.
Why then deceive the people by the manufacture of charms ?
Incantations to procure luck, vows to fiends, and services to devils,
Fastings and processions are all of no avail.

From of old it has been found difficult to avoid death.

How can any by intercessions expect to escape blame ?

From of old wizards and necromancers,

Having involved the world in poverty, have been denuded of
Heaven's help.

The devil's agents, having done service to devils, have brought the
devil upon them.

The gates of hell are ever open to receive such impious wretches.

Wishing to increase your store you only add to your sin.

Why then do you not repent, and early seek a remedy.

Let magic arts be avoided ;

Let human conduct be correct.

The sixth kind of wrong is gambling,

The vicious gamester conceals the dagger with which he stabs his
victim.

Beware ! Beware ! Beware !

The practice is opposed to reason.

There are proper ways of getting money, and success is a matter of
fate.

Do not by deceit and fraud destroy honest principles.

If it be decreed you will get it, why need you gamble ?

If it be not decreed, although you gamble, you will not obtain your
wish.

After all riches and poverty are arranged by Heaven.

Follow then your proper avocations and make yourselves easy about
the rest.

Confucius and Yen-tsze made themselves happy on the plainest fare.
They regarded the will of Heaven, were content with poverty, and
enjoyed happiness.

The life of man, in the present world, is like a midnight dream.

In all ages men have exerted themselves to do their duty.

Oh ! you multitudes !

Do not say there is no harm in it.

Every kind of mischief is occasioned by gambling.

Why do you, my noble heroes, involve yourself in stupefaction ?

The getting of unrighteous gain is like quenching one's thirst with poison.

Let all classes of people then conduct themselves with patience.

The more you gamble the poorer you become.

Consider the matter well, and reform your ways.

There are those who drive on until they fall into a snare ;

Getting accustomed to opium they become mad upon it,

In the present day many a noble son of Han

Has stabbed himself with the opium dagger.

With regard to the love of wine it is also a wrong thing :

Thriving families ought to guard against the liquor that ruins households.

Just think of Këeh and Chow, who presided over the empire,¹

And included the hills and rivers within their iron rule, yet they perished through wine.

Moreover there are geomancers and the fortune-tellers,

Who attempt to deceive God and contract endless guilt.

Riches and honour rest with Heaven ; life and death are sealed by fate ;

Wherefore then deceive the world with the view of enriching yourself ?

All the rest of the wrong things are too numerous to mention.

In judging of men you must distinguish the minutiae of actions.

If you do not regard small matters, you will at length spoil great virtues.

Before the thick ice is formed take warning by the hoar-frost.

Yu and Tseih² were diligent and anxious to prevent famine :

Hence the one became emperor, and the posterity of the other obtained rule.

Wan of the Chow dynasty, and Confucius³ were correct in their own persons.

Hence their souls were permitted to go up and down in the presence of God.

Words of truth

Need not be extended.

¹ B.C. 1764—B.C. 1120.

³ B.C. 1150—B.C. 499.

² B.C. 2204—B.C. 2254.

My soul having been allowed to ascend to Heaven,
My words are true and real, without the slightest extravagance.
My parental feelings are strong, and I cannot forget you.
Words are inadequate to express my feelings, therefore I have thus
enlarged.
Those who accumulate acts of goodness will have plenty of blessings.
Those who accumulate acts of wickedness will have overwhelming
curses.
Those who obey Heaven will be preserved; those who disobey,
perish.
Honour God, and you will obtain glory and honour.

ODE FOR YOUTH.

EACH LINE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINING FIVE WORDS, AND
EACH VERSE FOUR LINES.

ON THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

LET the true Spirit, the great God,
Be honoured and adored by all nations ;
Let all the inhabitants of the world
Unite in his worship, morning and evening.

Above and below, look where you may,
All things are imbued with the Divine favour.
At the beginning, in six days,
All things were created, perfect and complete.

Whether circumcised or uncircumcised,
Who is not produced by God ?
Reverently praise the Divine favour
And you will obtain eternal glory.

ON REVERENCE FOR JESUS.

Jesus, his first-born Son,
Was in former times sent by God :
He willingly gave his life to redeem us from sin ;
Of a truth his merits are pre-eminent.

His cross was hard to bear ;
The sorrowing clouds obscured the sun.
The adorable Son, the honoured of heaven,
Died for you, the children of men.

After his resurrection he ascended to heaven ;
Resplendent in glory, he wields authority supreme.
In him we know that we may trust
To secure salvation and ascend to Heaven.

ON THE HONOUR DUE TO PARENTS.

As grain is stored against a day of need,
So men bring up children to tend their old age :
A filial son begets filial children,
The recompence here is truly wonderful.

Do you ask how this our body
Is to attain to length of years ?
Keep the fifth command, we say,
And honour and emolument will descend upon you.

ON THE COURT.

The imperial court is an awe-inspiring spot,
Let those about it dread celestial majesty ;
Life and death emanate from Heaven's son,
Let every officer avoid disobedience.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE SOVEREIGN.

When one man presides over the government
All nations become settled and tranquillized :
When the sovereign grasps the sceptre of power
Calumny and corruption sink and disappear.

ON THE DUTIES OF MINISTERS.

When the prince is upright, ministers are true ;
When the sovereign is intelligent, ministers will be honest.
E and Chow are models worthy of imitation :
They acted uprightly and aided the government.

ON THE DUTIES OF FAMILIES.

The members of one family being intimately related,
They should live in joy and harmony ;
When the feeling of concord unites the whole,
Blessings will descend upon them from above.

ON THE DUTIES OF A FATHER.

When the main beam is straight the joists will be regular ;
 When a father is strict his duty will be fulfilled ;
 Let him not provoke his children to wrath,
 And a delightful harmony will pervade the dwelling.

ON THE DUTIES OF A MOTHER.

Ye mothers, beware of partiality,
 But tenderly instruct your children in virtue ;
 When you are a fit example to your daughters,
 The happy feeling will reach to the clouds.

ON THE DUTIES OF SONS.

Sons, be patterns to your wives ;
 Consider obedience to parents the chief duty ;
 Do not listen to the tattle of women
 And you will not be estranged from your own flesh.

ON THE DUTIES OF DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW.

Ye that are espoused into other families,
 Be gentle and yielding, and your duty is fulfilled ;
 Do not quarrel with your sisters-in-law,
 And thereby vex the old father and mother.

ON THE DUTIES OF ELDER BROTHERS.

Elder brothers, instruct your juniors ;
 Remember well your common parentage.
 Should they commit a trifling fault,
 Bear with it and treat them indulgently.

ON THE DUTIES OF YOUNGER BROTHERS.

Disparity in years is ordered by Heaven ;
 Duty to seniors consists in respect.
 When younger brothers obey Heaven's dictates
 Happiness and honour will be their portion.

ON THE DUTIES OF ELDER SISTERS.

Elder sisters, instruct your younger sisters,
Study improvement and fit yourselves for Heaven.
Should you occasionally visit your former homes,
Get the little ones around you and tell them what is right.

ON THE DUTIES OF YOUNGER SISTERS.

Girls, obey your elder brothers and sisters,
Be obliging and avoid arrogance,
Carefully give yourselves to self-improvement,
And mind and keep the Ten Commandments.

ON THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS.

Unbending firmness is natural to the man,
Love for a wife should be qualified by prudence ;
And should the lioness roar
Let not terror fill the mind.

ON THE DUTIES OF WIVES.

Women, be obedient to your three male relatives,
And do not disobey your lords :
When hens crow in the morning
Sorrow may be expected in the family.

ON THE DUTIES OF ELDER BROTHER'S WIVES.

What is the duty of an elder brother's wife,
And what her most appropriate deportment ?
Let her cheerfully harmonize with younger brothers' wives,
And she will never do amiss.

ON THE DUTIES OF YOUNGER BROTHER'S WIVES.

Younger brothers' wives should respect their elder brothers'
wives,
In humility honouring their elder brothers ;
In all things yielding to their senior sisters-in-law,
Which will result in harmony superior to music.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE MALE SEX.

Let every man have his own partner
 And maintain the duties of the human relations
 Firm and unbending ; his duties lie from home,
 But he should avoid such things as cause suspicion.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE FEMALE SEX.

The duty of woman is to maintain chastity,
 She should shun proximity to the other sex ;
 Sober and decorous she should keep at home :
 Thus she can secure happiness and felicity.

ON CONTRACTING MARRIAGES.

Marriages are the result of some relation in a former state
 The disposal of which rests with Heaven.
 When contracted, affection should flow in a continued
 stream,
 And the association should be uninterrupted.

ON MANAGING THE HEART.

For the purpose of controlling the whole body
 God has given to man an intelligent mind ;
 When the heart is correct it becomes the true regulator
 To which the senses and members are all obedient.

ON MANAGING THE EYES.

The various corruptions first delude the eye,
 But if the eye be correct all evil will be avoided ;
 Let the pupil of the eye be sternly fixed,
 And the light of the body will shine up to heaven.

ON MANAGING THE EAR.

Whatever sounds assail my ear,
 Let me listen to all in silence :
 Deaf to the entrance of evil,
 Pervious to good, in order to be eminently intelligent.

ON MANAGING THE MOUTH.

The tongue is a prolific source of strife,
And a multitude of words leads to mischief;
Let me not be defiled by lying and corrupt discourse,
Careful and cautious let reason be my guide.

ON MANAGING THE HAND.

To cut off the hand whereby we are dragged to evil,
Appears a determination worthy of high praise;
The duty of the hand is to manifest respect,
But for improper objects move not a finger.

ON MANAGING THE FEET.

Let the feet walk in the path of rectitude,
And ever follow it, without treading awry;
For the countless bye-paths of life
Lead only to mischief in the end.

THE WAY TO GET TO HEAVEN.

Honour and disgrace come from a man's self;
But men should exert themselves
To keep the Ten Commandments,
And they will enjoy bliss in Heaven.

APPENDIX II.

SURVEY OF CHINA.*

THE survey of China Proper, together with Leotung and a portion of Tartary, was commenced in the forty-seventh year of the reign of the Emperor Kang-hi, on the 4th of July, 1708. The missionaries who undertook the work were the Fathers Régis, Bouvet, Jartoux, De Mailla, Henderer, De Tartre, Fridelli (a German), Cardoso (a Portuguese), and Bonjour (of the Order of St. Augustin). In order to prevent unnecessary delay, Kang-hi issued orders to the governors of the provinces to give every possible assistance to the surveyors, and to take care they should be supplied with full information respecting local peculiarities by the principal people of the cities and villages through which they passed.

During the remainder of the year 1708 Régis, Jartoux, and Bouvet determined the position of the Great Wall from Kansuh in the west to its eastern limit on the shores of the Gulf of Leotung.

In 1709 and 1710 Régis, Jartoux, and Fridelli completed the survey of the greater portion of Manchuria, and the whole of Leotung and the northern province of Chih-le.

Shantung on the east, and Shen-si and Shansi on the west, were surveyed during 1711 and 1712; the former by Cardoso and Régis, the latter by Cardoso and De Tartre.

Combining, and proceeding southwards, the missionaries in the following four years were, through their extraordinary energy and judgment, enabled to lay down on their maps the whole of the Central and Southern Provinces.

De Mailla, Henderer, and Régis surveyed Honan, Kiangnan (now divided into the provinces of Kiang-su and Ngan-hwui), Che'-kiang, and Fokien.

De Tartre and Cardoso undertook Kiang-si, Kwang-si, and Kwang-tung; Fridelli and Bonjour, Sz-chuen and Yunnan. Bonjour

* *Vide* Chap. iii.

dying in the latter province towards the close of the year 1714, Régis joined Fridelli, and, after finishing the work in hand, they surveyed Howqwang (now Hoo-peh and Hoo-nan) and Kwei-chow.

The provincial maps were all completed, and the missionaries had returned to Pekin, early in January, 1717. Thus, in less than nine years above twelve hundred thousand square miles of country had been carefully triangulated and mapped, and about four hundred thousand square miles had been roughly surveyed in extra-provincial Tartary and Leotung, and this magnificent result was obtained by the exertions and scientific knowledge of a few European priests, the majority of whom were composed of men belonging to different nations, and only bound together by the tie of a similar faith and purpose.

Nothing now remained in order to complete the work but from the several maps of the provinces to compile a general map of the empire. This duty was performed by the Father Jartoux, who, upon its completion in 1718, presented it to Kang-hi.

The plan principally adopted by the surveyors was that of triangulation. Régis, who wrote the account of the operations, says: "Je puis assurer qu'on n'a rien oublié pour faire un bon ouvrage: on a parcouru soi-même tous les endroits tant soit peu considérables de toutes les provinces; on a examiné les cartes et les histoires que chaque ville garde dans ses tribuneaux; on a interrogé les mandarins et leurs officiers, aussi bien que les chefs des peuples dont on a parcouru les terres; enfin on n'a jamais cessé de se servir de la mesure actuelle, afin d'avoir, à proportion qu'on avançoit, des mesures toutes prêtes pour servir aux triangles des points qu'on jugeoit dignes d'être remarqués. Car après avoir bien délibéré, on crut devoir s'attacher à la méthode des triangles: toutes les autres avoient paru trop longues, en égard aux pays immenses dont l'empereur vouloit avoir la carte; et peu pratiquables par rapport aux villes qui sont fort proche les unes des autres, puisqu'il est certain que la moindre erreur de tems, ou mal marqué par une pendule, ou déterminé peu exactement par l'immersion d'un des satellites de Jupiter, feroit une erreur considérable dans la longitude."

Régis, after explaining at length the numerous errors that would in all probability arise from the use of time-pieces through their liability to accident whilst travelling, and the consequent excessive inaccuracies that would result in laying down points of longitude, and noting the many advantages attending the plan of triangulation, proceeds:—"Un autre moyen qu'on a cru devoir em-

ployer pour une plus grande exactitude, a été de revenir à un même point déjà déterminé par différentes voyes, et d'y revenir d'assez loin en opérant suivant les règles. Car il est indubitable, que si par le dernier coup d'instrument on trouve encore la même situation, on a une espèce de démonstration sensible de l'exactitude des opérations précédentes. Lorsqu'en mesurant on n'a pu revenir au même point, on a cherché en passant dans le voisinage des villes déjà placées, ou des lieux commodes pour en revoir les tours que les font remarquer, ou les montagnes qui les commandent, et de tems en tems on a fait mesurer, pour sçavoir si la distance que donnoit la résultat des opérations, les corrections nécessaires étant faites, convenoit avec la mesure actuelle."

In addition to the above precautions the surveyors, when re-examining their principal points, took the trouble to collate with them the results of some lunar and planetary observations taken at various times by their earlier Jesuit brethren during their travels in the sea-board provinces.

THE END.