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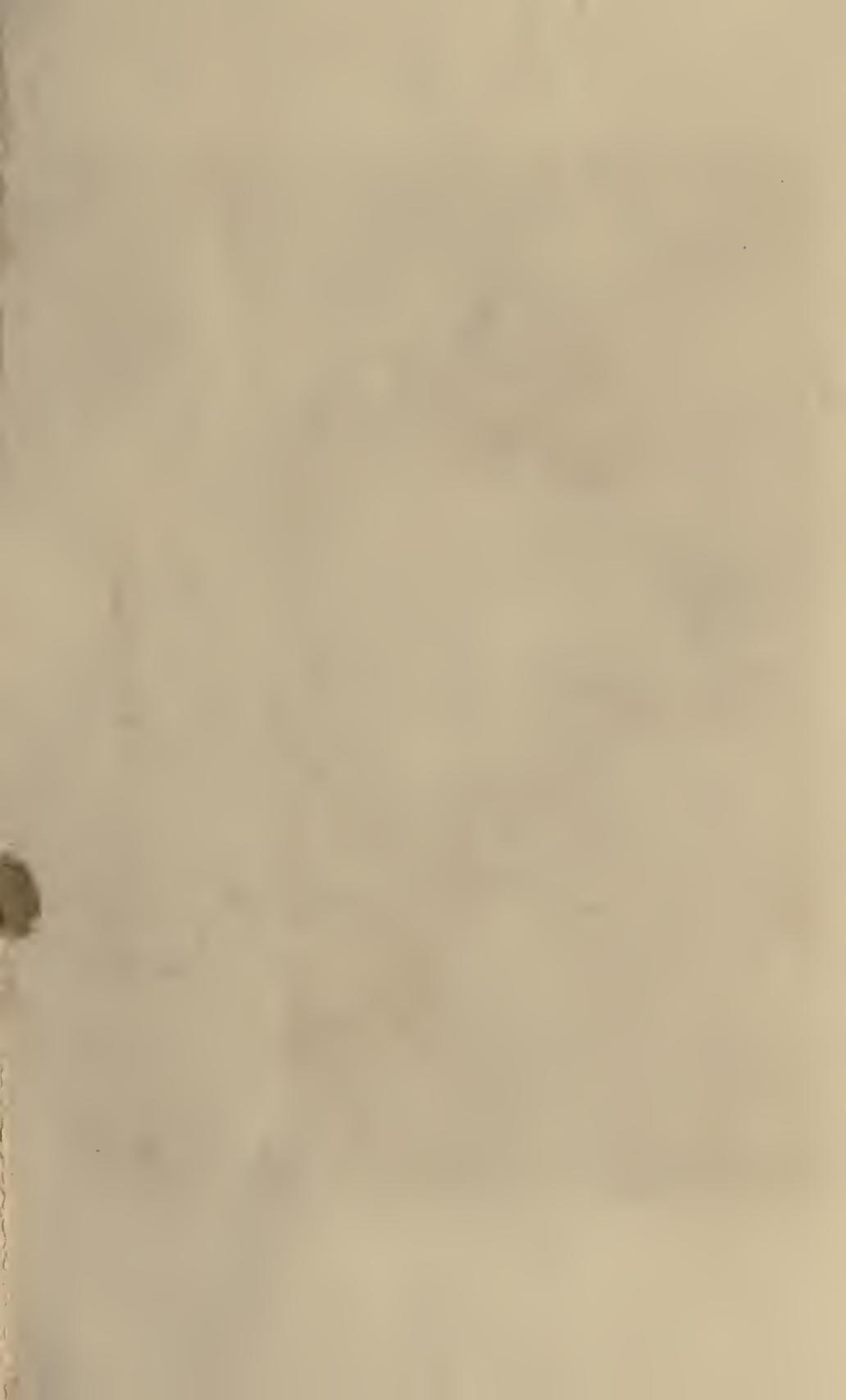


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The Emperor Keen Lung.

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H I S T O R Y

OF

C H I N A .

BY

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"ENGLAND AND RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA," "YAKOUB BEG OF KASHGAR,"
ETC. ETC.

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THE
HISTORY OF CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

THE EXPULSION OF THE MONGOLS.

Choo Yuen Chang.—His Origin and Early Career.—The Course of the Hoangho.—What Choo wished to accomplish.—His Policy.—Development of his Power.—The Public Weal.—Fangkue Chin.—A Mongol Success.—Chahan Timour.—Rival Generals.—Alouhiya.—Murder of Chahan.—Koukou.—Yunnan.—Mingyuchin.—Corea repudiates the Mongol Alliance.—Wang Jwan.—The Liberator.—Choo prepares to move.—His Opponents.—Advances on Pekin with Three Armies.—Suta.—Victories.—Capture of Pekin.—Flight of Emperor and his Court.—End of Mongol Dynasty.—Reflections.

THE prevailing disorders, which revealed the full extent of the people's misfortune,* attracted, among

* Among their principal causes of grievance was one relating to the Hoangho river, which, as Professor Douglas has said, may be truly styled, "China's sorrow." Two of Chunti's ministers proposed, in A.D. 1351, for reasons that are obscure, to alter the course of that river. Up to that time the Hoangho had emptied itself into the Yellow Sea, but its course was then diverted, at a point near where it entered the province of Kiangsu, into a

many others, into the ranks of those fighting under the national ensign a simple individual named Choo Yuen Chang.* Originally he had taken the vows of a

bed leading northwards to the Gulf of Pechihli. It was affirmed that this was its original course, and that its old bed could without much difficulty be rendered practicable. But the best opinions were adverse to the undertaking, and the accuracy of these optimist statements was denied. However, the Mongols were resolved to carry out their plan, and they did so, probably at the cost of much popular indignation. No reason has been suggested in explanation of the Mongol keenness on this point, but it probably was the desire to simplify the transport of troops from Peking to the south. We are indebted to the Père Gaubil for the following facts as to the course of the Hoangho. In the time of the Emperor Vouti of the Western Hans, it flowed into the Gulf of Pechihli. Later on it had two courses, one into the Gulf of Pechihli, and the other through Kiangsu into the Yellow Sea. Chintsong, of the Sung dynasty, closed the northern course, and thus it remained until the time of the Mongols. It now follows the more ancient course into the Gulf of Pechihli.—See Gaubil, “*Hist. des Mongous*,” p. 285; Pauthier, p. 374; Yule’s “*Marco Polo*,” vol. ii. p. 105–6. . . . The Hoangho was called by one of the earlier Emperors “China’s sorrow.”

* The following description of Choo is taken from the Abbé Delamarre’s translation of the Emperor Keen Lung’s history of the Ming dynasty (1ere partie, Paris 1865):—“The ancestors of this man, who came originally from Pui, thence migrated first to Kuyong, and ultimately to Sechow. His father, Chechen, first settled at Hiao, and then at Chongly, and his mother was named Chen. At the birth of Yuen Chang the room was several times filled with a bright light. He grew rapidly. He was gifted with a fine presence, and soon showed that he possessed great courage, a lofty mind, and that he entertained elevated views. When he was seventeen years of age the successive deaths of his father and mother left him an orphan, and without any means of supporting himself. He therefore took vows, and became a bonze in the temple of Hoangkiose. In the twelfth year of Chunti’s reign (A.D. 1345) he quitted this place to attach his fortunes to Ko Tschin (one of the rebel leaders), who, struck by his remarkable presence, not only took him into his band as a soldier, but made him his son-in-law. His choice was justified, for Yuen Chang proved victorious in every engagement. The year following this new departure he enlisted seven hundred men, whereupon Ko Tschin appointed him his lieutenant.” Ko Tschin died two years after this, leaving to Choo all the influence which he

priest, and entered a monastery; but now he cast aside his religious garb to follow the more congenial pursuits of a soldier. Enlisting as a private, his zeal and attention to his duties soon caught the eye of his commander. Raised to the rank of an officer, he speedily found occasion to show that in enterprise and personal valor he was equal to every emergency. His first feat was the capture of the town of Hoyan—an exploit in itself sufficiently creditable; but when he saved the inhabitants and their possessions from the rapacity of his ill-fed and badly-paid soldiers, he showed not only higher qualities, but also a truer perception of the necessities of the time than had yet been evinced by any other of the Chinese leaders. Choo was the first to inspire his countrymen with a belief in their capacity to substitute, without much trouble, a stable Government of their own in place of the decrepit and expiring dynasty of the Mongol. By proving that the maintenance of order and the preservation of life and property did not necessarily depend on the measures taken by the reigning Emperor, Choo dealt a most forcible blow to the reputation of the House of Genghis—in fact, the only blow still required to ensure its fall.

At first Choo had to content himself with a very subordinate part in the contest, for a claimant had been put forward to both the sympathy and the alle-

had acquired. It was at this period that Suta, his great general, attached himself firmly to his fortunes. It may be added that Mailla's account (vol. x. pp. 1-2) differs in some slight points from this.

giance of the Chinese people in the person of a youthful member, pretended or real, of the Sung family. The Mongol Court had always feared the dormant affection to that native house more than the innate love of independence in the hearts of the people; and now it concentrated all its force upon the work of crushing this particular movement. Its ends were attained. Army was sent after army to oppose this royal claimant and his general, Lieou Foutong; and, although the struggle proved stubborn, the Mongol authority was completely reasserted. In face of these successes, Chunti and his ministers conceived that they had every reason to congratulate themselves on a safe and satisfactory issue from the crisis. This hope was soon found to be delusive. They had in reality been wasting their strength and resources in grappling with what, in comparison with the increasing reputation and power of Choo, was a danger of very minor importance.

In A.D. 1356, Choo made himself master of the city of Nankin,* and thus obtained a hold on some of the wealthiest provinces in the country. His policy continued to be marked by the same moderation that had characterised the acts which first brought him into notice. He proclaimed that his sole wish, for the realisation of which he was prepared to spare neither his life nor any exertion whatever, was to restore to the people their lost independence, and to revive their ancient

* Then called Tsiking, altered by Choo to Yng-tien-foo, formerly Kianning.—Mailla, vol. ix. p. 619.

form of government.* The success which attended his military operations attracted to his side the young and the daring; but the stability of his position was rendered the more assured because the practical sense and the experience of the country were won over to his side by a fertility of resource equal to every difficulty, and by the prudence with which the fruits of victory were turned to the attainment of noble and praiseworthy objects. Almost before the Mongol Court realised the danger likely to arise from the operations of this particular leader, Choo had gathered into his hands the power and influence which enabled him to become its destroyer.†

From his post of vantage on the Yangtse, Choo succeeded in expelling the Mongol garrisons from most of the towns in Kiangsi, and, on their expulsion, in establishing an efficient form of administration of his own. The overthrow of the Mongols did not cause

* In a manifesto issued about this period, Choo appealed to the pride and most deeply rooted instincts of the Chinese. "It is the birth-right," he said, "of the Chinese to govern foreign peoples, and not of these latter to rule in China. It used to be said that the Yuen, or Mongols, who came from the regions of the north, conquered our empire, not so much by their courage and skill as by the aid of heaven. And now it is sufficiently plain that heaven itself wishes to deprive them of that empire as some punishment for their crimes, and for not having acted according to the teaching of their forefathers. . . . The time has now come to drive these foreigners out of China, and there is urgent need to choose Choo as the governor of the realm."—Pauthier, p. 376. This manifesto, which was largely circulated throughout the provinces, produced a great effect. The reference to the birth-right of China recalls the proud boast of Rome,

"Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."

† In the Chinese history Choo, afterwards Hongwou, is called the destroyer of the Mongol dynasty.

the friends of peace and order those doubts as to what would then ensue that nearly always suggest themselves at a time when the form of the existing institutions is undergoing a forcible change. But this confidence was only felt in those districts which were the scene of Choo's exploits.* Elsewhere, Chinese patriots were only an euphemism for Chinese brigands. Ravaged regions, sacked towns, and the usual horrors of war proclaimed throughout the rest of China that the Chinese and their Tartar conquerors had met in a last death-struggle out of which the one or the other must issue finally vanquished. The question briefly put was, whether the natives would tolerate any longer a foreign and a much-hated race as rulers.

The growth of Choo's power proved slow but sure, and the districts subjected by him did not throw off his authority. In the north, particularly in the provinces of Honan and Shansi, other leaders made indeed more rapid progress. One of these had seized the city of Kaifong, and others had carried their

* On one occasion an aged individual approached him at the head of a band of old men, and addressed him in the following words. Having praised his moderation, he "described the empire as being in a disturbed state, like a vast sea agitated by a violent storm. 'All the braves,' he said, 'who are striving to make themselves masters of the empire by the sword, appear to think of only a temporary interest, seeing that they ruin provinces which they have stripped of their inhabitants and their treasure, and that they increase the amount of misery under which we are already crushed. We surrender to you with pleasure because we hope that, as you conform with the wishes of heaven, you will gain over the affection of the people, and succeed in restoring peace to the empire.'"—Mailla, vol. ix. p. 616.

raids* through Leaoutung to the frontier of Corea; but they were all regarded with feelings more of apprehension than of love by the mass of the nation. Choo alone was considered to be working for the welfare of the people, and this reputation for sincerity and public spirit served to bring over to his side all those smaller leaders who could not hope to reach the highest place. Prominent among these was the pirate Fangkue Chin, whose naval exploits had exalted him to the rank of a national hero and made him a power for good or evil on the great river Kiang. In 1358 he sent an embassy to Choo, proposing an alliance for the emancipation of their country from the foreign yoke. He promised to place all his forces at the disposal of Choo, and in token of good faith sent one of his sons as hostage to Nankin.†

Choo again showed himself well able to turn the opportunity to the best advantage. Having entertained this mission in a becoming manner, he returned the son to his father, saying that where expressions of friendship were sincere, hostages would be unnecessary. Fangkue Chin appeared greatly touched by this act of magnanimous confidence, and sent Choo a short time afterwards a steed, magnificently caparisoned, with a saddle-cloth ornamented with pearls. But Choo refused to accept the gift. "I have no other passion," he said, "than to serve the Empire, and I ask only for skilful soldiers and ministers who

* During one of these they destroyed the Emperor's palace at Changtu.

† Mailla, vol. ix. p. 629.

may help me in my project. Corn, linen, and silk for the use of my soldiers are very necessary to me; jewels have neither value nor use." After this expression of Choo's designs, the understanding between him and Fangkue Chin was drawn more closely together, and their alliance became more firm. It was well that it was so, as elsewhere dissension prevailed in the Chinese camp, and no two other leaders were found to advocate the same policy and course of action.

The penalty of this want of union soon arrived; for in 1359 the Mongol general, Chahan Timour, recaptured Kaifong, and the Sung claimant, who had established his court there, barely escaped with his life and the relics of his force. Had Chunti possessed in any degree the capacity of the race from which he sprang, a turn in his favour might, even at this eleventh hour, have been given to the contest, and the authority of the Mongols might have been preserved north of the Kiang river. But Chunti's debaucheries continued, and Peking remained the scene of incessant intrigues. One plot in which the heir apparent took a prominent part failed by the merest chance, and its failure proved only the forerunner of others. In the field the absence of union was not less conspicuous than it was at the capital. Chahan Timour, the best and most skilful of the Emperor's generals, whose recapture of Kaifong afforded some solid hope for believing in a retrieval of affairs, was the pronounced rival of Polo Timour; and where the principal commanders set so pernicious an example, their lieutenants were not slow to do likewise. At this critical moment,

Alouhiya, a descendant of the Emperor Ogotai Khan, raised a considerable army in Mongolia for the purpose of, as he said, reviving the dignity of the Empire; but, however honourable his object, there can be no doubt that his pretensions constituted a grave peril to the Emperor Chunti, already sufficiently occupied and even embarrassed by the numerous hostile bands established within the heart of the realm. A body of troops hurriedly assembled and despatched to encounter Alouhiya, under a general named Toukien, was beaten with some loss, and compelled to find shelter in the ruined city of Changtu,* where Kublai had been wont to pass the greater portion of the year. From this peril Chunti was fortunately relieved by the capture of Alouhiya, who found that the integrity of his intentions with regard to the State was no excuse for taking up arms against the Emperor. There were those who counselled a policy of generous forbearance towards this energetic Mongol chieftain, but Chunti refused to be guided in this matter except by his own views. Alouhiya may have been either a misguided enthusiast or a shrewd critic of Mongol decay; but he was undoubtedly a rebel in Chunti's eyes. As such he was condemned to death.

The episode caused by Alouhiya's march out of Mongolia had hardly concluded, when the death of Chahan Timour caused fresh and serious embarrassment to the Emperor. In 1361, Chahan Timour had reduced the great province of Honan once more to its

* The Xanadu of the poet Coleridge.

allegiance to the Emperor, and during the late winter of the same year he had employed his victorious soldiers in the reconquest of Chantung. He had almost completed the latter task, when two of the rebel leaders, to whom he had not only accorded their lives, but also given them honourable posts of command, formed a plot to murder him. They succeeded only too well. Chahan Timour, with the confidence of a noble and fearless mind, trusted himself with a very small following into their power, when he was forthwith murdered in one of their tents. The loss of Chahan Timour proved irreparable. His adopted son Koukou exacted a fearful vengeance for this outrage, but, although he succeeded to his father's dignities, and, possessing some ability, took a not inconsiderable part in the later troubles, he could not hope, and was not able, to wield the same power as Chahan had exercised.

The year which beheld these events in Honan and Chantung, was also marked by a rebellion in Yunnan, where the shadow, if not the substance, of the authority established by Kublai and Uriangkadai a century before still existed. An officer named Mingyuchin had been sent thither by the Sung pretender for the purpose of stirring up the people; but although his efforts in this direction were far from having no result, he failed to maintain himself even against the weak garrison strengthened by reinforcements timely sent from Shensi. Baffled in Yunnan, Mingyuchin retired into Szchuen, where he met with better fortune, and for a short time maintained his authority in

that province—in fact, until he was overthrown by Choo.

One of the natural consequences of these internal troubles was a falling-off in the respect shown by the neighbouring states to the Emperor's authority. The people and governing family of Corea, although loving their independence, had up to this obeyed without demur the edicts of the Mongol ruler; but in 1362 Chunti unwisely sanctioned an arbitrary interference in their home affairs. Some relations of his wife, the Empress Ki, who was of Corean birth, murdered in that year the reigning king, but, far from punishing the criminals, Chunti appointed a new king of their choice. Tasutumor, such was his name, left Peking for his new kingdom, with a Mongol general and an army of 10,000 men, oblivious of the storm which his nomination had aroused. The Coreans resolved not to accept this nominee of Peking, and assembling in their thousands on the Yaloo river, under the leadership of Wang Jwan, their popular chief, inflicted so severe a defeat there on the Emperor's army, that only seventeen men escaped to tell the tale of their disaster. Such was the closing act of the Mongol dynasty in regard to its relations with the kingdom of Corea and its brave, independent people.*

It was not until the year 1366, when Chunti's incapacity had alienated the sympathy of his own followers, and when the dissensions in the ranks of the Mongols themselves had produced distrust and

* See Mailla, vol. ix. p. 641; and Ross's "Corea," p. 268.

suspicion on all sides, that Choo resolved to commence the war for the expulsion of the foreign rulers. Up to this point he had maintained and extended his authority without coming into contact with the power of the Emperor, and chiefly by quietly substituting his administration in districts which had been lost to the Mongols. But the end before him was the same as with the most pronounced of their enemies; he alone knew how best it could be attained. The difficulties which he had to overcome before he felt ready to grapple with the forces of Peking were far from being few or trivial. A rival leader in the southern provinces, Changsse Ching, who represented the hopes of a numerous and desperate band of adventurers, threatened his position in the rear, and the dispersion of this faction was the essential preliminary to any operations north of the Yangtsekiang. Having accomplished this task, Choo found himself brought face to face with a new and unexpected difficulty in the momentary defection of his ally, the piratical leader Fangkue Chin. This personage had not been as sincere in his protestations of friendship and zeal as had at the time appeared to be the case. Personal pique led him to break away from the alliance with Choo, and to enter into another arrangement with Koukou, the adopted son of Chahan Timour, who, after taking a certain part in the affairs of Peking, had been dismissed by Chunti from all his employments, and was now a desperate and a dangerous man, striving to realise a second fortune out of the troubles of the time. The promptness of Choo's measures foiled the

plans of his enemies. Before they could draw their strength to a head, Choo's generals were in possession of Fangkue Chin's cities, and that chief had been compelled to seek safety in an island of the sea. Seeing the hopelessness of the cause, Fangkue Chin threw himself on the generosity of his conqueror, and sank into obscurity at Choo's court. With the removal of these perils, Choo was left free to concentrate all his attention and forces on his forthcoming struggle with the Mongols.

In 1366, therefore, Choo gave orders to his troops to prepare for a general campaign, and at the same time issued a proclamation to the Chinese people telling them that the hour had arrived for casting off the foreign yoke which had pressed heavily upon them for almost a hundred years. The proclamation was calculated to inspire the people with courage, and the effect of Choo's eloquence was made complete by the sight of his well-drilled and well-led soldiers. Three armies left Nankin at the same time, each charged with a distinct mission. The two first were instructed to subdue the three provinces of Fuhkien, Kwangsi, and Kwantung. The notice of their approach, the mere sight of their banners, sufficed to attain the object of these corps. In the course of a few weeks the authority of the Mongols had been swept away for ever from three of the great provinces of the empire. The people hailed the name of their deliverer with acclamations of joy, and many hastened to swell the ranks of the army to which had been entrusted the more difficult task of

reconquering the northern provinces. Of the fate of the Mongol garrisons in the south history has left no record, a silence which by many will be considered more expressive than words.

Meanwhile, the third or great army, numbering 250,000 men, and consisting mostly of cavalry, was in full march for the northern capital. Choo did not at first place himself at the head of this force, as his own warlike disposition undoubtedly prompted him to do, but he entrusted it to his favourite general Suta,* who showed a skill and an aptitude for command that fully justified his leader's selection. In the autumn of the year 1367 Suta crossed the Hoangho and advanced in the direction of Peking. Very little resistance was offered; and the Mongol garrisons, discouraged by a long succession of reverses, retreated

* The following description of Suta's campaign is summarised from Keen Lung's "History of the Mings," already quoted. In 1367-68 Choo ordered Suta to march on Peking, and on the eve of his departure addressed him in words to the following effect:—"The inhabitants of the heart of the empire have long suffered greatly at the hands of numerous parties of marauders. I am sending you, General, therefore, to carry your arms into the north, in order that you may deliver the people from, so to speak, the ravages of fire and water. Heaven has abandoned the Mongols. If the princes are guilty, the people are innocent." He then enjoined on Suta the necessity of moderation. The Mongol leaders were to be promised their lives, and no prisoners were to be executed. Suta at once set out to perform his mission, and after a rapid march appeared before the gates of Peking, where all was confusion. Chunti was panic-stricken at the approach of his enemies, and turned a deaf ear to the bold advice of those who exhorted him to fight for his possessions to the last. He fled from Peking by the northern gate the night before the capture of his city. Suta employed his victory with moderation. No outrages were committed, and none of the Mongols were slain save those who fell in fair fight.

on the approach of the national army. One officer, bolder than the rest, attempted to effect a diversion from the side of Tunkwan; but his scheme, though ably conceived, failed in the execution. After this no further opposition was encountered until the province of Pechibli had been entered, and by that time the result of the campaign being more or less assured, Choo set out from Nankin to place himself at the head of his troops. At Tongchow, Pouyen Timour made a vigorous defence, but the town was forced to surrender, and the commandant either died of his wounds or committed suicide. A few days later Peking, whence Chunti* had fled, was carried by storm in face of the desperate resistance of a small portion of the Mongol army. These gallant defenders of the imperial city, headed by Timour Pouhoa and several of the civilian ministers, were cut down to the last man. The enterprise of Choo was virtually crowned with success by the capture of Peking and the flight of Chunti. The war with the expelled Mongols still went on, but China was then emancipated from the Tartar yoke. The description of these later campaigns belongs to the reign of Hongwou, not to the career of the adventurer Choo Yuen Chang.

The expulsion of the Mongols from China, after they had exercised supreme authority in it for almost a century, marks the close of the history of that remarkable people as a great national power. After the

* Chunti died at Yngchungfoo, in Southern Mongolia, in 1370, aged 52.—Mailla, vol. ix. p. 657.

death of Kublai their decay proved rapid. Not one of his descendants or successors seemed capable of reviving the earlier glories of the family. Possessing, almost to the end of their struggle with the numerous champions of Chinese liberty, the best army in the country, their own divisions and incapacity as rulers prevented their turning this superiority to any advantage. They also showed, by their indifference to the growing power of Choo, an inability to realise the situation, which would alone convict them of grave short-sightedness. While a formidable military power was being formed at their very doors, they remained inactive, or, still worse, they further enfeebled themselves by indulging personal rivalries and petty ambitions. The last page in the history of Mongol power in China is unworthy of its mighty past. At the very moment when the conqueror was being vanquished by the conquered, the great Timour,* descendant in the sixth degree of Genghis, was about to begin in Western Asia that marvellous career of triumph which emulated if it could not surpass that of the greatest of the Mongols. This fact makes it clear that the old Mongol spirit was not yet extinct, but it had certainly departed from that section of the family which had established itself in China.

With the fall of the Mongols a brighter era began for the Chinese, whose aspirations had been repressed

* Timour, at a later date, even thought of adding the reconquest of China to his other triumphs. Orders were issued at Samarcand for the collection of a large army for that purpose, and its march eastward began; but the plan was abandoned owing to the death of the great conqueror.

under a foreign rule, and the qualities shown by Choo during those years when he was moulding the national will to his purpose did not, fortunately, become less conspicuous after he mounted the throne, as the first of the Mings by the style of Hongwou. It was generally felt that a more auspicious epoch was on the point of commencing, and that the ancient glories of China were about to be revived in the form most agreeable and palatable to the nation. The incubus of a foreign domination had been cast off, and a great people could rejoice in the prospect raised by so satisfactory an achievement. The advent of the Mings to power was effected in the way most calculated to ensure the durability of their tenure, and the affection of the people was commanded by their new prince having conferred upon them the greatest of all the benefits which can be rendered by individuals to communities.

CHAPTER II.

THE REIGN OF HONGWOU.

Hongwou's Position.—His first Proclamations.—His Policy.—Chinese Characteristics.—The Military Class.—A Man of Peace.—The Duties of a Chinese Ruler.—Chinese Literature.—The History of the Previous Dynasty.—“*An Oppressed People eventually Revolt.*”—Public Schools.—The Hanlin College.—Patronage of Letters.—The Pandects of Yunglo.—Gratuitous Education.—Public Libraries.—Cheap Books.—The Sick and the Poor.—Suta's Campaigns in Shansi, Shensi, and Kansuh.—Lissechi.—Kuku Timour.—Protracted Campaigns.—Capture of Fongtsiang.—Suta's grasp of the Situation.—Surrender of Lissechi.—Ninghia.—Kinglyang.—Its Siege.—Kuku Timour again.—Changsanchin's Defence.—Chang Hundred Thousand.—Lanchefoo.—Its Siege by the Mongols.—A gallant Officer.—The Western Gates of the Great Wall.—Signal Defeat of Kuku Timour.—The Pacification of the North-West.—Yngchang.—Maitilipala.—Hongwou on the Yuen Dynasty.—His Advice to his Generals.—A Famine.—Salt.—Mongol Colonies.—Leaoutung.—Nahachu.—Spots on the Sun.—Szchuen.—Yunnan.—King of Hia.—Minchen.—Subjection of Szchuen.—Desperate War in the Desert.—Fuyuta.—Maitilipala's Return.—Death of Kuku Timour.—Death of Suta.—Sketch of his Career.—Nahachu again.—Conquest of Yunnan.—China and Corea.—A Crisis in that Peninsula.—Rebellion in Yunnan.—THE CHINESE SYSTEM AGAINST REBELS.—The Last of Nahachu.—Population of the Country.—The Japanese.—Hongwou's Will.—Death and Character.—His Work.

WITH the capture of Peking, and the despatch of an army into the north-west, under the command of his able general Suta, Hongwou had the leisure to take

a careful survey of his position. The Mongols were then in full retreat for their northern solitudes, but the situation was still pregnant with difficulty. In this events were but following the usual course of human affairs; for it has been often demonstrated how much easier it is to destroy than to create. To expel the foreigner and revive a form of national government was a task which appealed generally to the good-will and support of the nation; but it by no means followed that the endeavour to place Hongwou on the throne would meet with the same support, or attain a similar degree of success. The first years after the storming of Pekin were, therefore, passed by Hongwou in considerable anxiety, but the prudence which had marked all his proceedings when in a minor capacity continued to characterise his acts as supreme ruler. He began his career by attaining a great and striking success, and he showed how deserving he was of the great prize he had won by his subsequent wisdom and moderation.

The first proclamations he issued were those in honour of his parents and ancestors, which attract and receive the approval of the Chinese. Having indulged his own personal feelings and gratified the popular sentiment, Hongwou next turned his attention to reward those who had so far assisted him in his enterprise. The generals were recompensed with titles and pecuniary grants for their faithful service; but as these favours would have been conferred by the most ordinary of princes, Hongwou resolved to show the exceptional nature of his own talents by the bestowal of a peculiar

distinction. In the year 1369, the first of his reign, he erected at Peking a temple,* or hall, in which statues were placed in honour of those of his generals who had been slain, whilst vacant places were left for those who still survived the chances of the long war of independence.

Hongwou was much too prudent a man, and too thoroughly acquainted with the idiosyncrasies of his countrymen, to make his army the sole prop of his power and the basis of his authority. The utility of possessing a highly efficient and trustworthy body of troops was incontestable, and Hongwou was happy and secure in the possession. But in China it is necessary to stability of authority that, in addition to the power of the sword, there shall be the expressed approval of the national mind. The force of public opinion is on cherished points irresistible from the unanimity of a great and multitudinous race; and Hongwou showed marked skill, not only in appreciating the drift of his people's minds, but in flattering the ideas which influenced their opinion. In a country composed exclusively of civilians,† the new

* Delamarre's translation of the Emperor Keen Lung's "History of the Mings," vol. i. p. 16. In this invaluable work copious details, not procurable elsewhere, will be found about Hongwou and his immediate successors. The names of the generals—twenty-eight in all—are given, and among them Suta occupies the first place. In this decree of Hongwou may be seen the origin of the celebrated Hall of Generals, which is still maintained at Peking.

† Napoleon's dictum of the English being "a nation of shopkeepers," might be more correctly applied to the Chinese. The pretensions of the Government are framed on a large scale, and necessitate the maintenance of a strong standing army; but the views of the people are essentially pacific and averse to war.

ruler saw how fatal a mistake it would be to unduly exalt the military class. The Mongols had committed that blunder, or rather it formed the distinguishing feature of their system, and consequently their rule never did, and probably never could, contain the elements of durability. It was as possible for Hongwou as, perhaps, it was personally satisfactory to him, to reverse this system; and, while he kept several armies employed in the national war, he took every pains to impress upon his new subjects the fact that he was a man of peace, who believed that the national glory could be best advanced by promoting the welfare of the people. In China there are three principal ways of bringing these views home to the public mind. They are, firstly, by encouraging learning and by rewarding those who have shown proficiency in the study of the classical writers; secondly, by a pure and impartial administration of justice through the provincial governors; and, thirdly, by the imposition of moderate and fairly distributed taxes, and also by a benevolent attention to the local wants of the people, who, scattered over an enormous extent of country, and living under every variety of climate, are frequently visited with all the horrors due to drought, famine, and pestilence. The key to Hongwou's reign will be furnished by the manner in which he discharged the duties, thus defined, of a Chinese ruler.

The Mongols, although Kublai himself had set a wiser example, took but scant interest in the literature of the country; partly, perhaps, because they suffered from the obtuseness of "barbarians" to understand

or appreciate the beauties of a southern tongue, and also, no doubt, because the supremacy of letters was an idea totally foreign to their system. The wisdom of Kublai had imposed some fetters on their savage inclination; but with his death the inclination to patronise the classics of China passed away from his unworthy successors. There remained, therefore, to Hongwou the possibility of securing a great amount of popular applause by instituting steps both for the encouragement of learning, and also to promote the steady, if gradual, elevation of the literary classes. His first acts showed that he fully appreciated the opportunity, and they were guided by an excellence of judgment seldom shown by mortals in the shaping of even their own affairs. Much of the State resources had been turned aside from their legitimate objects by the later Emperors of the previous dynasty, to be devoted to purposes of personal indulgence, or for the maintenance of an unnecessary and foolish splendour. Hongwou's first measure was to stop every outlay that might come under the charge of extravagance, and to devote the public money to objects that might be fairly included in the category of national requirements. Not content with stopping the imprudent outlay which had marked the decline of Mongol power, he even went so far as to destroy some of the costly palaces* which had been constructed out

* On this point Mailla (vol. x. p. 20) may be quoted. "The Mongols had constructed a palace at Pekin, in the middle of which a lofty and very costly tower of singularly elegant proportions had been erected; and at its foot were to be seen two statues which at every hour of the day sounded a bell and struck a drum.

of Chinese money to testify to the magnificence of the House of Genghis. In this extreme step we may see the working quite as much of a shrewd judgment, and of a close acquaintance with the character of his countrymen, as of the spirit of an iconoclast. Hongwou's conduct was based on the best models, and could not fail to secure the national applause. When he remarked that "the Mongols should have devoted themselves to satisfying the wants of the people, and not to their own amusements," he was well aware that he was appealing to sentiments cherished by the Chinese from their childhood, and ingrained into the national character by centuries of common association, as well as of a high standard of cultivated intelligence.

In the true spirit of the founder of a new family, one of Hongwou's first acts was to entrust to a literary commission the task of writing the history* of the

Hongwou had one day the curiosity to pay the building a visit with a large number of his courtiers; and when he had examined this marvellous work for some time in silence, he remarked in a penetrating tone of voice, 'How is it possible for men to neglect the most important affairs of life, for the sole object of devoting their attention to magnificent (and useless) buildings? To do so, does it not convey a very poor opinion of oneself? If the Mongols, in place of amusing themselves with these trifles, had applied their energies to the task of contenting the people, would they not have preserved the sceptre in their family?' Thereupon turning round to some of his courtiers, he said, 'I order you to raze this tower with the ground, and to leave it so that there shall be no trace left of its existence.'

* This was always done with the most remarkable impartiality. The historians worked in conclave, and after years of unceasing labour, placed the result of their toil, when completed, at the feet of the sovereign. On this occasion Hongwou appointed a censor and a controller with a staff of sixteen men of letters, who were empowered to collect evidence from such of the Mongol officials as remained (Delamarre). One of these witnesses, on being asked

preceding dynasty. This was the usual formal notification of the fact that one epoch had closed and that another was about to commence in the national annals. Having passed this decree, which was so emphatically sanctioned by custom that it had come to be regarded almost as binding as a religious rite, Hongwou founded a school for the sons of the greater officials; and to give it a claim to the high consideration it might otherwise have needed, he sent his own sons to be educated there. Nor did his measures for the advancement of learning and for the development of the national mind stop here. They reached their culminating point in two works of the highest magnitude, the restoration of the celebrated Hanlin College,* and the codification and revision of the great book of laws.

The Hanlin College had first come into being, or, at all events, acquired definite form, under the wise and beneficent influence of the great Taitson. That prince had given stability to his authority by the patronage he extended to the learned classes, but his main object

what was the cause of the fall of the Mongols, replied, "The Mongols have possessed the empire; they gained it by their clemency, and they also lost it through their clemency." "But," replied the Emperor, "I have always understood that clemency gained the hearts of the people, and I never heard that it caused them to be lost; for just as a too precipitate movement results in our falling, or as the string of a bow stretched too far will break, so will an oppressed people eventually revolt. Those who are in authority should, therefore, be careful to show clemency."

* An interesting account of this venerable institution—of which the great reputation, and also the miserable present condition, depict so well the strange contradictions that exist side by side in China—is given in Dr. W. A. P. Martin's "Hanlin Papers," New York, 1880.

had been to elevate the taste and mould the style of Chinese writers. With that object in view, he founded the Chinese Academy; and so completely did he attain the purpose he had before him, that the standard of poetical elegance achieved and laid down by the poets of his day remains the standard still. The verses of Keen Lung, which furnished a theme for the admiration of Voltaire, were based on precisely the same lines as those observed by the poets of Taitson's reign, although they may exhibit graces to which the older writers had no claim. Having been started on the high road to success by the bounty of the great sovereign of the Tangs, the Hanlin College flourished on the munificence of those who came after him. In this instance, as in much else, each succeeding dynasty strove not to undo, but to perpetuate the work of its predecessor. The Sung and the Kins continued to show favour to the great institution that embraced within its wide-reaching folds the literature of the country; and one of the proofs of Kublai's capacity to rule the Chinese was that no sooner had he made himself master of the old Kin capital than he assigned as the abode of the Hanlin doctors one of the most costly and pleasantly situated of the palaces of the conquered. What Kublai had done as a matter of policy, Hongwou confirmed, and continued as a question of natural attachment and national predilection. To him the Hanlin represented an institution intimately associated with the dawn of China's greatness. True it is that it had no claims to go back to that vaguely known period of perfection when the

constitution of the country had its origin; nor had it been handed down as a remote tradition, with not only its original merits, but also with all the accumulated imperfections caused by the dangers, difficulties, and responsibilities of centuries. But it was closely connected with the period when China took her place, not only as the most powerful empire in Asia—she had done that eight centuries and a half before—but as unquestionably the most polished nation in the world since the time when Plato wrote the great truths of his master for a limited Athenian community, or, at all events, since the Augustan era of Roman literature.

And Hongwou was open to all these influences. A visit to the Hanlin College inspired him with the genius of the place, and he felt a national as well as a personal pride in reversing the neglect which Kublai's unworthy descendants had latterly extended to this monument of China's fame. Both at Peking, and also at Nankin,*—the favoured city of the earlier Mings—he granted favourable sites for the buildings necessary for the accommodation of its members, and extended to them all the assistance and material support which

* As we have said in the course of the description of Hongwou's earlier career, it was at Nankin that he first gathered round him the nucleus of a regular power and that he laid the seed of his future government. So it was only natural that, as all previous dynasties had had two capitals for their extensive dominions, he should select Nankin as one of his, and that to a great degree it should be a more favoured city than the northern town, associated as it was with foreign triumph from the facts of the Kin and Mongol dominations. At a later stage of the account of the Mings, we shall have more to say on this subject.

contributed to maintain the supremacy of its professors among the literary classes of China.

Hongwou's next great work, and one also which still endures, was the codification of the Book of Laws, the Pandects of Yunglo as it has been called. By this act he not only gave definite form and substance to the regulations by means of which society was kept together in China, but he also placed some further hindrance in the way of those who might seek to tyrannise over the people in districts remote from the central authority. By recording in a clear and unequivocal form the statutes of the empire—a work of immense labour, seeing that they emanated from a considerable number of different systems and opposite customs—Hongwou earned a claim to his subjects' gratitude, not merely because he thereby completed a national monument, but principally because he ensured by it just government and that immunity from official oppression which we have stated to be one of the three essentials to the popularity or stability of any administration in China. Hongwou was careful to do the thing that was not only just and true for all ages, but that which was likely to receive popular approval for the time being.

Nor did his efforts for the benefit of the country show symptoms of exhaustion with the accomplishment of these two grand schemes, which might be set down by the cynicism of sceptical critics to human vanity as much as to the benevolent desire of a paternal ruler. By one of the first edicts of his reign he had revived the ancient law of gratuitous

national education. Under the Mongols the schools which used to exist in every town of any pretension had been allowed to fall into decay. They were now restored, and schoolmasters, properly qualified, were appointed to their charge, under the immediate supervision of the Emperor* himself; and in order to place learning before the masses in her most attractive form, he caused public libraries, with books supplied from the capital or at the expense of the Exchequer, to be placed in all the provincial capitals and larger towns. Indeed, it was his ambition that every village throughout the country should possess its library,† but in this it was not possible for him to attain the full success he desired. He had perforce to rest satisfied with having placed at the disposal of a vast number of his subjects a ready means of self-instruction, and a source of pleasant occupation which they had never enjoyed at any previous epoch.

* He said, "I will myself select the masters for these schools, and I will make it my business to choose the most suitable men. The national education has ever been regarded by good emperors as one of the most essential points which claim their particular attention. I wish to imitate the wise rulers of the past in this matter, and I will, therefore, do anything in my power to supply my subjects with the means of education, and with all the assistance which may enable them to make use of those means."—Pauthier, vol. i. p. 394.

† Libraries in China have suffered from the neglect which has fallen over most of the national monuments since the death of the fourth Manchu Emperor Keen Lung at the end of the last century, and very few now remain. Even the celebrated Imperial Library at Peking has suffered in common with those of less note and importance. There are at this time no general libraries or reading-rooms throughout the country; but, as M. Huc has observed, books can be bought in China at a lower price than in any other country, and thus the evil is to some extent remedied.

Hongwou's care for his people was not confined to their mental wants; it extended to the corporal necessities common to mankind. By sumptuary laws he had put down the extravagance of his Court, and the sums which previous rulers had wasted on personal indulgence were devoted by him to the alleviation of his people's requirements. Acting on the ancient and widely recognised principle that the aged and the orphan have peculiar claims on the State, which demands from all alike ungrudging assistance and service, Hongwou impressed upon his officials the duty of attending to the wants of the poor and the weak. It would be saying too much to assert that Hongwou was the founder of orphanages and hospitals in China, but the peremptory instructions* he gave his subordinates before despatching them to their posts in the provinces, probably, accomplished the same benevolent objects. While he was on the throne the poor and the sick could feel sure of receiving from the authorities the amount of food, or other assistance, necessary for their support.

And the credit of this Prince was the greater, because the years which beheld the inception of these plans were marked by wars of which the bitterness and severity were undoubted, if the result continued one of uniform triumph for Hongwou. The people

* "Take particular care," he said, "of the aged and the orphan; give them all the support which will be within your power to afford; and look upon the former as if they were your own parents, and on the latter as if they were your children."—Pauthier, vol. i. p. 397.

in the more remote districts had not yet acquired the habit of obedience to the new ruler, and so long as doubt was justifiable as to the future of the Mings, there was some reason for those who thought that the national interests might be promoted without any formal recognition of their dynasty. The Mongol, moreover, was still formidable on the north-west frontier; and while Hongwou was actively engaged in the restoration of the central authority and administration, his general Suta was not less energetically employed in the difficult and dangerous tasks of driving out the relics of their late conquerors, and of firmly establishing the imperial authority on the western borders.

Suta's campaigns, which form the most stirring episode in Hongwou's reign, extended over a period of almost twenty* years from his first invasion of Shansi to his defeat of the Mongol general, Arpouha, a few months before his death. The invasion of Shansi was accomplished with such ease that it encouraged the Mings to delay no longer than was absolutely necessary in commencing operations against the provinces of Shensi and Kansuh, and the adjoining districts, where the warriors of the desert, again brought face to face with the necessity and penury which had made them conquerors, might recover their old audacity and proficiency in the science of arms. The Emperor resolved to strike quickly and vigorously at the scattered bands of his beaten and

* A.D. 1368 to A.D. 1385.

discouraged foe before fresh courage and confidence should return.

In the province of Shensi, Lissechi, a general of the Mongols, still maintained an independence, which he evidently hoped might endure. Lissechi aspired to place his state in the path of the Chinese as a barrier against their further aggression, but neither Hongwou nor Suta was disposed to grant him the time necessary to the success of his plans. A brother general, Kuku Timour, had nursed a similar ambition in Shansi, but his ambition had dissolved with his power at the first contact with the vindicators of their country. And now it had come to Lissechi's turn to encounter the same foe under circumstances not more favourable to his prospects, and there was no reason for anticipating that the result in his case would be different or less promptly attained. The military superiority of the Chinese army over the disheartened fragments of the Mongol forces was turned to the greatest advantage by the tactical ability of the general Suta, and the issue was never left in doubt.

The bend of the great river Hoangho* forms a complete barrier between the two provinces of Shansi and

* The Hoangho or Yellow River rises at a place called Sing-Suh-hae in Northern Tibet. Passing through Tcharing and Oring Nors, its course is generally east by north until it enters Kansuh, when it takes a more northerly direction. It stretches beyond that province into the desert, and forms a loop round the steppe occupied by the Ordus tribes; and then flowing south separates Shensi and Shansi until it reaches the Hoeiho. It then flows due east towards the sea. We have no exact knowledge of any roads leading from the east to the west in this quarter, or of any passage across the Hoangho, although both probably exist. The length of the Hoangho is 2,600 miles.

Shensi. Lissechi rejoiced in the possession of this defence, and imagined that Suta would experience great difficulty in overcoming it. With such confidence did the broad stream of the Hoangho inspire some of the Mongol leaders, that several of them sought to carry the war back into the country just subdued by the Mings. The idea may have been bold, but the scheme was not feasible. Esu, an ex-minister of the Yuens, collected a small band, and attempted to make a diversion against Pet-pin, a fortified place of some importance on the Pet-ho river. But the commandant of a neighbouring garrison threw himself into the threatened town, and the craftiness of his counsels proved of as much avail as the presence of an army; for when he found that his soldiers* were few in numbers compared with the troops brought against him by Esu, he resorted to one of those stratagems of which the very simplicity has often sufficed from the earliest days of history to baffle the wisdom of a foe. He collected all the junks in the place, and, planting red banners at their mast-heads, bade his soldiers, on the approach of the enemy, strike up with all possible vigour on their trumpets and drums. Esu, seeing this numerous flotilla, and inferring from what he heard the strength of the Chinese army, only stayed to gaze in disappointment on the city which he had hoped to surprise, and then beat a hasty and disorderly retreat.

In the meanwhile, Suta had completed his pre-

* See Delamarre's work, p. 18.

parations and crossed the Hoangho with an army accustomed to victory. Lissechi did not so much as attempt any resistance, nor does he appear to have possessed the capacity to improvise a stubborn defence out of means which might, in more capable hands, have proved sufficient. The town of Tsin-yuen, where Lissechi had taken up his residence and where he had expressed an intention to make a stand, surrendered without a blow on the approach of Suta's forces, and the pusillanimous leader, after a moment's hesitation as to the wisdom of making a timely and discreet submission, fled to prolong his hour of independence. It was only with diminished courage and weakened forces* that Lissechi succeeded in finding shelter behind the walls of Fongtsiang. The town of Koankia-tong, a place of some importance, had been entrusted to the charge of a brave Mongol officer named Sankocheli, whose sole thought in the hour of danger was how he might best defend the trust reposed to him. His fortitude rendered the concentration of the Chinese army necessary for this siege, and Suta had to devote all his energy to the task. Superior numbers soon decided the day, and Sankocheli brought a gallant defence to a conclusion by

* Several of Lissechi's officers were either taken prisoners or slain by the peasants, who appear to have risen to greet the arrival of the national army. The former were mostly executed by order of Suta—an act so little in consonance with the generous forbearance which marked the conduct both of this general, and of his master Hongwou, that we must in fairness assume that there were special circumstances in this case to render the punishment necessary.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 26.

committing suicide after he had immolated his family on the altar of military honour and devotion.

Suta, when this siege was over, sent his advanced guard against Fongtsiang, where Lissechi had taken refuge, and with it went also a special emissary charged with a letter from the Emperor to Lissechi promising him pardon and oblivion for the past should he submit. But the Mongol had not yet made up his mind to resign the game as lost, although he remained irresolute as ever to tempt the fortune of war. On the approach of the Ming army, he fled to Lintao,* and Fongtsiang forthwith opened its gates. The flight of Lissechi into Kansuh closed this portion of the campaign in Shensi. There remained to Suta the necessity of deciding whether he would continue his operations against Lissechi until they had resulted in his capture, or whether he would turn aside from his main enterprise and prosecute the war with the other hostile forces which still contested portions of Shensi against the imperial arms.

At a council of war held for the purpose of deciding what steps should next be taken, opinions were divided between those who proposed to continue the pursuit of Lissechi, and those who advocated leaving him for the moment undisturbed, while all their energies were directed against those of the Mongol leaders who had not yet suffered defeat. The latter were the more numerous. But councils of war are proverbially over-cautious, and Suta fortunately saw

* Lintao in Kansuh, about two hundred miles north-west of Fongtsiang, is also situated on the great high road to the west.

through the fallacy of his lieutenants' arguments. In a masterly manner,* he explained the advantages that would accrue to them from an immediate advance on Lintao and from the prompt capture of Lissechi. Nor did Suta delay in the execution of his design. Having come to a prompt and vigorous decision in striking contrast with the indecision and suggestion of half-measures that found favour and approval with his council of war, Suta's orders for a forward movement on the part of his main force were clear and emphatic. In a few days his cavalry had pressed on to Ningyuen, while his infantry had occupied in succession Long, Tsinchow, and Foukiang. Kongchang† shared the fate of Ningyuen, and then, by a rapid advance, his cavalry appeared before the walls of Lintao, where Lissechi had made no preparations for holding out. In this evil plight his old irresolution returned, and, as the situation appeared desperate, he placed himself, without striking a blow, in the hands of his enemy.

* The opposite scheme proposed was to lay siege to Kingyang, a place in the eastern part of Kansuh, and situated on the Kin Ho, due north of Fongtsiang. It had been put into a position to withstand a siege, and was garrisoned by a strong force under the command of Chang Leangchen. Suta's reply was as follows: "I do not agree with you for these reasons. The town of Kingyang is difficult of approach; its garrison is brave and accustomed to war; it would be difficult to capture it. On the other hand Lintao is shut in on the west by the nation of the Kiangtong, and on the north by the Hoangho. By its capture we might expect to recruit our ranks from its population, and its resources would greatly contribute to our supplies. By pressing him with our main army, if he do not flee to the west, Lissechi will have forthwith to surrender without striking a blow. Lintao occupied, what will the neighbouring towns be able to do against us?"—Delamarre, pp. 19, 20.

† These places are all situated on the main road between Fongtsiang and Lintao. Long is in Shensi, the rest are in Kansuh.

He was sent to the capital, where Hongwou spared his life and gave him a small but honourable employment.

The surrender of Lissechi and the capture of Lintao were naturally followed by the voluntary adhesion of many of the western cities to the cause of the Mings; but, although the results of these campaigns were all satisfactory and far from few, Suta's task still remained little more than half accomplished. The main body of the Mongols, with their fugitive Emperor, had taken up their residence at Ninghia, a town situated on the further side of the Hoangho near the verge of the Gobi desert, and advantageously placed in many ways for the purposes of men who had lost a great possession, but who yet aspired to recover it. At Ninghia the Mongols stood on the threshold of their former renown and greatness. With it in their hands, the hope of regaining what they had lost might still be indulged; but with Ninghia gone, there would be no alternative to returning into the desert and again sinking into the insignificant position of a nomad and unsettled race. The interest and importance of the following campaign resolve themselves, therefore, into the question of the possession of Ninghia.*

It has been seen that counsels were divided in Suta's

* Ninghia is situated in the extreme north of Kansuh, and on the western bank of the Hoangho. It was known as Chunsing, or Chunking, in the days of Genghis, and was famous as the capital of Tangut; at a later period it was renowned for its breed of mules and for its carpets. But Ninghia shares with Haylar, among places of political importance in China, the position of being the least known to modern geographers. Ninghia was, and is, one of the principal gates in the Great Wall.

camp between an attack on Lintao and on Kingyang ; but when the former had been taken, the next enterprise that suggested itself to Hongwou's commander was naturally the siege of the latter place. The Mongol Changsetao had been in command there, but, after Lissechi's overthrow, he hastened to Ninghia to procure reinforcements, leaving a small garrison under his brother Changsanchin to hold Kingyang against the Mings. Changsanchin, left to his own resources, became so unnerved by the greatness of the danger which threatened him, that he sent a messenger to Suta to say that he held Kingyang at his disposal, or he may have thought to better his chances of defence by a simulated surrender. Suta placed little confidence in the good faith of the Mongol, but sent a strong force under the command of his lieutenant Tangho to occupy the town. Changsanchin either recovered his courage, or had been playing a part throughout. Tangho arrived only to find the gates closed against him, and the town well prepared to stand a siege. But if Changsanchin's overtures were intended as a ruse to gain time they signally failed in their object, for Suta's promptness left him no time to profit by his device.

Tangho's corps was too small to lay siege in form to so strongly-placed and largely-garrisoned a fortress, and had to content itself with acting on the defensive and repulsing the onsets of the Mongols, who hoped to crush this detachment before it could be reinforced. Tangho succeeded in holding his ground ; and the arrival of fresh troops, sent by Suta as soon as he

learnt the real position of affairs, enabled him to surround Kingyang on all sides, and to cut off its communications with Ninghia, whence aid was anxiously expected by the beleaguered Mongol garrison. The siege had lasted some days, and no signs of the promised aid from Changsetao and the confederates of Ninghia were yet visible. Changsanchin therefore sent a pressing message for help to Kuku Timour,* the principal general at Ninghia and the responsible leader of the Mongols in their hour of distress. The messenger, Choho, made his way in safety through the enemy's lines, and carried the news of Changsanchin's desperate situation to the conclave of Mongol leaders.

Kuku Timour was more prompt to send the needed succour to a comrade in distress than Changsetao had shown himself to help a brother. He hastily collected such troops as he could dispose of, and made a forward movement into the districts recently subdued by the prowess of Suta and his army. Several towns were retaken and their garrisons put to the sword; but the relief of Kingyang remained none the less a task of difficulty, if not of impossibility. For Suta himself had been far from inactive; while his lieutenant Tangho† had been laying close siege to Kingyang, he had continued his operations beyond Lintao, and had occupied Lanchefoo and defeated the Prince of Yu, one of the most powerful of the Mongol chieftains.

* Called by the Chinese Wang Pao Pao.—Mailla.

† Delamarre calls Tangho Suez Hien, or simply Hien.

When he had accomplished this part of his plan of campaign, and rendered the western cities secure against surprise, he returned to Lintao, whence he marched on Kingyang to assume the personal control of its siege. Changsanchin had been making a gallant defence, and up to this had baffled all the efforts of his assailants. But he had suffered considerable loss during his sorties, and it was clear that unless aid promptly arrived he would have no alternative save to surrender. The garrison was reduced to such straits that they had to use the bodies of their slain as food; and, as no sign of Kuku Timour's promised succour was apparent, they at last threw open the gates and yielded their charge to Suta and the Mings. Changsanchin threw himself into a well, whether to invite death or in the hope of effecting his escape is not known, but, being discovered, he was dragged from his place of concealment and executed.*

The capture of Kingyang virtually closed the campaign in Shensi; and Suta, having enjoyed the personal gratification of witnessing the withdrawal, at his approach, of the Mongol forces to Ninghia, returned to the capital to seek a well-earned repose from his martial labours. Hongwou suffered about this time a serious loss in the death of his great general and well-tried follower, Chang Yuchun, who was in every way Suta's worthy colleague and peer. He appears to

* This was not because he had made a stubborn defence, but for the breach of faith in having opposed the Chinese after promising to surrender.

have been a gallant and daring soldier rather than a skilful commander ; but his character as a man is reflected in the fact that, although he was the senior of Suta, he served under him with cheerful obedience. With him it had been a common saying, in the dark days when the Mongols were on the throne of Peking, and when Chinese nationality was struggling for life and freedom on the banks of the Great River, that he would march with a hundred thousand men from one end of China to the other, and the saying has attached itself to his name. He is still remembered in the military annals of China as Chang Hundred Thousand.*

The departure of Suta inspired Kuku Timour and his Mongols with fresh courage. They flattered themselves that they had to fear only his superior generalship and not the valour or numbers of the Chinese. They might still, as they conceived, cherish the hope that they could regain what they had lost in Shensi and Kansuh, if not eastward of those provinces, and enjoy an existence in that quarter of the country, which they had first vanquished and then lost, preferable to any they could pass in the few oases of their old desert home. Suta, therefore, had not long departed before there was a return of activity to the Mongols within the cramped space they still held on the fertile territory of China. Kuku Timour resolved to take the field in person, and marched up the Hoangho for the purpose of besieging Lanchefoo, where Suta had left but a small garrison. The commandant, Changwen,

* Delamarre, p. 22.

must have been a man of more than ordinary courage and resolution, for, notwithstanding his numerical inferiority, he assumed the offensive, and at first he even obtained a few advantages over the Mongols. The latter returned, however, to the attack, and at last compelled Changwen to retire behind his fortifications. The news of the investment of this important place soon spread throughout the province, and troops were hastily collected from the surrounding garrisons and sent forward to reinforce Changwen's army. Prominent among those who came to aid Changwen was Yukwang, the Governor of Hongchang; but his movements, if characterised by celerity, were also marked by rashness, and he allowed himself to be surprised and overwhelmed by a Mongol detachment sent against him. This victory seemed to justify Kuku Timour's hopes that it was the skill of Suta and not the military prowess of the Chinese which he had to fear.

The news of this disaster called Suta back from the capital. Several fresh armies were raised for the campaign in the west, and Hongwou sent Ly Wenchong and other experienced lieutenants to assist his principal commander in the operations against the Mongol army then laying close siege to the city of Lanchefoo.* The mere rumour of Suta's approach

* The Mongols, in the hope of intimidating the garrison, paraded their prisoner Yukwang before the walls, but their ends were thwarted by the gallantry of this officer. He shouted out to his compatriots that Suta was near at hand with a large army. The message cost him his life, but it gave the besieged fresh heart. —Mailla, vol. x. p. 33.

served to ensure the relief of Lanchefoo, where Changwen had made so successful and determined a defence; for Kuku Timour broke up his camp and retreated, after another desperate effort to carry the town by assault. Having thus secured without a blow all the advantages of a pitched battle, Suta remained in his quarters during the year 1369, but he was actively engaged during that period in completing his preparations for the final move against the Mongols. He appears to have availed himself of this interval of rest to pay another visit to Hongwou's Court, where he was received with all honour, and where he presented Changwen, the gallant defender of Lanchefoo, to their Sovereign.*

The first blow was struck by Ly Wenchong, who

* Hongwou's address at the reception of this brave officer is characteristic both of the man and the country. "Great General, if the conquest of Shansi and Shensi will render your name immortal, the defence of Lanchefoo against a formidable army of Tartars covers Changwen with glory. It is on such occasions that men are to be judged. Those who do not vaunt the illustrious actions they may have performed are esteemed the more for their silence, while the merit of those who parade their great deeds before the world is diminished. A modest man does not himself boast of his great exploits, and a wise one avoids everything which could injure his reputation. A brave man, lacking modesty and wisdom, will not know how to succeed, though his capacity may otherwise be excellent. Of this history furnishes an infinity of examples. . . . When we began to carry arms, both officers and soldiers, all hoped to become rich and to rise in the service. Those who have escaped the sword of the enemy see to-day their wishes realised; but ought we to forget those who have lost their lives in assisting us to crown our undertaking? If they cannot enjoy the fruit of their labours, is it not just to bestow on their families the rewards which they merited, and which they purchased with their blood?"—Mailla, vol. x. p. 35. A noble sentiment, which was carried out practically by the bestowal of pensions and the adoption of the orphans.

made a rapid movement against the few Mongol garrisons remaining in the north-west portion of Kansuh. These scattered detachments were ill able to make a protracted stand against this vigorous attack, and in a very short time Souchow and Kia Yu Koan,* the western gates of the Great Wall, had surrendered to the Mings. By these successes the way was paved for an advance into the desert; and the importance of Ninghia, still the head-quarters of Kuku Timour, was much diminished, if, indeed, its very safety was not seriously menaced by the establishment of the Ming power on its flank. The Mongols were indeed reduced to such straits, that in sheer despair they had to face the alternative of a pitched battle. Kuku Timour drew up his army in a position of considerable strength near Souchow, but beyond the Great Wall. A precipitate attack made by one of Suta's lieutenants was repulsed with severe loss to the assailants, and the courage of the Mongols being raised by this preliminary success they set to work with renewed activity to increase the defences of their camp. Such confidence as they had vanished on the appearance of Suta. The very day of his arrival he reconnoitred their position, and resolved to deliver his attack on the morrow. The action commenced at day-break, and the battle raged throughout the long hours of a summer day. The Mongols at first repulsed the main onset; but Suta had sent a detachment to make a diversion in their

* Russia by the Treaty of St. Petersburg, 1881, obtains the right to trade with these places, and to station a consul at the former.

rear, and it succeeded in gaining an entrance within the lines of the defenders and in holding its ground. When this advantage had been obtained, Suta returned to the attack with renewed vigour, and carried the entrenchments at the charge. The struggle passed into a butchery. More than 80,000 men were counted among the slain when the slaughter ceased, and among these were the noblest of the Mongol leaders. Kuku Timour, when he saw that the fortune of the day had gone against him, beat a hasty retreat with a handful of trusty followers, making good his escape to Ninghia, whence, after a brief rest, he fled into the northern solitudes.

Suta sent one of his lieutenants into the desert beyond Kansuh, for the purpose of receiving the submission of the nomad tribes and scattered settlements of that region. We are told that he accomplished his purpose, and that he nominated a governor for this territory, which was kept in awe by the reputation of its master, rather than absolutely conquered. While we may not attach any definite meaning or value to the reported exploits of this expedition, the consequences likely to follow Suta's great victory over the last army at the disposal of the Mongol chiefs will be admitted to have contributed to the elevation of Ming authority in the eyes of the impressionable children of the desert. The pacification of the north-west was undoubtedly rendered the more thorough and assured by this carrying of Chinese authority into the wilds beyond the cultivated districts, and by this occupation of the eastern

approaches to the great trade-route with Turkestan and the West.*

While Suta had been engaged in the operations that culminated in the overthrow of Kuku Timour, his colleague, Ly Wenchong, had, on another scene of the war, brought a campaign of brilliance and importance to a conclusion. The ex-Emperor Chunti had retired to Yngchang, a place on the Mongolian steppe, where he died in the year 1370, and his titles passed to his son and heir Gaiourcheritala. A very short time after this event, Ly Wenchong approached at the head of the army with which Hongwou had entrusted him, and consternation seized in consequence the Mongol camp. The Mongols were too disheartened to offer any determined defence, and surrendered one position after another. Yngchang itself shared the same fate, and, although Gaiourcheritala made his escape farther into the desert, his eldest son Maitilipala and all the other members of his family were taken prisoners and sent to Nankin, where the Ming emperor chiefly resided. Ly Wenchong thus completed, by dispersing the ex-imperial family, and by sending them as captives to Hongwou, the work which Suta had

* In connection with this expedition the following incident calls for quotation. Weiching had been appointed Governor of Hochow (Kuachau) under the direction of Suta. When he arrived there to take up his residence he found nothing save a solitude inhabited only by the dead bodies of its citizens. The Mongols had exterminated the population sooner than see it pass under the authority of the Mings. The Chinese soldiers were at first terrified at the horrible spectacle, and wished to retrace their steps, but Weiching succeeded in restoring their courage and in inducing them to remain. Weiching's efforts soon restored all its old prosperity, and a new population to Hochow.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 43.

successfully begun. This crowning triumph afforded Hongwou's courtiers the opportunity to proceed in a body to congratulate him, and some among them suggested that Maitilipala should be executed in order that the late dynasty might be extirpated. But Hongwou was actuated by more generous motives, and refused to avail himself of the savage rights of a conqueror. The sole revenge* he took was to oblige

* Hongwou's reply was grand in its nobility. "The last ruler of the Yuens took heed only of his pleasures. The great, profiting by his indolence, thought of nothing save of how to enrich themselves; the public treasures being exhausted by their malpractices, it needed only a few years of dearth to reduce the people to distress, and the excessive tyranny of those who governed them led to the forming of parties which disturbed the empire, even to its foundations. Touched by the misfortunes with which I saw them oppressed, I took up arms, not so much against the Yuens as against the rebels who were engaged in war with them. It was over the same foe that I gained my first successes. And if the Yuen prince had not departed from the rules of wise government in order to give himself up to his pleasures, and had the magnates of his court performed their duty, would all honourable men have taken up arms, as they did, and declared against him? The misconduct of the race brought me a large number of partisans, who were convinced of the rectitude of my intentions, and it was from their hands, and not from those of the Yuens, that I received the empire. If heaven had not favoured me, should I have succeeded in destroying with such ease those who withdrew into the desert of Shamo? We read in the Chiking that after the destruction of the Chang family there remained more than ten thousand of their descendants who submitted themselves to the Chow, because it was the will of heaven. Cannot man respect its decrees?" But Hongwou's courtiers still wished to exalt their master's triumph, and clamoured for the execution of Maitilipala in the hall of the Ming ancestors. "Let them put in the public treasure-house," replied Hongwou, "the spoil brought back from Tartary, so that it may serve to alleviate the people's wants. And with regard to Maitilipala, although former ages supply examples of similar sacrifices, did Wou Wang, I ask you, when exterminating the Chang family, resort to this barbarous policy? . . . The Yuen princes were the masters of this empire for nearly one hundred years, and my fore-

the young Mongol prince to exchange his Tartar dress for the Chinese costume, when he conferred upon him a title of the third grade of nobility, with a small allowance or estate.

The campaigns against the Mongols being thus brought to a triumphant termination, and all prospect of any recovery on their part being at an end, the two victorious generals returned to Nankin to receive the thanks and congratulations of their Sovereign. The ceremony attending their reception was conducted with all the formality required by the national character of the occasion. Hongwou went down to the banks of the Kiang river to receive them, and preceded them in their procession through the streets. But the principal ceremony of all had yet to be performed. A few days later the Emperor, attended by his full Court, received the generals in public audience. They were then thanked and received the rewards of their faithful services; but, perhaps, the most striking part of the Emperor's address was the warning he gave them to avoid luxury, and to cultivate some peaceful pursuit now that the days of warfare were for a period probably over. In Hongwou's remarks may be seen something of the natural prudence of the man, who, knowing how easily those accustomed to lead their troops to victory might indulge dreams of reckless ambition, took the precaution to warn his generals of

fathers were their subjects; and even although it were the constant practice to treat in this fashion the princes of a dynasty which has ceased to reign, yet could I not induce myself to adopt it."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 40.

the consequences of infringing the laws to which even princes had to bow.*

The ruler was hardly relieved from the pressure of the struggle on the northern borders, when a great dearth beset the land to cause him fresh anxiety; and we learn from the Court chronicles that the Emperor put on mourning and retired to the private apartments of his palace, while the empress and the princes of the blood offered up sacrifice. After five days passed in this form of humiliation, rain fell in great quantities, and further danger of famine was happily averted.

Among the principal wants of an Eastern people must be placed a cheap and plentiful supply of salt, of which the central and maritime provinces of China produce abundant quantities. But the difficulty of conveying the precious article to the extremity of the empire left the inhabitants of many districts imperfectly provided with this necessary. Hongwou devoted much of his attention to this matter, and by his orders the provincial governors were entrusted with the task of distributing salt to the merchants in exchange for grain. By this means the people of the remote districts and of the frontier territories were able to procure a plentiful supply of this article.

In numerous other matters, small in appearance but really very closely affecting the happiness and welfare of his subjects, Hongwou showed equal forethought, and a strong desire to extend to them the support

* Mailla, vol. x. pp. 44-46.

and assistance of a paternal government. Nor did he confine his sympathy to those who were of his own race, and he extended as much consideration to the Mongols under his authority. Among the measures which had been taken at an early period of the war to root out the Mongol authority in the northern provinces had been the removal of a considerable number of Tartars to settlements in the interior of China. In their new homes they evinced a spirit of such turbulence and hostility towards the established authorities, that suggestions of resorting to extreme measures against them were made to the Emperor by the local officials. Hongwou wisely and temperately replied that their misconduct was probably due to the influences of the climate, for it could not be supposed that a people accustomed to the cold of the north would be contented and happy in the semi-tropical regions of the south. The true remedy, he added, for their dissatisfaction was not to punish them for what, after all, was a natural sentiment, but to convey them back to their native regions and to supply them with the means of leading an honest life there after their own fashion. From a sovereign of so just a mind, the thoughtfulness which prompted his sending to Ninghia for the garrison at that remote town a supply of fur coats and other garments appears to be but another natural trait in a noble character.*

* The practice among the rulers of the Yuen dynasty had been to give all the appointments and official posts to Mongols; but we are distinctly told that Hongwou employed merit wherever found. —Mailla, vol. x. p. 49.

The fall of the Mongols had left the governor of the north-eastern province of Leaoutung cut off from the rest of China, and dependent upon his own devices to maintain there some form of recognised authority. But the rapid progress of Hongwou's arms served to convince Liouy, the governor, that it would be imprudent for him to delay any further in sending his recognition of the new Chinese Government; and accordingly in A.D. 1371* he tendered his formal surrender, together with a list of the troops, resources, and population of his province. Hongwou received Liouy's overtures in a spirit of favourable condescension, and forthwith appointed him to act as military governor, with some of the rights of civil authority, in Leaoutung; and for a time it seemed as if that province had been reunited with the Empire without bloodshed or cost of treasure.

But this satisfactory result was not to be so easily obtained, nor without some of the proverbial disappointment and delay common to human enterprises. Liouy had local rivals and enemies who saw in his advancement as a lieutenant of the Mings the doom of the hopes they had indulged; but, although Liouy knew of their machinations, he permitted them to remain at large. He paid the penalty of his rashness, as they attacked and slew him on his own threshold. Two of his lieutenants succeeded in restoring order and in arresting one of the murderers, while the other escaped to a Mongol leader on the Manchurian

* Spots appeared on the sun this year.—Delamarre, p. 33.

frontier. But the situation remained one of anxiety and difficulty. A long council was held at Nankin on the subject, but the only decision at which it arrived was to appoint Liouy's lieutenants and avengers to his post, and to await the further development of events. This clearly represented no permanent settlement of the difficulty; rather only an expedient to gain time.

The Mongol chief, Nahachu,* caused considerable trouble to the people of this province, and the possibility of attack from this quarter created so much anxiety in the minds of the new governors of Leaoutung that they thought it better to attempt to conclude an amicable arrangement with him than to live on in a state of doubtful relationship. An envoy was accordingly sent to his camp to discover a basis for negotiation; but the Mongol placed the messenger in confinement, and resumed his depredations with increased vigour. A report of these proceedings reached Hongwou, who thereupon despatched two armies, one by land and the other by sea, to release the captive envoy and to pacify Leaoutung. The military operations that followed were marked by undimmed success rapidly attained. The Mongol bands were either captured or driven further back into the wilds of Manchuria, where both the inclemency of the climate and the barren nature of the soil rendered life cheerless and a matter of difficulty. To their principal leaders, sent captive to Nankin, Hongwou extended

* The similarity of the name of this chief to that of the Manchu leader Nourhachu in the seventeenth century is remarkable.

the generous forgiveness which he had previously exhibited towards other Mongol princes in the West.

While these events were taking place in the north, others of hardly less importance had happened in the extreme south, where the secluded provinces of Szchuen and Yunnan, after an interval of uncertainty, were undergoing the same vicissitudes of fortune which had attended the other parts of the Empire until they passed under the sway of Hongwou. In these provinces the officials appointed by the Mongol still retained, in A.D. 1372, their posts, nor did they appear to apprehend that there was danger in their path from their neglect to send to Hongwou that recognition of authority which conquerors expect and require. So long as affairs in the north remained urgent, Hongwou neither felt the inclination nor recognised the necessity to interfere in a quarter whence he had no danger to anticipate. The Szchuen officials were thus left to enjoy undisturbed their brief hour of independent authority.

At length one of them assumed a royal style, and took the title of King of Hia; and the outrage to Hongwou's dignity from this act appeared the greater because Minchen, who committed it, was of Chinese race. An army was, therefore, collected and placed under the command of Thangho for the purpose of bringing this potentate to reason and of reducing Szchuen to the state of a province of the Empire. A naval flotilla was also brought together on the Yangtsekiang in order to assist the land forces, and also to secure possession of the best road into the

south-west. The invading force was divided into two bodies, one charged with the capture of the important river port of Chunking, the other with that of the capital Chentu. Success attended both movements. The advanced guard seized the narrow gorge at Ichang, and captured the city of Kweichow, where a successful stand might have been made. The Chinese forces, having thus carried the first and most formidable barrier in their path, pressed on, and appeared likely to easily overcome the resistance of Minchen's ill-disciplined levies. But the people of Szchuen fought with great determination and long held Thangho's main body at bay before their position at Kutang. They might even have baffled Hongwou's commanders during a much longer period, but for the rapid successes obtained by another Ming general, Fuyuta, who was rapidly approaching the capital from the north. Three months were occupied in these manœuvres, which had not yet resulted in any decided advantage to the Ming army; and Hongwou, anxious lest the prize of war should escape him, sent large reinforcements to both his generals.

The prompt despatch of these fresh troops decided the campaign, for it enabled both the Ming generals to assume the offensive. Two decided victories, gained by the prowess and skill of Fuyuta, settled the fate of Szchuen; for, with the loss of their hold on the river, Minchen's lieutenants had no choice save to retire to Chentu. While Thangho marched on Chunking, Fuyuta beleaguered Chentu. At the former place Minchen resolved to surrender to the

Chinese, and presented himself laden with chains in their camp. He was granted terms honourable alike to himself and to his conquerors; and, after one unsuccessful sortie, the garrison of Chentu followed the example of the late King of Hia. The remaining towns of the province, with two exceptions,* surrendered without attempting a futile resistance, and the whole of the great province of Szchuen was reduced to a state of submission to Hongwou.†

The conquest of Szchuen had not long been completed, when a revival of activity on the part of the Mongols beyond the north-western frontier called Hongwou's attention again to the subject which had so often previously engaged it. Kuku Timour had been joined by the so-called Mongol Emperor,‡ and had availed himself of Suta's absence to make incursions into Kansuh. Resolved to bring this often-contested but never-ending struggle to a conclusion, Hongwou despatched Suta at the head of an army of 400,000 men, and assisted by his most celebrated lieutenants, to Kansuh for that purpose. His instructions were to pursue the enemy into the recesses of Tartary. The fortune of war is proverbially fickle, but seldom has its inconstancy been more strikingly evinced than on this occasion. The Mongol forces had been repeatedly defeated; for twenty years no glimpse of

* The exceptions were Paoning, and Tsongking. Both places were taken after sieges of short duration, and their governors were executed for their unnecessary and useless obstinacy.

† Hongwou rewarded his generals with presents of money, and of pieces of silk.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 63.

‡ Gaiourcheritala.

victory had visited their cause, and, so far as their physical resources went, they were never at a lower ebb than when the campaign of 1372 commenced. On the other hand, the Chinese forces were more numerous, and certainly should have been better disciplined than they were before, while they were still commanded by their chosen leader Suta. Yet, notwithstanding these facts, the earlier portion of the campaign was marked by Mongol victories and Chinese defeats, and in these encounters Suta himself was the greatest sufferer.

Twice did that general attempt to carry by a desperate attack the entrenchments which the Mongol leaders had erected for the protection of their army, and twice was he compelled to retire with heavy loss, baffled from the assault. Nor was this the only reverse or the worst. The necessities attendant to the moving of an army in a barren country, where water and pasturage are only to be obtained in limited quantities and at isolated spots, had compelled Suta to divide his forces. The fortune of the corps under his immediate direction was to shatter its strength for the moment against the ramparts of Kuku Timour's encampment; but the second body, under the command of Thangho, whose ill-luck in Szchuen seemed to indicate him as an unfortunate general, was surprised and cut to pieces at Kiteouchan in the desert.

The situation of Hongwou's great army was one, therefore, of extreme peril; for a retreat to China, with the exultant Mongol tribesmen in pursuit,

could scarcely be less disastrous than a lost battle. The success of a third division of the army fortunately released Suta's main body from its unpleasant predicament.

A corps had been entrusted to the joint command of Fongching and the heroic Fuyuta, of whom the latter was placed in charge of the vanguard. The advance of this force was conducted with celerity, and the Mongols appear to have been disconcerted by the movements of a foe who showed that he understood as well as they did the kind of manœuvres necessary in a desert country. Fuyuta defeated several hostile bands and captured their leaders. He continued his march far into the desert, and then slowly retraced his steps to Kansuh with numerous captives and the spoil of fifty camps. Further east on the Shensi border another Chinese general, Ly Wenchong, gained, after a fiercely contested action, a signal success over a Mongol horde, but he found the obstacles of the desert an opponent more difficult to vanquish than his human foes. He owed the extrication of himself and his soldiers from a position of extreme peril rather to his good fortune than to the excellence of his arrangements.

Although the results attained by this great and costly expedition were far from being of the decisive character that its originators expected, the Chinese generals had been able to inflict a sufficiently heavy punishment upon the Mongol tribes to induce them to discontinue their incursions into Kansuh. The remainder of this year and the whole of the following

one* were employed in desultory engagements which redounded little to the military credit of the Chinese, and which brought the question no nearer to a definite solution. But for the fortuitous capture of two of their leading chiefs, the success and the profit of this border strife would have remained on the side of the Mongols. In 1374 the statement was still drawn from the veracity of the native historian that "the borders of the Empire were constantly insulted by these people." Fresh troops continued to be sent to the scene of these outrages, and Suta was again called upon to proceed to the quarter where he had already gained much distinction, although all his military ability had not availed to give solid peace to this troubled region. Further engagements followed, but the practical result remained almost the same. The Chinese retained full and unquestioned possession of the cultivated country within the borders of the north-west provinces; but they were unable to destroy, and were beginning to find it unprofitable to challenge, the right of the Tartars to levy black mail on all who passed through the desert.†

* 1372 and 1373.

† A singular incident occurred about this time. Maitilipala, whose capture and generous treatment by Hongwou have already been referred to, was summoned by the Emperor, and informed that it was his intention to send him to Tartary to join his father. Maitilipala, not unnaturally alarmed at the vagueness of the proposition, entreated the Emperor to allow him to remain where he was, but Hongwou was fixed in his determination. His reply is sufficiently remarkable. "You are the eldest son of the heir apparent of the last Emperor of your house. When first you were made prisoner I had some thought of sending you back to your home, but on considering your youth and the length of the journey, I feared that

The Mongols themselves now experienced a more severe loss than the adverse decision of numerous skirmishes in the death of Kuku Timour, whose fortitude and energy had long contributed to the preservation of their cause. The nominal ruler of this race, Gaiourcheritala, whose father's faults had lost him the imperial diadem of China, also died a few months later, but the fact would not possess much significance save for the incident that attended it. Hongwou sent a mission of condolence to his successor. He may have done this in the belief that the new prince would be his former *protégé*, Maitilipala, but under any supposition the act shows that these border affairs were regaining their normal aspect. The ex-Mongol princes were again becoming the chiefs of a pastoral and nomadic people.

Some sort of assured tranquillity having at last settled down on the northern marches, it was not inappropriate that the long career of Suta should reach its close when the most important portion of his labours had been ratified by the verdict of success. And so it happened, although this great soldier was

you might not be able to sustain such great fatigue. Since that time you have grown stronger. I ought not to keep you here any longer. Therefore you must depart to render to your parents the duty of an affectionate and respectful son. It is useless to attempt to excuse yourself. I command that this shall be done."—Mailla, vol. x. pp. 71-72. Hongwou appears to have been actuated in this decision by motives of policy. Maitilipala was the rightful Mongol heir, and, favourably impressed by Hongwou's generous treatment, might be disposed to ally himself with the Ming ruler. This anticipation was natural enough; but on Gaiourcheritala's death in the following year Maitilipala was set aside, and another son selected as his successor. So are astute and deep-laid schemes baffled and turned awry by the simplest accidents.

still, comparatively speaking, a young man, and might have rendered many more years of faithful and useful service to his Sovereign. But that was not to be, and Suta, who during his retirement filled the honorary post of Governor to the Prince Imperial, died peacefully at the capital. With him disappeared the foremost and most notable of the men who had assisted Hongwou in his great enterprises, and with the death of Suta we begin to feel that the end of this eventful reign is drawing near. Hongwou mourned for the loss of his favourite general in private, while in public he pronounced a funeral oration over him. Suta's statue was placed in the great hall at Nankin and marked the addition of another celebrity to the list of departed Chinese heroes.*

Both in the south, and also in the north, there were

* Suta was only fifty-four years of age, and during thirty of these he had borne arms. Keen Lung, translated by Delamarre (p. 83), said of him:—"Suta spoke little, and was endowed with great penetration. He was always on good terms with the generals acting with him, sharing the good and bad fortune alike of his soldiers, of whom there was not one who, touched by his kindness, would not have done his duty to the death. He was not less pronounced in his modesty. He had conquered a capital, three provinces, several hundreds of towns, and on the very day of his return to court from these triumphs he went without show, and without retinue to his own house, received there some learned professors, and discussed various subjects with them. Throughout his life he was, in the presence of the Emperor, respectful and so reserved that one might have doubted his capacity to speak. The Emperor was in the habit of speaking thus in his praise:—"My orders received, he forthwith departed; his task accomplished, he returned without pride and without boasting. He loves not women, he does not amass wealth. A man of strict integrity, without the slightest stain; as pure and clear as the sun and moon, there is none like my first general Suta." "

further troubles arising out of the wars in Szchuen and Leaoutung; but these, although fraught with considerable importance as marking further stages in the work of reuniting and pacifying the country, do not call for detailed notice. In Leaoutung, Nahachu had assumed a bolder attitude, and resorted to more vigorous measures. From being a leader in petty raids he advanced to the more dignified position of the commander of an army, and even menaced the hold which Hongwou had established with little trouble to himself over this province. But although he invaded the low country and threatened several strong places, his increased confidence in himself did not bring any greater success; rather may it be said to have contributed to his fall, for it often happens that the confederacy which is formidable in irregular warfare, and if engaged in detachments, is easily overthrown and broken up when it attempts to combine and to assume a vigour that it does not possess in reality. Such was the case with Nahachu. His followers were defeated with heavy loss, and he himself escaped with difficulty to the hills, which he never should have quitted. From that time Nahachu gave much less serious trouble to the officials of Leaoutung* than he

* To this success must be attributed the resumption of official intercourse between the Courts of China and Corea. In 1369 Wang Jwan, King of Corea, had sent an envoy to Hongwou, and in 1375 it was followed by a formal embassy. Wang Jwan died about the latter year, and was succeeded by his son Yu, who enjoyed possession of the throne for only a short period, as he was deposed and ultimately poisoned. His son Mao, who succeeded him, met with the same fate; and an ambitious minister, Li Chungwei, seized the

had done before, and Hongwou's authority was generally accepted and recognised throughout this province and the north-east.

Nor were Hongwou's arms less successful in Yunnan. Two acts of perfidy* had embittered the contest there and rendered the subjection of Yunnan a matter of as urgent necessity for the sake of vindicating the majesty of Chinese authority as for regaining possession of another and the last of the provinces of the empire. Many other pressing affairs required the attention of Hongwou, and the preparations for this campaign being necessarily of a complicated and arduous nature, several years elapsed before the slow-moving arm of Chinese vengeance reached the wrong-doers in this quarter; but not for the lapse of time did the blow fall less heavy, nor did the Chinese forget the full measure of the injury they had suffered.

To Fuyuta, whose uniform success had marked the later campaigns against the Mongols, Hongwou entrusted the command of the army which was charged with the task of accomplishing the last of his great military enterprises; and neither the number of the troops nor the details† of the preparations, left the general cause to doubt the full and speedy triumph

throne and established a dynasty of his own. The descendants of Li Chungwei still govern the primitive kingdom of Corea.—See Mailla, vol. x. p. 86; and Ross's "Corea," pp. 268-69.

* The murder of two of Hongwou's envoys.

† Among these may be mentioned the drawing of a map on a large scale, showing all the information extant about the province of Yunnan.

of his operations. The invading forces were divided into two bodies; one, under the command of an officer named Koen, and computed to consist of 50,000 men, advanced through Szchuen on the town of Oufan, menacing Yunnan on the north; while the second, led by Fuyuta in person, assailed it on the eastern side from Kweichow. Both armies advanced for some distance into the country without encountering any very serious opposition; but at Kinsing, a town situated a short distance north-west of the capital, the Yunnan prince concentrated in a position of considerable strength all his troops, and checked the further progress of the Chinese general. But it was not for long. Fuyuta executed some intricate manœuvres, of which it would be difficult to indicate the significance, but which had the effect of bringing on a general action. The battle was stubbornly contested, and lasted many hours; and at one time it looked as if one half of the Chinese army, which was separated from the other by a river, would be overwhelmed before assistance could come to it. Fuyuta's promptitude retrieved the day, and the local forces were driven from the field with heavy loss, leaving 20,000 prisoners in his hands. The fall of the capital followed a very short time after this overthrow of the army, and the Prince of Yunnan fled for refuge to the hills of the Burmese frontier. The remainder of Yunnan was soon reduced to subjection, and these successes were obtained with as little bloodshed and trouble as could have been expected under the circumstances.

But the pacification of this region was not to be completed without a tragical incident. The Chinese soldiers had fought with valour, and their generals had shown moderation towards the defeated, so long as open hostilities continued ; but when, after a short period of tranquillity, the inhabitants of certain districts rose up against their authority, and entered the field as rebels, the whole attitude of the Chinese underwent a change. From moderation and forbearance they passed at once to the extreme of severity, if not of cruelty. The unfortunate and ill-advised insurgents were butchered, and it is estimated that, before tranquillity was restored, 30,000 of them had suffered at the point of the sword. Such has always been the Chinese practice. In their treatment of an open foe they have generally shown justice, and sometimes magnanimity ; but towards rebels their attitude has always been one of stern and relentless cruelty.*

The Empire was now thoroughly at peace,† and a succession of favourable seasons greatly promoted the prosperity of the people. Within the limits of the provinces of the country there were none left with either the wish or the power to dispute Hongwou's authority, and the Chinese nation employed itself, with that energy and intuitive skill which are among its principal characteristics, in recovering

* The same year 1382 which witnessed these events, was marked by the death of the Empress Machi, "a princess worthy of the rank to which Fortune had elevated her."—Mailla.

† In A.D. 1387 the Japanese made several descents on the coast, and the Emperor ordered watch-towers to be built at frequent intervals in the maritime provinces. A militia of 58,000 men was raised for this special service.—Delamarre, p. 90.

from the depressing effects of a long season of anarchy and internal strife. And the progress made towards recovery was astonishingly rapid. In contrast with the general happiness and tranquillity of the people, the numerous skirmishes on the remote frontier lose their significance and become merely the ordinary incidents in the daily life of a great governing people.*

The chief, Nahachu, whose raids into Leaoutung have already been mentioned, had again drawn together the Mongol forces in the east, and, having made extensive preparations for a final bid for power, resumed at this conjuncture his operations against the Ming officials in that province. Although it might appear that the danger from this quarter was not of any serious character, yet Hongwou attached sufficient importance to it to induce him to send a large body of fresh troops, under the command of the generals Fongching and Fuyuta, into the province. A desultory campaign, marked rather by a conflict of words than by an interchange of blows, ensued, and in the result Nahachu's followers were dispersed or taken prisoners,† while their chief, either by treachery or

* The population of China in the year 1394 is given at 16,052,860 households, and 60,545,812 souls. This would not include the inhabitants of the outlying districts and provinces, but it shows how greatly the Chinese people must have suffered from the ravages of these long wars.

† One Mongol prince was sent to the Loochoo Islands, the ruler of which was on intimate terms with Hongwou. The best evidence of the progress made in the pacification of the borders is furnished by the fact that a large expedition marched from Shansi for a considerable distance into the desert without encountering a single Mongol.

cajolery,* was captured and sent to Nankin. Other successes followed, and the verdict of previous victory was amply ratified by the flight of the Mongol chieftains into the recesses of Manchuria and westwards towards the Tian Shan.

The last eight years of Hongwou's reign were undisturbed by any serious commotion, although a mutiny among a portion of his army, encouraged by an ambitious officer, seemed likely to cause great trouble. The scheme was fortunately divulged in good time, so that the Emperor's measures for the preservation of order were both prompt and effectual. Lanyu, whose share in the campaigns in Leaoutung, to which reference has been made, had not been small, but who had allowed himself to be carried away by the promptings of ambition, was arrested and punished with death. He either gratified his pique or

* The facts are not very clear, but Mailla describes the incident in the following passage:—Nahachu “rode before the Chinese lines at the head of a few hundred horsemen, and announced that he came for the purpose of making his submission. The Chinese general, transported with joy, called for wine, and Nahachu having filled a goblet presented it to him. In order to respond to this act of politeness, Lanyu took off his cloak, and offered it to the Mongol general in token of sincere affection, and begged him to put it on. Nahachu refused to do so before Lanyu had drunk the wine. This contest of civilities lasted some time, but Nahachu seeing that Lanyu would not yield muttered some words between his teeth, and dashed the cup which he held to the ground. He even drew back two steps, as if he had the intention of returning. Changmou, one of the leading Chinese officers, placing a bad construction on what Nahachu had muttered to himself, hastened forward to arrest him; and when the Mongol wished to mount his horse in order to flee, Changmou struck him with his sword, wounding him on the shoulder.” Nahachu, however, survived this encounter, and was honourably received and pensioned by Hongwou.

satisfied his private animosities by implicating many brave officers and soldiers in his schemes. Lanyu was the most, if not the only one, guilty; but twenty thousand lives were sacrificed to meet what were thought to be the exigencies of the occasion.*

The last days of Hongwou's reign were marked by no disquieting events, and although the loss of his eldest son had raised causes of possible dissension by the elevation of a child to the place of heir apparent, they did not present themselves in any tangible shape during the lifetime of the aged prince, whose long career was now about to close. In 1398 Hongwou's maladies grew worse, and although the skill and attention of his doctors kept him alive for some months, it was evident to all that his end was near at hand. Under these circumstances Hongwou made all the arrangements for the peaceful transfer of power with calmness and decision. He sent his sons, who were known to covet the throne, to their different posts in

* About this time a provincial official reported that a man, in order to save his mother from a lingering death, made a vow to sacrifice one of his children to an idol should she recover. The woman got well, and the child was sacrificed. The official wanted to know what was to be done under the circumstances. Hongwou's reply is remarkable, as showing that the crime of infanticide admitted of no extenuation in his eyes. "The ties which attach the father to his son are sacred, and form one of the first duties of nature. A father ought to wear mourning during three years for an eldest son, and this unnatural father has immolated his without listening to the cries of his own blood, and without showing any sign of grief. Is not that enough to stifle all feeling, and to offend at the same time both against nature and the law, by rendering oneself guilty of a crime unknown even among barbarians? He would deserve to suffer the extreme penalty of the law."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 100.

the provinces, so that his grandson might succeed him without disturbance or opposition; and having thus ensured, so far as he could, the tranquillity of the realm, he resigned himself to his end. In his will* he

* The following is the text of this Emperor's will written on his sick bed four months before his death in the year 1398. The exceptional feature of this document was that its contents were made public before Hongwou's death. The state of the empire was still such as to make the new Ming ruler extremely cautious in his measures. "It is a long time since I received the order of heaven to exercise governing authority over the people. I have now reigned during thirty-one years. All my efforts have been directed with the idea of failing in no respect towards the accomplishment of my duty. I have pacified the empire, and restored its ancient splendour. Always occupied, either in fighting our enemies, or in the management of public affairs, I have nothing to reproach myself with on the score of idleness or negligence. I have acted to the full extent of my power for the advantage of the people—at least such has always been my intention, and I have grounds for hoping that they are satisfied of my good-will. I have nothing to boast of from my extraction. I had neither any special virtues nor merit of a high degree, and I have seen myself placed on the throne without having sought the honour, and even without having desired it. I put before me, as the models of the manner in which I ought to try and govern, the wise emperors of past centuries, for I felt that it was necessary for me to imitate them in everything. And now that I look back I am tranquil, because I believe I have relaxed no effort in my desire to attain success. I have now reached the seventy-first year of my age, my natural strength grows weaker and weaker every day, and there is every likelihood of there being not much more delay in my rendering nature the tribute which all men owe her. I await the end without any disquietude. With the view of providing, so far as is in my power, that the empire shall rejoice long after my death in the advantages which I have striven to procure for it, I have chosen my grandson Chuwen to be my successor. I have remarked in him much prudence, and a gentle disposition. He has intelligence, and shows himself open to advice. It is my belief that he will govern well, and that the people will be happy under his authority. Moreover he is the son of my eldest son, the heir apparent; and I should be unjust to him were my choice to fall on anyone else. I order that all the princes, magnates, and officials, both civil and military, are to have for him all the respect and deference that they have for me, and to obey him in everything as their one and lawful prince. Let it also be made known to all my

expressed the reasons which had induced him to select his grandson, Chuwen, for his heir; and caused the document to be published in order that the people might know the motives of, and approve, his policy. He lingered until the summer of the year 1398, when he died in the 71st year of his age.*

Of the character† of the illustrious Hongwou posterity has best been able to form an opinion by the deeds which he accomplished. As described by his great successor, the Emperor Keen Lung of the Manchu dynasty, he appears to have had most of the virtues and few of the faults of mankind. But we need not attempt here to analyse his character too closely, for

subjects what are my last intentions and my supreme will on this point. I wish that my body should repose after my death in the tomb that I have myself prepared for it; and I trust that nothing will be changed, added to, or taken away from the surroundings. As regards the funeral ceremony it should be carried out on the lines of what was observed in the case of the Emperor Wenti of the Han dynasty (see vol. i. p. 103-4). Lest the princes, my children, should prove the cause of trouble, were they all to assemble in the capital immediately after my death, I forbid them one and all to go there; and I decree that they keep themselves tranquil, each one in the place to which I have assigned him, and await there in peace the orders of the new Emperor whom they ought to obey with all the respect and docility that subjects owe their lawful sovereign.”—Amiot.

* Among the unfortunate circumstances of Hongwou's reign must be mentioned the disaffection of most of his generals after their return from the wars (see Hongwou's excellent advice *ante*, p. 47). Even the gallant Fuyuta did not escape the disease of a reckless and over-reaching ambition, and in 1394 he received an order to put himself to death. Fongching acted and suffered similarly (see Delamarre, *passim*).

† M. Abel Remusat, one of the most gifted critics of Asiatic history, has composed an instructive and ingenious comparison between Genghis and Hongwou. His opinion of Hongwou's character will be found in the “Nouveaux Mélanges Asiatiques,” tom. ii. p. 4, to which work all can and should refer.

we shall arrive at a more just opinion concerning the man by considering his work. To his credit must not only be placed the expulsion of the Mongols, but also the more difficult task of having created in their place a new machinery of government. Not only had he vanquished in innumerable encounters the chivalry of the Mongols, and dispersed, after long and arduous campaigns, the fragments of their broken power, but he had restored the dignity of the Chinese Empire to as high a point as it had reached under Kublai. The virtue of the man was just as conspicuous in his daily life as king, as his courage, fortitude, and military capacity had been as a popular and national leader in the dark days of Mongol despotism. It may be doubted whether China ever possessed a more beloved ruler, and certainly none had the same opportunity of realising the national wishes and of supplying its wants as he had. Even now, it is asserted, the Chinese look back with secret longing to their favourite Ming dynasty, and the virtues and achievements of Hongwou form the basis of its fame. Hongwou must be placed among the limited number of the great rulers of China who never allowed themselves to be carried away by the magnitude of their successes, and who could meet the reverses of bad fortune with equanimity and resolution. But in the eyes of a civilised community not the least honourable of his characteristics will be held to be his moderation towards his enemies, and the mercy with which he tempered the severity of his country's justice.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY MING RULERS.

Kien Wenti.—His Treatment of His Uncles.—Ty, Prince of Yen.—Yen's Proclamation.—Outbreak of a Civil War.—Its bitter Character.—False Bulletins.—Great Battle.—Two Days' Fighting.—The Siege of Tsinan.—Stratagems of the Commandant.—Chinyong retrieves Fortune of Imperialists.—Death of Changyu.—Wenti's Imprudence.—Futile Negotiations.—Advance of Yen's Army northwards.—Reverses.—*"I know how to advance, but not to retreat."*—Fatal Error of Wenti.—Fruits of Victory thrown away.—Yen's Triumph.—At the Gate of the Capital.—Its Surrender.—Wenti's Resolve.—Long survives his Fall.—Wholesale Executions.—Autocratic Decree.—Brigand and Usurper.—Yonglo.—The Northern Tribes.—Tonquin.—Internal Troubles.—An Ambitious Minister.—Conquest of Tonquin.—Becomes a Province of China.—A generous Proclamation.—The Expedition of Timour.—Shah Rokh's Embassy.—Yonglo's Death.—Short Reign of Gintsong.—Foreign Embassies.—Export of Tea and Breeding of Horses.—The Ming Authority assured.

WHETHER the cause is to be attributed to the excellence and forethought of Hongwou's arrangements, to the general tranquillity prevailing throughout the state, or to the solid contentment of the people, the fact remains that Chuwen succeeded his grandfather without encountering any open opposition. He then

assumed the title of Kien Wenti.* But this tranquillity was soon proved, so far as the domestic relations of the Ming family were concerned, to be hollow and deceptive and only the lull that precedes the storm. For Wenti's uncles, although banished to their provincial posts, still nursed the ambitious dreams that arose partly from their position and partly from their youth ; and the new ruler appears not only to have been aware of their dissatisfaction, but to have credited them with a much higher ambition even than they possessed. As these princes were absent from the capital at the time of the late Emperor's death, Wenti felt obliged, out of ordinary decency, to send invitations to them to attend their father's funeral. Some declined and others accepted the summons, and among the latter, to the surprise of the Court, was the most formidable and ambitious of them all, Ty, Prince of Yen. The prospect of Yen's visit to the capital was far from being agreeable to either Wenti or his ministers. The latter had reason to doubt the friendliness of his intentions, and they stood in much fear of his influence with the army. Wenti dreaded his approach as that of his most daring competitor. A council was hurriedly convened to consider what steps should be taken to meet the threatening danger, and at last it was decided to inform Yen that it would be more becoming in him to abandon his

* His first acts were to pass edicts in honour of his parents, and to proclaim his favourite wife Empress and her son his heir. Chuwen was only 16 years of age when he mounted the throne."—Delamarre.

purpose and to return to his province. His duty as a son and as a subject were brought into conflict, and he had to sacrifice his respect for the dead to his obedience towards the living. But the slight thus inflicted made no passing impression on the spirit of this proud and vindictive prince, and the wrong of this act was to be atoned for only by a bitter civil war, in which thousands of lives were to be uselessly lost.

At this same council it had also been resolved that, as there could be no doubt of the hostile plans entertained by the Emperor's uncles against his position, if not his person also, immediate steps should be taken to bring them to a proper sense of their relations with the new ruler. But while Wenti's ministers came to this resolute decision against the whole collective body of the late Emperor Hongwou's sons, they were cautious in their mode of dealing with regard to the Prince of Yen in particular. One minister, indeed, showed sufficient courage to suggest that the proper course to pursue was to engage Yen at once with all their forces as the most formidable of these enemies of the public peace. But this view found no other supporter, and the determination come to was to proceed against the other brothers one by one, and thus deprive Yen of such support as they might be able to afford him. Officials were sent to inquire into their conduct, and armies followed in their track to put down rebellion and to assert the Emperor's power and authority. Wenti's measures, so far as they went, were attended with unqualified

success. All his uncles, save the one that was most formidable, were deposed from their governorships and reduced to the ranks of the people. One preferred* death to that ignominious descent, but Yen alone remained to disturb the peace of mind of Wenti and his satellites, and also to avenge his brethren.

Yen's position was little shaken by these high-handed acts of authority, and it may even have been rendered the stronger because the wholesale proceedings against his brothers had the effect of representing his cause in the light of the injured party. As if to show his contempt for his nephew's power, he imprisoned and then executed three officials who had been sent from Nankin to spy upon his deeds. Nor did his hostility cease with this outburst of indignation. An attitude of passive defiance was, he felt, one that could not be long maintained, and the time had evidently come when it was necessary for him to strike a bold blow for his own rights and independence, if he did not wish to be swept aside and share his brothers' fate. He accordingly issued a proclamation† calling upon all those who

* The names of these princes were—Siang, Chow, Tsi, Tai, and Min. The first-named set fire to his palace and perished with his family in the flames; the last four were degraded and reduced to the rank of the people as explained. See Mailla and Delamarre.

† This proclamation is a remarkable one of its kind. "I am the son of the Emperor Kao Hoangti (Hongwou), and I am also the son whom he admitted most into his confidence. Among other wise instructions which he left us, he said, 'If the powers of government should happen to be placed in the hands of false ministers, we must have recourse to arms in order to exterminate them and to deliver from so pernicious a pest the prince who may chance to be on the throne.' This is the motive which has induced

cherished the memory of Hongwou to rally to his side. The Chinese historian appears disposed to regard the collision between these personages as a matter of family quarrel and dynastic pretensions, but the facts justify the assumption that the real point at issue had become a larger one. If Wenti's government could

me to take up arms. The ministry is held by two traitors who are endeavouring to destroy the edifice, which my august father elevated with such infinite pains, and to expose it to the gravest dangers. If their audacity be not repressed, they will ruin the prince whom he established as his successor. I wish, following the example of Chowkong, to support our prince, and to do for our dynasty what that wise minister did for his nephew the Emperor Ching Wang. You, who are the faithful subjects and servants of the Great Hongwou, unite with me in order to punish the perfidious Tsitai and Hoangtseting! Already five of my brothers have been the victims of their wickedness. They treated them with such ignominy that the Prince of Siang, unable to support his shame, precipitated himself into the flames of his house; and if they have so far spared me it is only with the intention of making surer the blow they have destined for me. Even now they have sent men as wicked as themselves to spy upon my actions, so that the Emperor may be led to take umbrage at my doings, and to provide the occasion for my ruin. I intend to do myself justice, and I believe I shall be doing the State a service by clearing it of these creatures. The Emperor has taken no part in these odious manœuvres. His gentle and beneficent character keeps him aloof from the unjust and cruel schemes, which are worthy of these two ambitious individuals alone, who look with keen jealousy upon the authority which our father confided to us with the view of our putting down any enterprises detrimental to the interests of his family. It was for that purpose that he granted us our principalities; my brothers have lost theirs, and as for me, although I have governed this region according to the laws of the empire for more than twenty years, although I have given on all occasions proofs of my zeal and of my fidelity to serve the Emperor my master, they have decreed my ruin, and I can only prevent it by forestalling them. It is not, then, any motive of ambitious turbulence that bids me raise my standard. I am endeavouring to avert the ruin of my family, and to maintain the Emperor on a throne which is placed in jeopardy by the acts of two traitors. My cause ought, therefore, to be that of all those who keep the blood of the Great Hongwou, now falsely aspersed, in affectionate remembrance."—Mailla, vol. x. pp. 108-110.

not yet be called hopelessly bad, it was fast tending in that direction, while Yen had the tact to promise and hold out for popular approbation a higher standard of excellence in the administration.

The Imperial Government perceived from this proclamation and the warlike measures of the Prince of Yen that the time had arrived when it would have to make good its position and rights against the formidable pretender who had been goaded into action by its injustice, and who claimed for his cause the support of all those who took as their motto justice and the common weal. At first the hope was entertained that the Prince of Yen would experience some difficulty in maintaining his authority within his own province when once it was realised that he had undertaken so dangerous a task as to pit his strength against the whole force of the empire; but this expectation had soon to be abandoned. The Prince* rapidly consolidated his authority over the whole of his province. The fortified towns surrendered for the most part and hoisted his flag, while the few that declared for the Emperor were speedily brought back to a sense of their duty. The Prince's active army was augmented by these garrisons and by large levies raised from the hardy people of the north. While Wenti's ministers remained inactive and hardly fully awake to the gravity of the crisis, the Prince of Yen

* He became known as such *par excellence*, and henceforth, until his accession to the throne in 1404, this designation will be used.

stood fully equipped for and ready to begin an offensive war.

The first successes in the strife, which commenced with singular bitterness, and which raged throughout a period of almost five years, went to the side of the Prince, for, although they fought with the courage of soldiers who had contributed to the fame of Hongwou, the Imperialists were uniformly the vanquished. Yet these victories were far from being cheaply purchased. Thousands fell on either side, and the Prince found reason to congratulate himself over some exceptional advantage when a hard day's battle left him some more tangible result than the name of master of a field of promiscuous slaughter. But one triumph soon brought another, and a fortunate prize of 8,000 horses* enabled him to mount that number of men and to strengthen himself in an arm in which he had hitherto been weak. Wenti experienced a further loss in the surprise and capture of some of his most trusted and skilful officers,† whose services could ill be spared, but who found an easy issue from their misfortunes by attaching themselves to the cause of the Prince, their captor. Perhaps Wenti's greatest misfortune consisted in his never learning, until too late to repair them, the full extent of his disasters. Then, as in more modern times, and in countries nearer to our own, a fashion came into

* Mailla, vol. x. p. 113.

† Among these was Likien, whose handsome face had gained him the hand of an emperor's daughter. He married the Princess Taimin, the seventh daughter of Hongwou, and consequently Yen's sister.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 114.

vogue with the Government to obscure its defeats by mystical statements and reports of corresponding advantages. An order of false bulletins was fairly inaugurated.

The progress of the struggle was marked by numerous battles which equalled in bitterness any recorded in the civil wars of China. It was not, however, until the year 1401 that this contest for power reached its largest dimensions, when both the Imperialists and the Prince placed several large armies in the field. The Prince directed his main effort during the campaign of this year to the capture of Taitong,* while Wenti's commander, Li Kinglong, resolved to strike a bold blow in the hope of averting the fall of so important a place. Li Kinglong assembled, therefore, all the available troops to the number of about 600,000† men, marched northwards with them from Tsekinghoan,‡ and compelled Yen to forego his purpose. The two armies, after marching and countermarching for some weeks, drew up opposite to each other near Techow,§ which place was in the possession of the Imperial forces. Both sides were anxious to begin an engagement that each hoped might prove decisive; and when the Prince offered battle his challenge was eagerly accepted. The engagement lasted several days from early dawn to setting of the sun, but whether the numbers

* In Shansi, on the northern borders.

† Mailla.

‡ In Pechihli, south-west of Peking, famous for its marble quarries.

§ Techow, on the Euho, near the northern frontier of Chantung.

engaged were so great as to render time necessary to produce any decisive result, or whether all fought with obstinate desperation, the balance of victory remained steady, and inclined to neither one hand nor the other. At one point, indeed, thanks to the intrepidity of two of Wenti's commanders, Tingan and Kuneng, the victory seemed on the point of being gained, and the cry was raised among the Imperialists, "The day is ours; now is the time to extinguish this revolt." The announcement was premature, and the Prince, heading his troops in person, restored the battle. The desperate position of affairs may be inferred from the fact that his boldest followers had counselled flight, and that, before he gained a moment's breathing-space to survey the field of battle, he had to head three charges, in each of which his horse was killed under him. Even then, the end appeared remote and doubtful, but the death of Kuneng and the dispersal of the two wings decided this hardly-contested combat in favour of the Pretender. More than 100,000 men were either slain in the fight or drowned in the waters of the Euho during the pursuit; and Li Kinglong had difficulty in collecting the broken and discouraged fragments of his army in Techow. Even here the Prince*

* Some idea of the customs of the age and of the character of this war may be formed from the following incident, which may be taken as an exemplification of the old adage that "all is fair in war." The Prince of Yen after these successes laid siege to Tsinan, the governor of which place formed a plan to decide the war at a blow by the murder of the rebellious prince. Tsi Hiwen, such was his name, sent his assailant word

allowed him no rest, and, inflicting a second defeat upon him, compelled him again to flee.

Wenti's first step, when the full extent of his defeat became known to him, was to remove Li Kinglong, the principal author, as was alleged, of this military disaster; and as it happened that his successor, Chinyong, was a soldier of considerable experience and skill, the very announcement of his appointment sufficed to restore the sinking confidence of the Imperialists. The result justified the choice, for in a very short time he had collected a large army, perfected all his preparations for a campaign, and drawn up strongly fortified lines round the town of

that he desired to surrender, but requesting as a favour that he would only enter the town with a limited number of troops. Yen did not suspect treachery, and readily assented to these terms, which might be set down as either fanciful or politic. Tsi Hiwen had, however, placed iron harrows on the walls and in the towers of his fortress, and when Yen rode into the city these were dropped on the heads of himself and his party. Fortunately they were not directed with a sure aim; and although the Prince's horse was killed and he himself thrown to the ground in the fall, he rose uninjured and escaped on the fleet steed of one of his companions. Of course he vowed and wished to take a summary vengeance; but Tsi Hiwen, fertile in resource, had still another device to make good the defence of Tsinan. He set all the artists in the place to work to paint as many portraits as they could of the Emperor Hongwou, and these when completed he caused to be hung from the ramparts, knowing that the prince would not dare, both out of respect for his father's memory and also for fear of offending public opinion, to order his troops to fire upon them. The ruse was completely successful, and Yen, although irritated at the result, was fain to admit that in Tsi Hiwen he was dealing with one more than his match in astuteness. The Chinese historians evidently consider that this and similar incidents, which abound in their annals, carry a significant lesson, for they show how great talent and powerful resources may on occasion be baffled by a little cunning.

Tongchang.* The Prince having taken several places which had hitherto resisted his arms, advanced rapidly towards this town, and took up a position at Lintsing,† where he could draw supplies from his rear both by means of the Euho Canal,‡ and also from the sea. He did not make any protracted halt there, but continued his forward movement against Chinyong, who had placed a body of his troops in a village in advance of his main position. This corps was surrounded and destroyed almost to a man before Chinyong could come up to its support. But the Prince's troops, carried away by their success, pursued the fugitives too far, and were in turn assailed and driven back by Chinyong's main body. Their loss seems to have been considerable, and the Imperialists following up their advantage with close ranks, were carrying everything before them, when the Prince at last reached the field in person with his force. The two armies then closed in the shock of battle, and for hours the result hung in suspense. The Prince performed prodigies of valour, fighting on foot like a simple soldier, and the apprehensions of his friends were raised to the highest point when he and a small body of troops threw themselves into the midst of the enemy and remained for a long time cut off from support in the

* In Chantung on the Imperial canal.

† Thirty miles north of Tongchang and also on the canal and in Chantung.

‡ The Euho, or Yunliang canal or river, is the northern portion of the Imperial canal. The Shaho is the continuation of this from Lintsing to Hangchow, crossing in its course both beds of the Hoangho and also the Yangtsekiang.

masses of the foe. Nor did Chinyong evince in any less degree all the qualities admirable in a soldier; and when the long day's battle ended it left him master of the field. More than 30,000 of the flower of Yen's army encumbered the ground, and among the slain was his best and favourite general, Changyu.*

To a struggling Prince or an embarrassed Government Fortune often gives a respite when on the eve of seeming destruction; and so did this gleam of success, transitory as it proved, carry gladness to the heart of Wenti. But seldom, indeed, has there been granted to those who have brought about their own ruin by their imprudence sufficient wisdom and sense to avail themselves of the grateful offering and to turn it to such account as to avert their fall; and this Chinese Emperor affords another instance of the established truth of the illustration. Wenti's first act on the news of his general's victory was to recall two of the most objectionable of his ministers and to reinstate them in their offices. This conduct inflamed the resentment of the Prince of Yen, who devoted himself with renewed ardour to the task of recovering the ground he had lost.

The war continued during the two following years with indecisive fortune, although victory generally inclined to the side of the Prince. Moreover, the area of his operations was steadily growing larger, and he was gradually drawing nearer and nearer to

* The Prince of Yen mourned Changyu as a brother, and conferred several posthumous titles of honour upon him.

the capital. After a single reverse Wenti repented of his having replaced the two ministers who were recognised as Yen's principal opponents, and he again summarily dismissed them, confiscating their property at the same time. An attempt was made after this apparent return to a wiser and juster line of conduct to effect an understanding and to put an end to a war which was devastating the fairest provinces of the realm. But although the Prince of Yen* expressed his willingness to accept fair terms, and to conclude a pacific arrangement, the Emperor was so ill-advised, that, in the persuasion that the season was too far advanced for military operations, he broke off negotiations when they promised a successful issue.

The year 1403 witnessed the outbreak of hostilities afresh and on a larger scale than ever. Both sides had apparently come to the resolution that it would be well to make a supreme effort to terminate the struggle by a final appeal to arms, and to accept the consequences of defeat. For a new bitterness

* He wrote in 1402 to Wenti as follows:—"I, Chutai, Prince of Yen, your subject, offer with respect to your Majesty this memorial with a view of putting an end to all strife and of giving the Empire peace. I have heard of the just chastisement which has visited the traitors Tsitai and Hoangtseting, and both myself and all our family have greatly rejoiced at it. But the most trusted of my officers still doubt whether this step is anything more than a feint. They say that your Majesty should have withdrawn your troops and recalled your generals, and that although these two disturbers of the public peace have been removed, they still influence the Government. This fear compels me to stand on my guard and to defer sending my soldiers into winter quarters. I hope that your Majesty will do your best to remove these impressions, and remain cautious in adopting the pernicious advice of turbulent spirits."—Mailla, vol. x. pp. 126-27.

had been imported into the contest, and the civil war, which originally possessed little more than a local character, threatened to involve the whole country. The Prince of Yen was denounced on all hands as a disturber of the public peace. His promises of reform were forgotten, and it was only remembered of him that he was breaking that law of obedience which it was one of his principal vaunts that he wished to enforce.* The adherents of the two parties turned again with renewed fury and energy to the arbitrament of arms for a decision of their dispute.

The first encounter after this further resumption of hostilities was disastrous to the arms of the Prince, for in a great battle fought on the banks of the Imperial Canal, he was repulsed with heavy loss by Wenti's generals, Tingan and Su Weitsou. The consequences of this reverse threatened to be more disastrous than the actual loss in men and officers, for his troops were so much disheartened by the defeat that they refused to march any longer against their foe, and clamoured for an immediate return to their own country. But the Prince evinced the fortitude of a hero, and strove to animate his soldiers with his own courage by exclaiming that he knew only how to advance, and not

* Meiyu, Yen's brother-in-law, refused to accompany him to pay his respects (*kotow*) at the tomb of their ancestors. His reply was "Filial piety is in my eyes the first of duties and the most entitled to respect; but I despise those who are really wanting in it, especially when they should be the first to set a laudable example."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 131.

to retreat.* His bold words failed to dissipate the effects of disaster, and although he remained several days without changing his armour, he had gained few over to his views, when an error on the part of Wenti's Government averted the disbandment of his force, and played the game into his hands just as it seemed almost lost.

The Imperialists owed their victory to the opportune arrival of Su Weitsou with a strong reinforcement, but no sooner had this success been obtained than orders were sent for the return of Su Weitsou and his corps. The morrow of their great victory found Wenti's generals incapacitated from following it up by this withdrawal of some of their best troops, and the blunder of their master furnished their opponent with the opportunity of retrieving his fortune. Both armies constructed fortified camps, and remained vigilantly watching each other's movements in order to seize any favourable opportunity that might present itself of attacking the other unawares. Neither side obtained any advantage until the Prince, whose spies kept him well-informed concerning the plans of the Imperialists, succeeded by a stratagem in drawing them from their entrenchments, when he fell upon them with his whole force. This battle was

* "I know how to advance, but not to retreat," he said. "Let those who wish to take the northern road pass to the left, and the others to the right." Nearly all passed to the left. One of his officers endeavoured to support his chief. "The loss of a battle ought not to deprive us of courage; out of ten battles, the founder of the Han dynasty lost nine, yet did he make himself master of the empire."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 134.

as short as it proved decisive. Wenti's army was completely overthrown. Many thousands of prisoners, including the generals in command, and all the spoil of the camp remained in the hands of the victor. With the defeat of this veteran army, and the capture of Tingan,* the fate of the war was virtually decided. From that day the result was never in doubt.

In this moment of distress conflicting counsels were pressed upon the unhappy Wenti. Some advised him to withdraw into the southern provinces and there continue the struggle, while others suggested coming to terms with the conqueror on the basis of a division of the empire. But the counsels of incapable men do not acquire decision in times of great peril, and while Wenti's ministers were advocating a leaden-winged policy, the Prince had crossed the Hoangho, traversed the fertile plains of Honan and Ganhoei, and planted his ensigns on the banks of the Great River, in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital. Emissaries from the Emperor were then sent, in the guise of supplicants, to the camp of the conqueror, but they failed to find in eloquence the means of reaching his heart. Thrice they beat the ground with their heads, but they were unable to do more than fill the cup to overflowing of humiliation and self-abasement. The Prince ironically apologised for causing them so much trouble, and also announced that he had not come so

* The Prince of Yen treated Tingan honourably. "I am only here," Tingan proudly said, "like an old bow which is broken and useless to you." "The Emperor, my father," replied the prince, "held bravery in honour, and I wish to imitate him."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 136.

far to secure a division of the empire for himself, but to ensure the punishment of those who had outraged the honour of his family.

Some vain attempts were made to place Nankin in a position to stand a siege until the garrisons of the south, already summoned to its aid, could arrive ; but the soldiers who had long fought the battles of their unworthy master with courage and fidelity were not to be replaced, and many of them had joined the service of their conqueror. The Prince did not leave the supporters of the Emperor much time to complete their plans. Little beyond forming a municipal guard had been done towards defending the city, when the Prince of Yen delivered his attack against three of the gates. In a few hours all was over, and the capital was in the hands of the soldier prince who had waged a civil war during more than four years, not, as he protested, for a personal object, but for the honour of his family and the benefit of his country. The sequel will show how far his protestations were sincere.

In the meantime the reign of Kien Wenti had closed by his voluntary abdication. Unlike the traditional Chinese monarch, he clung to life when he had lost the station to which he had been called. He hesitated so long about seeking a place of shelter in the south, that he was soon deprived of the chance of making a dignified exit ; and when the news that the Prince of Yen held possession of the gates reached him in his palace, there remained to him only three courses to pursue. Between suicide, surrender, and a

hurried escape in disguise, Wenti might still, at this eleventh hour, make his choice. But the fear both of death and of his enemy reduced him to the last expedient. He and a few chosen comrades shaved their heads and put on the garb of priests, resigning the cares of worldly life with the capacity to meet or support them. The rumour was spread about that Wenti had perished by his own hand, while as a matter of fact he was wending his way to Yunnan, where he passed in retirement the last years of his life. Wenti survived his fall nearly forty years. Long afterwards, in the reign of Yngtsong, an aged priest published a book of verses describing the misfortunes of Wenti. By some accident the author was identified as that ruler, when the authorities at once relegated him to honourable confinement in the palace at Peking, where he died shortly after he had been deprived of his liberty. History contains few more striking examples of happiness being long enjoyed in a private station by one who could not obtain it on the throne.

The Prince of Yen, in possession of the capital, and with all cause of embarrassment removed from his path by the supposed death of his nephew, turned his first attention to the punishment* of those whom he regarded as the aspersers of his family honour. During several weeks he pursued them with relentless

* Few of Wenti's courtiers showed much fidelity to their master's cause after his disappearance; but there was one illustrious exception. This was Hiaojou, who to the last protested against Yen as a usurper. With his latest effort he wrote in four characters "The Brigand Yen, Usurper."—Delamarre, p. 140.

vigour, and, not satisfied with wholesale executions of ministers and officers, he endeavoured to extirpate their race by massacring the other members of their families. The victor forgot in the hour of triumph that clemency is the most creditable quality in an irresponsible and supreme ruler, and indulged a terrific and inexcusable cruelty. But at first he evinced a seeming reluctance to assume the reins of power, although the bent of his thought was sufficiently indicated by the displeasure with which he received a proposal to place Wenti's youthful son upon the throne. At last, yielding to the importunity of his friends, or apprehensive of some rival supplanting him, he allowed himself to be forced into accepting what he wished, and then his measures to mark the commencement of his reign were thorough enough. By an autocratic decree of unprecedented force, he ordered that the years of Wenti's reign should be blotted out from history and added on to those of Hongwou, so that he might figure as his father's immediate successor. His early acts as king were thus in striking contradiction to his promises and proclamations as prince; but neither his summary proceedings, nor the executions with which he never failed to follow them up, availed to obliterate the events of the preceding four years, or to remove the brief reign of his unfortunate nephew from the country's annals.

The new ruler took the title of Chingtsou, but he is best remembered as Yonglo,* from the name given

* Yonglo means "eternal joy."

to the year of his accession. His first act was to remove the imperial residence from Nankin to Peking, although the former retained the position and rank of capital; and his earliest cares were caused by his northern neighbours, who had not remained indifferent spectators of the internecine strife which threatened to wreck all the results of Hongwou's wisdom and success. Among the Mongol tribes, who were again becoming known under the general term of Tartars, there had arisen leaders desirous of establishing some form of central authority and of reviving the title and position of the Khakhan. One of these desert chiefs, Kulitchi, who had assumed something of the style and privileges of royalty, incurred the resentment of the members and supporters of the old Mongol royal house; and although Yonglo extended to him marks of his approval and pledges of his support, he either fell a victim to the machinations of his enemies or was unable to maintain his position against them. Whatever hopes Yonglo may have entertained of ensuring the tranquillity of his northern frontier by means of an understanding with an adventurer glad to hold his position under the protection of a Chinese Emperor, were speedily destroyed by Kulitchi's overthrow.

This cause for vigilance, if not of anxiety, existing on his northern frontier, Yonglo can have found little pleasure in the prospect which presented itself to him in the far south, where a critical state of affairs in the tributary kingdom of Tonquin called imperatively for his attention. With that interest in the condition of countries in their immediate neighbourhood, which,

combined with supreme indifference to occurrences in lands beyond their sphere, has always been characteristic of the Chinese, Yonglo heard of a series of palace plots and crimes there, which had resulted in the deposition of the ruling dynasty, and in the elevation of an ambitious statesman to the throne. At first Yonglo, misled by the artful messages of this minister, Likimao, was disposed to overlook the means which he had employed to gain supreme power, and this inclination was strengthened all the more because Likimao reported that he had placed a child of the royal house upon the throne. The Imperial ratification of the appointment was sent in the belief that these representations were true, and Likimao congratulated himself on having attained his ends without having provoked the wrath of his powerful suzerain. But his self-gratulation did not long continue. The ministers of a just revenge were already at work to ensure his fall.

Likimao soon sent another envoy to China to prefer some requests of a personal character, but on his arrival he found there an unexpected guest in the person of a fugitive, who declared that he was the rightful prince of Tonquin. From him Yonglo soon learnt all the truth as to Likimao's proceedings and crimes; and the recital roused in him not only a natural detestation of the wickedness committed, but also a feeling of pique at having been so easily cajoled by Likimao's specious representations. The identity of the prince was clearly demonstrated by the respectful salutations of Likimao's own emissary, and

Yonglo at once resolved to champion the cause of one who had been so cruelly injured. The unfortunate princes of the tributary kingdoms and dependent states of this empire have ever found in the ruling family of China a sympathetic friend and willing supporter.

After the repulse of the small force sent to escort the rightful prince, Chintien Ping, back to his dominions—for when Likimao found that his schemes were discovered, and that he had no choice between the loss of the position he had acquired and a rupture with China, he resolved to adopt the manlier course and fight the matter out—Yonglo* despatched a larger army to put down and punish the insolent usurper. A campaign which included several encounters marked by great carnage followed, and Yonglo's commanders effected their purpose. Liki-mao was taken prisoner and the authority he hoped to establish utterly rooted up. As no eligible prince could be found for the throne, and in deference to the prayers of the people, Tonquin was incorporated

* Chinese history is full of apparent contradictions and inconsistencies, for which we must blame our authorities. We have seen the cruel acts that marked Yonglo's accession to power; but what instructions to generals on the eve of a campaign could be more humane than these?—"Likimao has offered me a disgraceful affront, spare no efforts in order to capture him, but be careful not yourselves to commit the crimes which you are going to punish. Maintain carefully discipline among your soldiers, and do not increase the troubles with which this empire is agitated. Respect the burial-places and the houses of the inhabitants, their goods, and also their wives and their daughters. Spare the lives of those who surrender. If I hear of any one of you breaking these orders, all his services shall be forgotten, and I will punish him with severity."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 159-60.

as the province of Kioachi* with the rest of the Empire. To Likimao was granted as a favour permission to serve in the army as a private soldier.

The Chinese authority was not generally recognised in this new region until the more turbulent races in the country had been disheartened by two unsuccessful risings. Changfoo became known not only as the conqueror, but also as the pacifier of Tonquin. The interest that can be felt in this petty struggle is but slight, nor does any greater importance belong to the desultory warfare in which Yonglo was engaged with the tribes of the northern and western deserts. In this he obtained some successes, and met with a few reverses; but the result left matters practically unchanged.

It was while on his return from one† of these expeditions, which had been carried across the steppe to as far as the upper course of the Amour, that Yonglo‡

* The population of this province was estimated at 32,100,000 persons, in addition to 2,087,500 wild tribes in the mountains. The administration of this large province was entrusted to 472 tribunals.

† Mr. Howorth mentions in his erudite "History of the Mongols" (vol. i. p. 633), that the Chinese army under Kanghi, 280 years later, found a tablet on the Kerulon commemorating this expedition.

‡ A danger which portended much trouble, but which happily passed off without raising a ripple on the surface of China affairs, cannot be wholly ignored in the survey of the reign of Yonglo. This was the threatened invasion of China by Timour. In 1415 Timour, having completed his Georgian and western campaigns, returned to Samarcand, where he directed his attention to the revenge of his family's wrongs in China. The invasion of China was resolved upon, a royal proclamation was issued, and the levies for a great expedition were made. Timour began his march and penetrated the mountains of Khokand; but little more than the rumour of these preparations had reached China when the

was seized with his last and fatal illness. This event occurred in the year 1425, when he was sixty-five years of age, and after he had reigned during twenty-one years. His eldest son, whom he had passed over in the succession, had been the cause of some trouble by forming intrigues against him, but his discontent having been discovered, he was placed under arrest. Another of Yonglo's sons, who had some time before been proclaimed heir apparent, succeeded him without disturbance or opposition, and reigned for a few months as the Emperor Gintsong. His virtues gave promise of a happy and prosperous reign; but the fates were not propitious, and his early death again cast the bark of state on troubled waters.

With the reign of Gintsong the first stage in the history of the Ming dynasty may be considered as reached. Their authority was firmly established, and the dangers which had threatened them in consequence of the Yen civil war had been passed through in safety. Both on the northern and on the southern frontiers the Emperor's sovereignty was successfully asserted; and envoys came from distant states of Bengal and Malacca to bring presents from their rulers to the Chinese potentate. The Chinese themselves were well pleased with these recognitions of

aged conqueror's death marred his designs. Timour began his journey in January 1415, and died in the following March at Otrar (see "Vie de Timour Bec," by Ali Shereffidden, translated by François Petis de la Croix; Paris, 1722). Four years later Timour's son, Shah Rokh, of Herat, sent an embassy to Peking in the year 1419, which was very favourably received and did not return until 1422. Among the presents sent was an old horse which had been the charger of Tamerlane (see Gibbon's "Decline and Fall").

their power, and regarded the elephants sent from India as omens of happy import. The internal condition of the country* was prosperous, and its external affairs were directed with sagacity and confidence as to its mission.

* Among the various edicts passed during these last two reigns may be mentioned one ordering the contraband export of tea to be severely punished. In connection with this subject was another of a somewhat similar character relating to horses. The want of horses has always been largely felt in China, and it was the custom to import horses into Shensi from the Mongolian steppes. These were purchased or exchanged for tea, which bore a standard proportionate value to the Tartar horse; a horse "of the first quality" was considered to be worth eighty pounds of tea (Delamarre). Other measures were taken to increase the number of horses in the country, and some of these were unpopular.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MING DYNASTY (*continued*).

A Peaceful Accession.—A Literary Rivalry.—Kaohin.—The Virtue of Promptitude.—Tonquin.—Insurrection there.—Chinese Withdrawal.—The Birth of an Heir.—Expeditions.—A Royal Poet.—Yngtsong.—An Empress Regent.—Wangchin, the Eunuch.—Gains the Upper Hand.—Rising in Yunnan.—Yesien, the Tartar.—An Ill-timed Affront.—War.—Incapacity of Wangchin.—Rout of Toumon.—Capture of Yngtsong.—Wangchin's Fate.—The Ransom of an Emperor.—Siege of Pekin.—Kingti.—Return of Yngtsong.—Intrigues.—Yukien.—Death of Yngtsong.—An Imperial Geography.—Military Grades and Public Farms.

THE accession of Gintsong's son, Suentsong, to the throne was not attended by any event of importance. For the time the clashing of arms had ceased throughout the land, and no more formidable contest presented itself for decision than a wordy war between the lettered classes of the nation. Yet that in its way was serious enough, and might have been fraught with grave consequences, because the grievances of a class so powerful as the literary body in China always has been constituted a subject to which no ruler could, even if he wished to, be indifferent. The matter came home to

every family in the kingdom and affected their worldly interests very closely. In the competitive examinations held throughout the country, students from the southern provinces carried everything before them, and threatened to monopolise all the honours. Not content with restricting their sphere of activity to their own native districts, they ventured beyond them, and were beginning to gain many of the prizes in the schools and academies of the north. Suentsong promptly answered the numerous petitions addressed to him on this subject by appointing a Commission of Inquiry, which found an easy and efficacious remedy by restricting competitors for literary honours to their native districts. The whole official and literary body was divided into three principal classes, one confined to the north, another to the centre, and the third to the south.

This difficulty happily solved, another presented itself in the discontent and ambition of the Emperor's uncle, Kaohin, who had been created Prince of Han, but whose ideas soared above a provincial governorship. In a short time he adopted a menacing attitude towards his nephew, and, making extensive military preparations, boasted that he held the Empire as much at his mercy as his father the Prince of Yen had done in the days of Kien Wenti. But Suentsong showed courage and capacity; and, assuming the command of his army in person, marched against this incipient rebel. The promptitude of his measures paralyzed the plans of his enemy, and none thought of resisting a monarch who showed that he knew

so well how to claim his rights and to assert his authority. Before it was generally realised in the country that Kaohin meditated revolt, he was under conveyance to a state prison at Peking.

The latest Chinese province, Tonquin, proved anything but a possession easily governed. The hill-tribes and a large section of the settled inhabitants were in a constant ferment, and the Chinese garrison was kept continually on the alert and under arms. This state of things soon grew intolerable, and it became a question whether the province should be abandoned, or whether recourse should be had to extreme measures in order to stamp out the national disaffection. After several of his detached corps had been cut to pieces by the mountaineers, the governor sent urgent messages to request reinforcements, saying that without prompt aid he would be unable to maintain his position. On the receipt of this bad news a council was held by the Emperor in the palace, when, after anxious deliberation, it was decided to withdraw the Chinese garrison and to remove the agents of civil authority. Changfoo alone, who had gained his reputation by its conquest, was averse to its surrender, but his advice was either ignored or over-ruled. Thus came to an end in A.D. 1428, after the brief space of ten years, the direct exercise of Chinese authority in Tonquin. The significance of the event was further enhanced by the deposition of the Prince left on the throne by Suentsong's lieutenant, and by the elevation to supreme power of an intriguing minister and popular leader. Notwithstanding this flagrant violation of the

agreement upon which he had withdrawn his troops, Suentsong did not conceive it to be prudent to renew his grandfather's interference in the affairs of this state. The conquest of Tonquin had not indeed been attended with much difficulty, but its retention and administration had been only effected at the cost of a great effort. There was nothing in its position to repay the bloodshed it entailed, and Suentsong was wise to relax his hold upon it at the first opportunity and with the least affront to his personal dignity.

The tranquillity of Suentsong's life was no more disturbed by foreign wars, and the internal affairs of his country continued prosperous and raised no suspicion of any ground for anxiety. But in one respect he shocked the national sentiment, although he appears to have been led to do so by the desire of considering the necessities of the state. Shortly after his accession he had proclaimed his principal and at that time favourite wife Empress, but time went on without his having an heir. This naturally caused considerable disappointment to a monarch desirous of retaining the throne in his own immediate descendants, and when one of his other wives presented him with a son the Empress's fall in his affections was assured. The child was proclaimed Heir Apparent with all the solemnity due to the auspicious occasion, and his mother was elevated to the rank of Empress, from which rank the Emperor's first wife was deposed. This unusual step, contrary to established rules, was received with murmurs on the part of the people, but the Emperor would not be diverted from his path.

He might, perhaps, have been less determined on the subject had he known that the boy was not his. A substituted child, if we may accept the authority of the Emperor Keen Lung,* was thus put in the place of the heir to the Chinese Empire.

Suentsong seems to have varied the monotony of reigning by periodical expeditions into the region north of China, which partook of the double character of the chase and the foray. During these he succeeded in inflicting some punishment upon the nomad tribes, and exhibited capacity in the conduct of irregular warfare by the manner in which he surprised the scattered forces of his opponent. A reign of assured internal peace and much national prosperity was brought suddenly to a conclusion in 1435. Suentsong showed during his reign of ten years the possession of many of the kingly virtues, and during his leisure hours he cultivated the Muses† with attention and success. This amiable prince left the throne to the son whose doubtful birth he had hailed with such delight eight years before.

As Yngtsong, the new Emperor, was only a child of eight years of age it was necessary that some one should assume the active responsibility of authority during his tender years; and, as is usual under such circum-

* Delamarre, p. 221. On this point Mailla is silent.

† Delamarre translates the following from the Ming annals as a specimen of his style:—"The hyacinths grow in lonely valleys and spread abroad their perfume; wise men are in the desert, their virtue is very luminous. Oh! how blooming are the hyacinths! they marry with the crowd of other plants. Oh, may the wise help my efforts!"

stances, the opportunity was afforded the princesses of the reigning family to put themselves forward and assert their rights in the matter. The strongest willed and the most influential among these did not, however, prove to be the wife who had successfully imposed upon the late Emperor, and who had thereby obtained the supreme position in the palace; but it turned out to be Changchi, Suentsong's mother. Her son was hardly dead when she seized the reins of power and proclaiming herself Regent, gained over the adherence of the most influential of the ministers by taking them into her confidence and by forming them into a council. This new governing body consisted of five members, who acted in co-operation with the Empress Regent. They possessed their offices, however, by her favour, and they appear to have been as little able to resist the tact of her advances as to oppose the schemes and policy which she propounded. They served as a useful screen for her ambition, and in bidding her grandson follow their example and accept their advice, she knew she was really directing him so as to best promote her own ends.*

Her desire to exercise the authority of ruler being thus easily attained and gratified, it was only natural that she should look about to discern what persons there were who might threaten her undisturbed tenure of the position she had usurped, and who

* "You see these five great ministers," she said to Yngtsong, "every one of them has rendered signal services to the empire, and by following their counsels you cannot fail to be successful." —Mailla, vol. x. p. 197.

she might count her friends and who her enemies. Among the latter, as she conceived, none was more formidable and more to be dreaded than the eunuch Wangchin, who had gained a great ascendancy over the young Emperor Yngtsong; and with the promptitude of an unscrupulous mind she resolved to compass his death. Before the assembled ministers and in the presence of the whole court, she denounced him as an enemy of the state, and as one whose crimes rendered him deserving of death. But the young Emperor implored that the life of his favourite might be spared, and all present supported what he asked as a personal favour. The Empress felt constrained to yield, but she warned Wangchin that on the next occasion he must expect no mercy. She little thought at the time that she would never again have so much as the inclination to decree his punishment.

The exact character of Wangchin's crime is not known, but probably he possessed no fault greater or more disastrous in its consequences than his incapacity. Having thus been marked out in a public manner as the enemy, and consequently as the object also of the Empress Regent's resentment, he set himself to the task, difficult though it was, of removing the insecurity of his position by ingratiating himself into her good graces. In this he succeeded beyond all his hopes, and in a degree that might appear to be incredible, although we know how much a handsome face, a ready tongue, and a plausible address may accomplish. Within three years after

the scene described, Wangchin had not only gained a seat on the council, but his influence was all-powerful with the Empress Regent. She, who had been his bitterest, indeed, so far as we may judge, his only foe, was now his warmest friend and staunchest supporter. Without him nothing was done, and the Empress practically resigned to him the functions of authority.

The consequences of this diversion of the ruling power from the hands of the Empress and her council into those of this ambitious individual proved most disastrous and unfortunate, for his incapacity was boundless. Having displaced the experienced ministers of the Empire, he advanced to the front rank of the official service creatures of his own, but all had to retain office by humouring his whims and obeying his commands. The administration of the country was carried on after a certain fashion without any evil consequences becoming apparent, but when Wangchin selected his favourites or his creatures for commands in the army he imperilled both his reputation and the national interests by inviting defeat. Even here his better fortune seemed at first likely to save him from the natural consequences of his impolicy, for a revolt in Yunnan* was summarily repressed and the Emperor's authority promptly reasserted. But the natural consequences of human incapacity are not to be ultimately averted. They arise sooner or later; and their

* The people of this province have always been turbulent and addicted to rebellion. The Panthay insurrection was the latest manifestation of this fact. On the occasion in question the Yunnanese were apparently encouraged to revolt by the withdrawal from Tonquin.

advent was not long deferred in the case of Wangchin.

Among the Mongols of the northern frontier there had at this time arisen some fresh sense of union, and Yesien, Prince of Chuning,* who succeeded to his father's place and name about the time when all Wangchin's designs had apparently been crowned with success, was possessed with the ambition to renew the incursions into China that had formerly been the prerogative and practice of his race. The border governors soon reported that Yesien was actively engaged in military preparations, and that his emissaries and spies were exploring the frontier of the Empire for the purpose of ascertaining its weak places. But for the time Yesien took no active steps against the Chinese authorities, and duly sent the usual envoy and presents to the capital for the purpose of announcing his accession to the chiefship of his people. He also made the customary request to the Emperor for a Chinese princess as his wife. Yesien's moderation removed the apprehensions which his military preparations were beginning to arouse, and both Yngtsong and the more experienced of his officials were in favour of a gracious compliance with the requests of the Tartar prince. But to Wangchin the occasion appeared to be one not for arranging in a satisfactory manner a difficulty† that

* The title conferred on his father by the Chinese Emperor.

† That the state of the Imperial finances was not altogether flourishing may be inferred from the fact that prisoners were allowed to ransom themselves in this year (A.D. 1439).—Delamarre, p. 243.

might imperil the national interests, but for exalting his own position and for gratifying his personal vanity. Wangchin appropriated for himself the presents sent by the Tartar chief, and haughtily refused to entertain the proposition of marriage which he made to the Chinese Government. The messengers returned to the camp of Yesien to inflame his indignation by the rejection of his overtures, and by the relation of their discourteous treatment.

The desert chieftain took this conduct on the part of the Chinese Government as an affront to his person, and as a slight upon his honour. According to the code of honour among his race, the insult thus publicly offered could only be atoned for in blood; for the instincts natural to man raged, uncontrolled by the lessons of civilisation, in the hearts of the children of these northern steppes. Yesien's reply to Wangchin was to collect his fighting men and to harry the border districts of the Empire. The boldness of his policy greatly disconcerted Wangchin and his advisers, for Yesien marched against the strongly fortified and strategically important town of Taitong in Shansi, and even proclaimed his intention of attacking Peking.

Wangchin, alarmed at the storm which he had so heedlessly raised, called out all the troops stationed in the northern provinces, and he also compelled the courtiers to take up arms and join the active army in the field. Five hundred thousand men were assembled, and, to increase the confidence of the soldiers and to make victory doubly assured, as he thought, Wangchin insisted on the young Emperor placing himself at their

head. But, as the event turned out, these extensive preparations and this presence of the sovereign contributed not to make a victory more signal and illustrious, but to render a defeat more crushing and ignominious.

The eunuch general was ill-able to direct the unwieldy machine which he had found it so easy in the Emperor's name to create, and, ignorant of the way in which it was necessary to provide for the requirements of so vast a body of men, his troops had not taken the field many days before they were reduced to extreme straits by the breaking-down of the transport and commissariat services. In face of an enterprising enemy this mismanagement soon produced the greatest confusion in the ranks of the Imperialists. Divided counsels also presented themselves in the Cabinet to increase the disorder in their midst; but although many sought to expose the folly of Wangchin, and to cause his removal from office, yet he remained supreme in the affection of his Sovereign and in his own effrontery.

Meantime, Yesien was actively employed in the endeavour to take the superior army of his opponent at a disadvantage, and at last the favourable opportunity offered itself when Wangchin pitched his camp in a false position at a place called Toumon. The error of the Chinese commander was so glaring that Yesien imagined that it must conceal some deep-laid stratagem, and accordingly sent one of his officers nominally to discuss the terms on which an arrangement might be concluded, but really to examine the

military position. The envoy hastened back as soon as he could to urge Yesien to deliver his attack without delay, as fortune had given the Chinese army into his hands. The Tartar prince acted with the promptitude the occasion required. The Chinese, cooped up in a narrow space and surrounded on all sides, fought with desperation, but with little judgment. They broke in every direction, and were pursued with vigour by the Mongol horsemen. The battle in a few hours became a rout. The Tartars gave no mercy, and more than 100,000 Chinese perished at their hands. Nor had the calamity ceased there. The Emperor himself, the youthful Yngtsong, remained captive to his savage foe, and it seemed but a trifling consolation in the midst of the surrounding misfortune to find that Wangchin had paid with his life* the penalty of the ruin entailed by his imprudence and temerity.

Large sums of money were offered for the ransom of Yngtsong, but Yesien was loth to part on easy terms with so distinguished a captive. After his great victory at Toumon, the Tartar chief did not meet with as many successes as he might have anticipated, for the border garrisons stood resolutely to their posts, and at last Yesien resolved to return to the Toula, taking back with him his state prisoner,

* Fanchong, the commander of the Guards, seeing that the day was lost, approached Wangchin and slew him with his sword. His relations and friends were executed later on at the capital, and his and their goods were confiscated to the state. The detailed list published of his wealth recalls to mind the possessions of Wolsey.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 214-15.

Yngtsong. His parting message to the ministry at Peking was to fix the ransom of the Emperor at 100 taels of gold, 200 taels of silver, and 200 pieces of the finest silk.

The departure of Yesien rendered it necessary for the Empress to take steps for the conduct of the administration during the enforced absence of the Emperor. At first there had been only a council of regency, but when it became known that Yngtsong had been conveyed to the north, his younger brother, Chinwang, was placed upon the throne in the year 1450, and he took the style of Kingti. The seven years during which he filled the throne were marked by the consequences of the rude shock which the rout of Toumon had produced throughout the whole country. That single defeat had almost sufficed to undo all the fruits of the policy of previous years, and to even render the task of preserving internal order one of no slight difficulty, so easy a matter is it to destroy compared with the labour required to create.

The eight years during which Kingti ruled in his brother's place were marked by a fierce but intermittent war with the Tartars, during which Yesien carried terror and desolation through the border districts of Shansi and Pechihli. During one of these expeditions Yesien, who carried his imperial prisoner about with him, laid siege to Peking, but, as his force was composed mostly of cavalry, he was unable to do more than to beleaguer it and make feeble attacks on the gates. The arrival of fresh troops from

Leaoutung enabled the Chinese to assume the offensive, when Yesien was glad enough to be able to make an orderly retreat back to his native districts with his captive. Yesien returned on several subsequent occasions; but the Chinese, who had had the good fortune to discover a capable general in Yukien, more than held their own.

The one disturbing element in the situation was the continued captivity of Yngtsong, whom neither the wealth nor the force of China could ransom. A feeling was gaining ground that not much harm would be done were Yngtsong left to his fate, and this was encouraged and strengthened by Kingti, who, having tasted the sweets of power, felt loth to lose them. For reasons which must have had force at the time, but the memory of which has not been preserved, Yesien* came to the determination to release Yngtsong, and to permit his return to his country. This decision was suddenly formed, and was little expected by either the court or the people of China, and when the unfortunate Yngtsong reached his native country he found none prepared to receive and few to welcome him. His imprisonment had lasted little more than twelve

* Yesien's subsequent career may here be briefly sketched. A few months after Yngtsong's release he murdered his rightful chief or sovereign, the Great Khan of the Mongols, Thotho Timour, because he had refused to elevate his wife, Yesien's sister, to the throne. Yesien seized his place, but his triumph proved of brief duration. In 1454 he was himself murdered by Ala, the chief of a kindred horde. Ala also was assassinated, and the chiefship again passed to a son of Thotho Timour.—Delamarre, pp. 299, 300.

months, but it had continued long enough to provide him with a successor, and to completely change the aspect of affairs at his capital. When he entered Pekin the few hopes he had entertained of a restoration to the throne were abandoned, and he calmly accepted the apartments assigned him in the palace by his brother Kingti. The shadow of the rout at Toumon still hung heavily on his mind.

But although Yngtsong thus waived all his rights in favour of his brother Kingti, his son had been proclaimed Heir Apparent, and it was generally understood that the succession would lie with him. Having fared so well in his first design of retaining possession of the throne, Kingti not unnaturally next turned his attention to the task of preserving it in the hands of his own branch of the family. In this plan he was on the point of succeeding, although success might have entailed a civil war, when the death of his only son marred his prospects. No other event occurred to redeem the memory of Kingti's brief reign from oblivion, but on his death in 1458 Yngtsong was brought forth from his seclusion and restored to the throne. The hope was indulged that under Yngtsong the national prosperity might revive; for Kingti had been a cold and unpopular ruler, whereas Yngtsong had shown that he possessed virtues and qualities well suited to the fulfilment of the duties of his rank, although, through the evil influence of the eunuch Wangchin, they had been obscured by the faults of his minister and by the catastrophe in the war with Yesien.

Yngtsong's return to power was not followed by any of those remarkable events which his friends had anticipated. He was restored to the throne by an intrigue not very dissimilar to that which had resulted in his temporary deposition, and his reappearance in public life was signalled by his supporters ordering the execution of their rivals.* Yngtsong reigned for eight more years, but during these no event of greater moment occurred than the petty intrigues of a court presided over by a prince without force of character or any definite views of his own. At first the object of their lip-loyalty, and then, when their aims had been attained, regarded with indifference, Yngtsong's supporters soon began to either fall away from him or to plot his fresh deposition, for to the stormy petrels of politics a settled state of things is irksome and tranquillity impossible.

One plot among the eunuchs of the palace was on the point of succeeding, and only the faithful valour of the body-guard thwarted their plans and put down

* Among these was Yukien, the general who successfully defended Peking against Yesien. Yukien's career had been in every way a creditable one, and he had several times suffered from the rapid changes which took place in the relations of parties during these years. For twelve years he had been inspector and controller of the revenue for Shansi and Honan. He was imprisoned on a frivolous charge, but reinstated in his post at the prayer of the people. This was in 1441. Five years later he originated a great financial reform in the abolition of the numerous custom-houses needlessly established, and by the transfer of their duties to the local officials. Yukien appears to have been the most upright and capable man in China of his day.—See Delamarre, pp. 250, 262, 272.

the seditious movement in blood. Another, promoted by the prime minister, Cheheng, was fortunately discovered in time and its authors were promptly arrested and executed after being stripped of their rank and honours. Cheheng avoided some of the ignominy of his sentence by taking poison. It was only through such anxieties as these that Yngtsong could make good his claim to reign in China, nor did the condition of the country afford much room for rejoicing, despite the fact that the Tartars left for a season the borders undisturbed. Earthquakes and inundations caused considerable loss to the country, and spread terror among a superstitious people accustomed to see in natural phenomena the measure of their faults and the anger of the celestial powers.

Yngtsong's death occurred in the year 1465, when he was thirty-eight years old, and he left his throne to his eldest son Chukienchin. In his will, which contained nothing else that was remarkable, he ordered that none should immolate themselves on account of his death, and by forbidding this mistaken practice he manifested some fellow-feeling towards his subjects. Yngtsong's later reign did not come up to the expectations formed about it before it began, but, at the least, it was not marked by any disaster similar to that of Toumon. When Yngtsong* died he could

* Among the events of the reign may be mentioned the completion of a great work on the ancient and modern geography of China entitled "Tai-ming-y-tong-tchi." This work consists of ninety volumes, and a copy is in the library at Paris (Mailla, vol. x. p. 239). Imperial farms were also established for the first time in

fairly say that he left to his children the heritage he had received almost intact, and in nearly the same condition as when he received it.

China. These were formed out of confiscated lands, and great discontent was caused thereby. A more commendable step was taken in the establishment of military schools where degrees were issued for proficiency in archery and horsemanship.—Delamarre.

CHAPTER V.

THREE MING EMPERORS.

Hientsong.—His discreet Conduct.—Petty Wars.—A Desert Chief.—Mansu.—His brief Reign of Independence.—Executed as a Warning to Others.—A Council of Eunuchs.—Landed Proprietors.—Attempted Revival of Feudal Rights.—The Relations of Classes.—The Duty of Princes.—The Extravagance of the Court.—Gold Mines.—A New Canal.—The Feeding of the Capital.—Repairing of the Great Wall.—Hiaotsong.—Buddhism still a Foreign Religion.—Intrigues.—Mawenchin.—Affairs in Central Asia.—Hahema.—Population of the Country.—Revolt in Hainan.—Description of that Island.—The Court of Finance.—Public Granaries.—Woutsong.—The Plot of the Eight Eunuchs.—Liukin.—Other Intrigues.—Period of general Disturbance.—Happy Termination of these Difficulties.—Insurrection in Szchuen quelled.—The Hiangma.—Pillaging of Suburbs of Pekin.—Trouble bringeth not Wisdom to Woutsong.—His Death.—The Throne Vacant.—The First European at Canton.

HIENTSONG* promptly gained popular acclamation by the religious manner in which he obeyed his father's last instructions. The prescribed interval of mourning was kept with due observance, and the young

* The principal authority for this period is Delamarre's translation. It gives a most detailed account of Hientsong's reign.

ruler selected as his Empress the princess whom his father had designated for him. In great acts not less than in small ones, he strove to imitate his predecessor, and to copy his virtues without repeating his vices. The harsh treatment and ingratitude shown towards the illustrious Yukien had been one of the darkest spots on the reputation of Yngtsong's later years. Hientsong had both the discrimination and the resolution to remove, so far as he could, this reproach to his family by publicly paying honour to the memory of that minister and general. The ceremony of rehabilitating the character of this worthy man, and of restoring his original honours, was performed with exact attention, but in any other country than China this would seem but a useless and unnecessary proceeding. The Chinese have, however, continued to attach importance to the practice, partly because it may be held a tribute to truth, and also because it must be considered some redeeming feature in the hard conditions of their official life, which bestows comparatively few rewards, and which always calls for severe hardships.

During the twenty-two years that Hientsong occupied the throne, many questions presented themselves for his consideration, and, so far as may be judged, he endeavoured to, and did, fulfil his duties in a creditable and conscientious manner. This period was one also of almost incessant warfare, not only on the extreme frontiers, but also in some of the more inaccessible districts of the interior. Yet no campaign on a large scale, signalised either by some great triumph or by

some equally decisive reverse, was fought to redeem the memory of these small wars from oblivion. When it has been stated that there were insurrections in Hopeh and Szchuen, seditious movements in Leaoutung and Yunnan, that there were disturbances among the fierce Miaotse,* and the tribes of the Tibetan border, enough has been said to illustrate the condition of the country, and to show the vicissitudes of empire. None of these wars attained serious dimensions, and in all the encounters necessary to vindicate the authority of the Government, the arms of Hientsong were crowned with victory.

One contest, and one alone, threatened to assume a larger aspect, and may fairly claim brief description in this place. In the bleak region round the sources of the Hoangho, where scattered tribes have found it difficult, from the remotest ages, to gain a sustenance for themselves and their flocks, the chief Patan had gathered into his hands some of the power of supreme authority. His town or permanent camp, with its mud rampart, appeared, in the eyes of his simple race, as good a symbol of kingly power as the more pretentious buildings of the greater capitals seemed to a people of higher culture. The first ruler of Chechen, as this district was called, was quite satisfied to recognise the supremacy of the Chinese Emperor, and to base his position on the moral paramounce

* A savage but freedom-loving people dwelling in the mountains of Kweichow. They still retain the qualities which have distinguished them from an early period, and their complete subjection and introduction to the benefits of a civilised manner of life remain a question for some coming Chinese statesman to settle.

of his powerful neighbour. Patan had been the faithful ally and dependent of the later princes of the Yuen dynasty, and when they were displaced and vanished from the scene he transferred his allegiance without hesitation to the new ruler Hongwou.

Time went on, and the arrangement, which had seemed natural and prudent to Patan and his son, assumed an irksome character in the eyes of the ambitious Mansu, the grandson of the former chief. The Chinese declared that he availed himself of his favourable position to make his town the refuge-place for all the evil-doers on the western borders, and certainly he adopted the attitude of a man who conceived that he had some more profitable and distinguished work to do than to guide the fortunes and sway the councils of a pastoral tribe. His first collision with the Chinese authorities was caused by a dispute over the collection of the small tribute for which he was liable, and the removal of this difficulty was not facilitated by the existence of a sanctuary controversy. A small body of troops received directions to march against him, but Mansu was on his guard. He succeeded in taking them by surprise, and overwhelmed this detachment in the narrow approaches to his capital. This victory invested his party with a more formidable character than had yet been attached to it, but it also entailed the grave peril of marking him out as an irreclaimable foe of China. Fresh troops were sent against him; his followers, dismayed by the sight of the extensive military preparations brought to bear on them, deserted him, and at last

Mansu himself fell into the hands of his enemy. His fate was intended to act as a warning to any who might aspire to imitate him, and on his arrival at the capital he was forthwith executed as a rebel.*

Two measures of domestic policy carried out by the Emperor Hientsong attracted considerable notice, and both excited almost universal condemnation. The first of these was the creation of a Council† of Eunuchs into whose power were placed all matters of life and death. At first it seemed as if this creation of a new administrative body aimed only at humouring a whim of the ruler, and it was not seriously anticipated that this tribunal would exercise much influence over practical affairs. It soon became clear, however, that its functions were more than honorary, and, as a body of troops was specially set apart for the execution of its behests, the new council rapidly became an engine of tyranny. The part taken by its members in the work of administration was most important, and the character of its charter also absolved it from responsibility. No one knew what decrees it passed, but none could escape the malice of a private enemy who happened to be a member of this Chinese Star Chamber. During five years this palace conclave was the terror of the land, but at last the public outcry against it became so loud that Hientsong had to suspend its functions, although he still hesitated to destroy the work of his own hands.

* Delamarre, pp. 344-5; Mailla, vol. x. pp. 244-6.

† Called Si-tchang.—Mailla.

The nation was little satisfied with this inadequate reparation, and after its members had been formally denounced as enemies of the state, several of the principal of them were sentenced to death. Hientsong's popularity thereupon revived, and his subjects charitably attributed to weakness and amiability his having so long condoned the criminal and tyrannical proceedings of this section of his most intimate courtiers.

In the second measure, of which the consequences did not become immediately perceptible, will be found one of the chief causes that operated towards effecting the early overthrow and destruction of the Mings. The members of the reigning House, and all who had contributed to its elevation, naturally expected some reward for their position or their services; and it became their first ambition to obtain territorial grants from the Sovereign, and to found an estate which could be handed down as a patrimony to their descendants. The feudal practices and system had died out in China many centuries before, and it was not to be supposed that a people, like the Chinese, strongly imbued with the principles of equality, and only recognising as a superior class the representatives of officialism and letters, would look with much favour on any attempt to revive an order of territorial magnates with whom they had no sympathy. Hientsong himself felt no strong interest in the matter. He knew the people's mind on this subject, and he was aware that the authority of the King is rather diminished than enhanced by the

presence of a powerful and warlike nobility, who have always been prone to see in the ruler the highest member of their order rather than the "divinely-elected" guide of a people. On the other hand, he was not sufficiently cold to resist the importunities of his friends. In the matter, therefore, of making territorial grants to the more prominent of his supporters he vacillated between one side and the other. The representations of one of the censors led him to pass an edict against any territorial concessions, but within a very few weeks of this firm and wise decision he was so far influenced by his relatives that he conferred several grants of land on members of his family. The rule once broken was seldom afterwards rigidly enforced, and gradually the scions of the Ming family became territorial magnates to the much discontent of the people. It was in the eyes of the latter a flagrant interference with the laws of providence to "assign to one man a district which could supply the wants of a hundred families."*

* The socialistic tendency of these theories is evident, but in China their evil was arrested and corrected by the veneration of the people for the sovereign, and by the natural conservatism of the masses. Class distinctions being unknown, all parties having to rise through the same curriculum of education and examination, the career in the army and the civil service, as necessarily in literature, being open to all, the people naturally regarded with any sentiments than those of pleasure and approval an attempt to foist on them institutions which they did not understand. Something of the view taken by the people as to the duty of princes may be gathered from the sentiment of a minister who declared that "when the surplus treasure in the exchequer is not devoted to the task of alleviating want, and defraying the cost of the army, it is because the sovereign is cherishing secret and sinister intentions."—Delamarre, p. 337.

While this cause for discontent not only existed but was acquiring fresh force throughout the country, the extravagance of the court had resulted in grave pecuniary embarrassment, and, as some possible means of supplying urgent wants, orders were given to resume the working of all the gold mines in central China upon which work had been long discontinued. More than half a million of persons were employed in these operations, but the result was next to nothing. Many lives were lost from fever, and the total sum which the Emperor derived from this desperate expedient and experiment amounted to no more than thirty ounces. The search for gold was then abandoned in despair, but we are not told whether the Emperor sought the true remedy of his embarrassment in retrenchment and economy.

On the other hand several undertakings of great public utility must be placed to the credit of Hientsong, and among these not the least important was the cutting of a canal from Peking to the Peiho, sufficiently deep to admit of large junks laden with grain proceeding to the capital both from the Yuho and from the Gulf of Pechihli. The transport of grain from the central provinces, in order to supply the wants of the capital and of the northern districts, where a large garrison was permanently stationed, was always very extensive, and a regular organisation was required to maintain it in an efficient state. At first it had been placed in the hands of the civil authorities, but eventually it was transferred to those of the military,*

* Delamarre, p. 351.

by whom the work was performed with remarkable success. In this measure may be seen the germ of an efficient military field transport, although it must be remembered that here the great difficulty of all was much simplified by the existence of a convenient water-way throughout the entire route.

Another enterprise of a dissimilar but not less useful character was accomplished in the repairing of the great wall of Tsin Chi Hoangti. In 1474* it was reported in a memorial to the throne that this structure was in a state of great disrepair, and that the flourishing condition of the Empire afforded a favourable opportunity for restoring it. The necessary sanction having been obtained from the Emperor, the work was prosecuted with energy. The local garrison supplied the labour, and in a few months the wall had been renovated throughout a great portion of its length by the efforts of 50,000 soldiers. A large extent of territory within this wall was then parcelled out among military settlers, and while there was increased security from without, greater prosperity prevailed within.†

The closing years of Hientsong's reign witnessed the achievement of several brilliant successes over the Tartars. The town of Hami was taken by one of his lieutenants, and again subjected to Chinese

* This year was marked by the appearance of a comet, which remained in the northern heavens for several months. It may be worth pointing out that the Chinese writer speaks of it as having then "extinguished itself."—Delamarre, p. 352.

† Six hundred thousand bushels of grain were raised annually in this new district.—Delamarre, p. 361.

authority. But on the northern frontier near Taitong the Imperialists suffered a reverse, which the unlucky commanders represented in their official bulletins as a success. The latter misadventure was exceptional, and the capture of Hami more truly represented the condition of the Empire, when Hientsong's death* left the throne vacant. (A.D. 1487.)

His son and successor, Hiaotsong, was a youth of eighteen when he was called upon to assume the grave responsibility of governing the Empire, but his youth does not appear to have led him into any greater indiscretion than to show a marked partiality for the doctrines of Buddhism. In China, although such a tendency has long been common, and although Buddhism now holds an important part in the religious ceremonies and belief of the court, a leaning towards Buddhism has always been denounced as a kind of infidelity. The moralists of the palace and the petitioners of the throne have ever seized the opportunity thus afforded them to dilate upon the virtues of the great men of a primitive era, and to protest against the immorality of these later days. So it was in the case of Hiaotsong; but whatever his errors of opinion, his acts† as ruler appear to have been founded in wisdom, and marked by generosity towards those who disagreed with him.

The presence of a young prince upon the throne

* Mailla says he died of grief at the loss of one of his wives; Delamarre assigns no cause.

† The first year, A.D. 1487, of his reign was marked by a shower of falling stars of extraordinary brilliance.

always affords the opportunity for rival ambitions to assert themselves in the arena of public affairs. The first few years of Hiaotsong's reign were not free from this cause of irritation, and several ministers were banished and decapitated in expiation of their crimes or misfortune before the Emperor felt sure that he had found in Mawenchin a man in whose integrity he might place the same faith as in his ability. Mawenchin held throughout Hiaotsong's reign the foremost place in official life, and the country benefited equally by his sagacity and his valour. Nor, though the records are always too meagre, and sometimes too contradictory, to now invest the subject with any of the interest which at the time it claimed in the eyes of the Chinese, can we pass over the one question which occupied the attention, roused the apprehension, and employed the talent of Mawenchin and his colleagues.

In remote Central Asia, where the exciting game of ambition has oft been played by ephemeral conquerors, whose fluctuating fortunes have been marked by the overthrow of dynasties, the Chinese had now for almost a century maintained their supremacy intact, if frequently disputed, and their strong position at Hami* enabled them to foil the spasmodic

* The town of Hami, or Kamul, has always been of importance, as the place at which the routes passing both south and north of the Tian Shan range converge and meet. It was also long the bulwark of Buddhism on the west against the encroachments of Mahomedanism; but in 1550 Hadji Mahomed, the friend of Ramusio, speaks of it as the first Mahomedan city met with in travelling from China. It had then passed under the authority

attempts of their rude assailants. The governor of this town naturally became a personage of great importance on the north-west frontier, and at no other place did good service receive its due reward more promptly than at this gate of the Empire. One of Hiaotsong's first acts had been to raise Hanchen, the governor, who had retaken it in the last year of Hientsong's reign, to the rank of prince, but Hanchen's new honours did not bring good fortune to him in the matter of his onerous charge. For the very year following his elevation, Hahema, a Tartar chief who reigned at Turfan,* attacked him suddenly, and, having slain the commandant, drove out the Chinese and set up his own authority. With the loss of Hami, all the possessions beyond Gobi also fell into the hands of tribes who, always hostile to the Chinese, had grown doubly inimical to them since they adopted the tenets of Mahomedanism. On this occasion Hahema, concerned to defend his western frontiers against neighbours not less aggressive than himself, withdrew from his conquest, and consented to pay to the injured dignity of China the reparation Mawenchin required.

But Hahema's moderation did not last long.

of Mansur of Turfan. The climate is exceedingly mild, as oranges grow there, and now that the Chinese are again firmly established in Central Asia its old prosperity may revive (see Col. Yule's "Cathay and the Way Thither" for several references to condition of Hami in the middle ages). Baron von Richthofen speaks of its claims as being "the best and, indeed, the only natural line for a railway from China to Europe."

* Turfan or Tarfur, an important town situated south of the Tian Shan range, and about 300 miles west of Hami.

Mawenchin placed in the vacant seat of Hami a young prince called Champa or Hiapa, who came from Manchuria, and who represented in direct line the old reigning House of the Mongols; but this appointment seemed to Hahema an affront of a personal character. Hahema at once marched against Hami, which he seemed resolved to prevent falling into the hands of anybody else, as he could not keep it for himself. Hami surrendered without any attempt at resistance, and Champa, instead of enjoying his new principality, became a prisoner in the hands of a malignant foe.

It was impossible for the Chinese to put up with this second and flagrant insult. The deposition of Champa reopened the old sore caused by the murder of Hanchen, and rendered it incumbent on Hiaotsong's ministers to take steps to inflict a summary punishment on the ambitious Hahema. It is always easier to decree the punishment of a vassal whose security consists in the remoteness of his district than it is to carry out his chastisement, and Hahema continued to enjoy the security of his position. After this second triumph he proclaimed himself Khakhan, and he continued to make Turfan his principal place of residence. Hami he was content to leave in the charge of two of his lieutenants with a small garrison of two hundred horsemen.

The confidence shown in these arrangements provided the Chinese with the opportunity of striking a prompt blow against their opponent. An attack on Hami did not promise to be a very hazardous undertaking, although it naturally proved more difficult to

keep secret the preparations for such an enterprise. Hahema's officers soon heard of the approaching force, and by a rapid retreat ensured their own safety and converted the Chinese success into a barren victory. The presence of a Chinese army at Hami sufficed to bring Hahema to a proper sense of his position. He then surrendered his prisoner Champa, sent in a fresh expression of his dependence on the Chinese Emperor and acquiesced in the installation of Champa as Prince of Hami. Peace was thus given to a region which the ambition of Hahema had threatened to disturb.*

The rest of Hiaotsong's reign was uneventful so far as its external relations went, but an insurrection on the part of the natives of Hainan† called attention to

* About this time, in 1502, the population of China was returned at 9,113,446 families, or 53,281,158 persons. The lands under cultivation amounted to 14,228,000 king, or more than 200,000,000 acres. This latter estimate appears excessive, but it is quoted from Mailla, vol. x. p. 262 and note.

† The island of Hainan is of very considerable importance. It is attached to the province of Kwantung. At present little is known of the actual condition of this island, but its mineral wealth is believed to be considerable. Timber forms its principal staple trade. The Chinese authority was first established there in B.C. 111 by General Lupoteh, but for many centuries it has been a reality only in a few districts adjoining the coast. The capital is Kiungchow, and it is also the principal sea-port. The inhabitants are divided into three races—the Chinese, the Shuli, who appear to be a cross between the natives and the Celestials, and the Shengli, Black Li, or aborigines, referred to above. The population is estimated at about two and a half millions. Hainan, which in the past has often been a mere piratical nest and a source of trouble to the Chinese Government, is probably destined to play a considerable part in the development of European trade with China (see, for an interesting description of Hainan with references, vol. xi. "Encyclopædia Britannica," 9th edition, 1880).

a remote portion of the Empire which seldom received much notice from the magnates of Peking. The blacks of Hainan, as they were designated, had had the misfortune to be placed under the authority of a governor who ground them down with harsh usage, and when on some rumour of his tyranny reaching the ears of his superiors he was removed, his successor continued with still greater violence the course he had adopted. The Hainanese, unable to make their plaints in any form likely to receive attention at the capital, began to plot how they might effect their deliverance from an oppression which weighed so heavily upon them, and they found a popular chief in the person of Founancha, ready and willing to lead them against their Chinese masters. In the disturbances that followed in consequence of this effort towards freedom the small Chinese garrison was unable to do much towards the maintenance of order, and the natives under the leadership of Founancha long baffled the attempts made to reduce them to subjection. It is possible that the struggle might have continued for an indefinite period had not the Chinese raised a corps of native troops who were able to engage the Hainanese insurgents on more equal terms. This plan of proceeding answered extremely well, and when Founancha was slain in a skirmish his followers either disbanded or gave in their formal surrender.

With the pacification of Hainan the last important event of Hiaotsong's reign is recorded. That prince was still young, but his strength appears to have been feeble, and it had long been evident that his end was

approaching.* His death occurred in A.D. 1505, when he was only thirty-six years of age, and he left the throne to his son, who became the Emperor Woutsong. It is difficult to form a clear opinion as to the character of these princes of the House of Ming, who succeed each other on the stage of history without performing any deed calculated to impress the mind or to inspire the pen. Hiaotsong showed something of the care a great prince should exhibit towards his people by providing public granaries in which corn could be stored for years of dearth and famine. Into these each district of ten hamlets was obliged to send annually a quantity of grain until there were stored up 100,000 bushels in each granary. The wisdom of this precaution was undoubted, and in a land in which large provinces are so frequently desolated by famine, as is the case in China, the people had good reason to laud the forethought of their ruler.†

The reign of Woutsong proved prolific of misfortune both for the prince and also for the nation. His accession to the throne served as the signal for a clique of courtiers to begin machinations which had the double object in view of advancing their own fortunes and of gradually usurping the functions of the

* In 1504 Champa was driven from Hami by a local rising headed by Hapola, the son-in-law of the former governor, Hanchen. He was, however, reinstated by the Chinese, and Hapola was executed.

† A Chinese popular opinion on the subject of the king's responsibility and that of his ministers may be found in the following sentence taken from Delamarre (p. 415):—"The Emperor is full of pity, but the Court of Finance is like the never-dying worm which devours the richest crops."

sovereign. Eight eunuchs figured in the front rank as the leaders of this seditious movement, but Liukin was the most prominent of them all. To his ambitious mind the part even of chief minister appeared small and scarcely worthy of his claims, and, while feigning to be content with a position which left him the dispenser of the Emperor's favour, he was really plotting how to oust Woutsong and the Ming dynasty, and to place his own family on the throne. These schemes long failed to arouse the suspicions of a too-confiding prince, but they very soon attracted the indignation of the people.

They also served to stir up ambitious dreams in the breasts of some who without an example of infidelity would have been satisfied to remain the dutiful subjects of the Emperor. In Szchuen the latent dissatisfaction found vent, as has often been the case in that great province, in a popular rising, but elsewhere throughout the country—at Nankin and in Shensi in particular—the Emperor's uncles took the lead in intrigues for the deposition of Woutsong. Of the fortunes of these cabals, and of the practical result that followed, it will briefly suffice to say that Liukin was on the eve of attaining his objects, when a quarrel with some of his confederates led to the divulgence of his plans and to his immediate arrest. In his palace proof was found, in the vast quantity of treasure and of military weapons he had collected, of the ambitious plans which he had entertained. His execution put an end to the designs of this Chinese Wolsey.

The Emperor's relatives, the princes of Ting and

Ganhoá, did not stop their preparations because of this purification of the palace. The Prince of Ning was first brought to reason by one of Woutsong's lieutenants, and then his kinsman of Ganhoa was likewise reduced to a sense of good order. Within a very short period of the time when the machinations of Liukin and the ambitious plans of these princes threatened both the disintegration of the Empire and also the ruin of the Ming family, internal tranquillity was restored by the Imperial troops. Woutsong owed the recovery of his authority more to his good fortune than to the excellence of his arrangements. His natural indifference seems to have prevented his realising the gravity of the danger to which he had been momentarily exposed, and from which he had been happily rescued.

The insurrection on the part of the common people in Szchuen, of which little had been thought at the time, proved more formidable and difficult to put down than the plots of courtiers and the agitation of self-seeking potentates, for in their case they were actuated by a real grievance and by an overpowering sense of wrong.* The inhabitants of that province, who have long been remarkable for their courage and love of liberty, qualities which they may have derived from their native soil, famed alike for the beauty of its

* In connection with this rising may be quoted the following dictum, that "a government which displeases everybody must necessarily exercise the minds of its subjects to emancipate themselves from their slavery."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 271.

scenery and for its productive character, collected in considerable force in the northern valleys, and bade defiance to the local authorities. Fresh troops had to be brought from the neighbouring provinces, and a large army was placed in the field before there seemed to be any good ground for believing that the insurgents would be dispersed. Even when assailed by an overwhelming force they withdrew into the neighbouring province of Kweichow sooner than make their formal surrender to the officers of an unjust prince. In Kweichow they were joined by the Miaotze and others, but as soon as it was seen that depredation represented their principal object they were doomed. Never again did they become formidable, and the embers of this once popular rebellion were gradually and effectually stamped out.

The errors of the Government entailed a punishment still nearer home. In the metropolitan provinces of Pechihli and Chantung bands of mounted robbers collected, and they became, under the designation of Hiangma, the terror of a large tract of country, covering hundreds of square miles. Peking itself was not safe from insult and attack. In 1512, Liutsi, their principal leader, pillaged its suburbs, and for a moment it looked as if he were about to secure the person of the Emperor and to become the arbiter of the state. A large army arrived opportunely from Leaoutung, and Liutsi was compelled to retire. Having thus held complete success almost within their grasp, the Hiangmas lost ground as rapidly as they had gained it. Reverse followed reverse, and the same

year which beheld Peking imperilled also saw the final overthrow of Liutsi and the complete dispersion of his band.

Although these numerous troubles might well have suggested caution in his actions to Woutsong, his last years were marked by much of the recklessness of the earlier ones. In defiance of the strict etiquette of the Chinese Court, he passed his later days in expeditions beyond the northern frontier, which partook of the double character of hunting tours and of forays against the Tartars. Memorial was presented after memorial in the hope of inducing the monarch to see the error of his ways, but he regarded the matter from his own point of view, and was not to be turned from his path. A fresh revolt on the part of the Prince of Ning failed to disturb his serenity, but the energy with which he devoted his attention to its repression showed that he was at least resolved not to omit any measure of precaution in grappling with his enemies. A short time after the repression of this rising Woutsong was seized with a malady which proved mortal. His death, in the fourteenth year of his reign,* was the signal for

* The most important event by far of Woutsong's reign was the arrival at Canton of the first European who landed on the shores of China. Raphael Perestralo sailed from Malacca to China about the year 1511; and in 1517 Don Fernand Perez D'Andrade, a Portuguese officer, arrived off the coast with a squadron, and was favourably received by the Canton mandarins. He visited Peking, where he resided for some time as ambassador. The commencement of intercourse was thus effected in a most auspicious manner, and it might have endured, but that a second Portuguese fleet appeared in Chinese waters and committed there numerous outrages and acts of piracy. Upon this Perez was arrested by order of Woutsong, and after undergoing six years'

much confusion, as he neither left children nor had he selected an heir. The consequences of the misfortunes which distracted the realm, but which left his position and equanimity undisturbed, were to be reaped by his successors.

imprisonment was executed by order of the Emperor Chitsong in A.D. 1523. The termination of the first act in the history of intercourse by sea between China and Europe was therefore less favourable than its commencement had promised.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MING DYNASTY—*continued.**Chitsong and Moutsong.*

The Throne vacant.—Empress Regent decides the Situation.—Chitsong.—Execution of Kiangping.—The Tartar Yenta.—Mansour of Turfan.—The Ordus Tribes.—Indifference of Chitsong.—His Superstition.—Mutiny at Taitong.—Chinese History one of the Empire, not of the People.—No National Growth to be recorded.—Materials destroyed.—Affairs in Cochin China.—Troubles on the Northern Frontier.—Invasion of Shansi.—A Price put on Yenta's Head.—Great Chinese Reverses.—Capital besieged.—Peace Proposals.—Horse Fairs.—The Japanese.—Hostility of the Two Races.—Character of these Islanders.—Causes of Strife.—Japanese Descents.—Their Successes and Final Repulse.—European Intercourse.—Return of the Japanese.—Alliance with Coast Pirates.—Tsikikwang's Victories.—Chitsong's Death.—*Mea Culpa.*—Memorials.—The Indictment of a King.—Moutsong.—Promise of Better Times.—Convention with Yenta.—Moutsong's early Death.—Revival of Troubles.

THE throne being thus left vacant and no heir existing whose claims could be held to be indisputable, there was every prospect of a period of trouble ensuing upon the death of Woutsong, and only the promptitude and resolution of the Empress Changchi averted

such a catastrophe. She at once summoned all the principal officials to a secret council, and dwelling upon the critical nature of the situation, insisted on the absolute necessity of choosing some scion of the reigning House and proclaiming him Emperor. Their choice fell upon the grandson of the Emperor Hien-tsong, a youth of some fourteen summers, who ascended the throne under the style of Chitsong. A glimpse is obtained of this young prince before he had accepted the responsibility of power in his parting interview with his mother. Although fortune was about to raise him to so brilliant a station, we are told that he parted from her with reluctance. "My son," she said, "you are about to accept a heavy burden; never forget the few words your mother has addressed to you, and always respect them."*

His first act was to proclaim a general pardon, from which Kiangping, an ambitious official who had risen by the personal favour of Woutsong, and who even aspired to the purple,† was alone excepted. Neither the Empress Dowager nor her ministers would allow this measure of oblivion to apply to so formidable an opponent, and Kiangping was accordingly executed after his estates had been made forfeit to the Crown. In a very few months, therefore, the dangers of a disputed succession were happily averted, and the most formidable enemy of the public peace had been

* Mailla, vol. x. p. 299. There is evidently an omission. We must assume the excellence of the maternal advice.

† In China it would be more correct, save for its pedantry, to say "the yellow."

removed without difficulty or strife. Chitsong's long reign could not well have opened under fairer auspices.

The incursions of the Tartar chief Yenta had formed a principal element of disturbance throughout the lifetime of Woutsong; they became still more frequent after his successor occupied the throne. Indeed, hardly a year elapsed without witnessing some of his depredations either in Shansi or Pechihli, and his raid formed the annual event along the northern frontier. Nor was Yenta the only chief who troubled the borders, or whose acts weighed down weak-kneed ministers at the capital with the cares of government. Mansour, of Turfan, had succeeded to the authority and power of Hahema, and he had again established at Hami a delegate of his own. In 1522 he advanced across the desert and laid siege to Souchow, but in this he had miscalculated his strength. The town was stoutly defended, and Mansour was in turn attacked by a relieving force. From the battle which ensued, he was glad to escape with his life and the relics of his army. After this reverse, Mansour gave little more trouble, and in 1528 he thought it better, on account of the defection of several of his allies, to send in his surrender and to admit* the supremacy of the Emperor.

Nor were these the sole quarters whence danger emanated. The district included in the loop of the Hoangho, and bounded on the south by the Great

* Mansour sent a lion as tribute.—Mailla.

Wall, was inhabited by the assemblage of tribes known then and now under the name of Ordus or Ortus.* These, although settled within what may be called the geographical frontier of China were really as independent of her authority as if they had been a tribe in a remote portion of Central Asia. They had owed this happy immunity from interference on the part of the Chinese tax-collectors and officials as much to the excellence of their conduct as to the natural difficulties and barren character of the region they inhabited. During the reigns of some of Chitsong's predecessors disturbances had arisen on this border, and the second year after his accession was marked by a raid on a more than usually large scale. The Ordus were doubtless encouraged in their depredations by the example of their eastern as well as by that of their western neighbours, although in comparison with either they were a source of small anxiety to the Peking authorities.

Chitsong felt little disposition to devote himself to the cares of government, and preferred to relieve his superstition in religious ceremonies and to indulge his inclination by cultivating a taste for poetry. His advisers deplored the attitude of their prince, and remonstrated with him on the consequences that his

* A full but uninteresting description of these tribes is given in Mailla, vol. x. pp. 300-3. They still constitute one of those semi-subdued people—an *imperium in imperio*—whose existence mars the symmetry and completeness of the Chinese Empire according to the notions of Europe. Reference may also be made, for information about these tribes, to Timkowski's interesting "Travels," vol. ii. pp. 266-8; and to Huc's "Travels," vol. i.

indifference to the duties of his high office must entail. But their counsels were poured into ears that did not heed, and Chitsong continued the even tenor of his way. A mutiny among his troops at the northern post of Taitong did not avail to rouse him from his torpor, but when, after the birth of an heir, he expressed a desire to retire from the throne into private life, and made some preparations towards carrying his intention into execution, his courtiers all joined to urge upon him the necessity of abandoning it in order to save the realm from the numerous calamities of a long minority or disputed succession.

Three principal subjects alone were of absorbing interest in the reign of this Emperor, and it is the common fortune of great empires that they should relate exclusively to foreign affairs. But it must not be supposed that they exercised no or little effect on the material condition of the country, or on the development of the national resources. These three questions were the wars with Yenta, the Tartar, and with the Japanese, and the progress of events in Cochin China. Each of these topics occupied a most important place in the annals of the time, and they contributed to swell the tide of difficulty that was already accumulating round the Ming dynasty. It might be more instructive to trace the growth of thought among the masses, or to indicate the progress of civil and political freedom; yet not only do the materials not exist for such a task, but those we possess all tend to show that there has been no growth to describe, no progress to be indicated

during these comparatively recent centuries. It is the peculiar and distinguishing characteristic of Chinese history that the people and their institutions have remained practically unchanged and the same from a very early period. Even the introduction of a foreign element has not tended to disturb the established order of things. The supreme ruler preserves the same attributes and discharges the same functions; the governing classes are chosen in the same manner; the people are bound in the same state of servitude, and enjoy the same practical liberty; all is now as it was. Neither under the Tangs nor the Sungs, under the Yuens nor the Mings, was there any change in national character, or in political institutions to be noted or chronicled. The history of the Empire has always been the fortunes of the dynasty, which have depended in the first place on the passive content of the subjects, and in the second, on the success or failure of its external and internal wars. This condition of things may be disappointing to those who pride themselves in tracing the origin of constitutions and the growth of civil rights, and who would have a history of China the history of the Chinese people; although the fact is undoubted that there is no history of the Chinese people, apart from that of their country, to be recorded. The national institutions and character were formed, and had attained in all essentials to their present state, more than 2,000 years ago, or before the destruction of all trustworthy materials for the task by the burning of the ancient literature and chronicles of China. Without

them we must fain content ourselves with the history of the country and the Empire.

The disturbances in Cochin China, which were the direct consequence of those previously recorded in that portion of the Empire, do not call for the same detailed notice as the two other matters referred to. When Lili had consolidated his position in that kingdom by his amicable convention with the Chinese, he reigned for several years in tranquillity, and left his throne to his children. That family was still reigning at the time of Chitsong's accession, but he had not long occupied the Dragon Throne when the House of Lili began to experience the same misfortunes as those by which it had risen to the purple at the expense of another. An ambitious minister named Mouteng Yong ousted the reigning prince, and made his way by a succession of crimes to the throne. Secure of his main object, the exercise of unquestioned authority, he feigned moderation by placing on the throne one of his sons, while in the background he wielded the attributes of power without much of its responsibility. The path of the new despot was not free from trouble, as the royal house continued to find many supporters, but it still looked as if he would succeed in his plans when the Peking Government suddenly came to the resolution to interfere and support the expelled family. Mouteng made some preparations to resist the Chinese army of invasion, but his heart misgave him at the critical moment, and he thought it better to accept terms by which he surrendered the throne he had usurped but retained

the office of first minister. Thus for a further period the kingdom of Cochin China, through the intervention of the Chinese, secured internal tranquillity.

The Tartar chief Yenta,* whose marauding attacks on the Shansi frontier had for some time caused the Chinese considerable trouble, represented a more serious danger to the Empire, for the governorship of Taitong, which was the principal scene of his activity, was situated within a short distance of the capital. He began in the year 1529 a series of incursions into Shansi, which continued throughout this and the following reign. Sometimes he varied the excitement of his pursuit by combining with his brother Kisiang, the chief of the Ordus, in raiding in the western district of Ninghia across the Hoangho; but as a rule the neighbourhood of Taitong witnessed his exploits. Never, wrote the Imperial historian, were the frontiers of China more disturbed than they were by Yenta.

In 1541, Yenta carried his activity still further than he had yet done, for, under the guidance of a traitor Chinese monk, who wished to avenge himself for some slight that had been offered him, he in that year made his way through the Great Wall, and passing the garrison town of Taitong, marched against Taiyuen,†

* Yenta was the son of a Mongol chief named Hochu. His brother, Kisiang, was chief of the Ordus, but he himself ruled in the north, in the country of Kaiyuen and Changtu. One hundred thousand horsemen followed his banner.—Mailla.

† Taiyuen, the chief town of Shansi, one of the most prosperous of inland cities. Famed in the middle ages for its cutlery and the manufacture of military weapons, it may be called the Toledo of China. For a description of Taiyuen see Williamson's "Travels in North China" (London, 1870), vol. i. pp. 307-10.

the principal city in Shansi. The expedition, in which Kisiang and the Ordus also took part, was a complete success, and the invaders returned with a vast booty to their encampments. Impunity brought increased audacity, and thenceforth the interior of Shansi was not more safe than its borders from the attacks of this daring leader. Kisiang's death, caused by the effects of a debauch, left his brother supreme among all the Tartar tribes, and this event increased their formidable character for war, as it tended to promote union. Despairing of success in the open field, the Chinese hoped to obtain their object by the removal of their principal enemy. A price was set on Yenta's head, and 1,000 taels, with an official post of the third rank, was promised to the bold man who should have the courage and the good fortune to slay that formidable chieftain.

This personal threat served only to inflame the animosity of Yenta against the Chinese. In 1542 he again entered Shansi, and inflicted a crushing defeat, as far south as the town of Pingyang,* on the garrisons of Honan and Chantung, which had been ordered to march against him. The consequences of this success were most disastrous, for a large territory, which had been prospering by the absence of all strife for nearly two centuries, was handed over to the mercies of a fierce and reckless barbarian. Thirty-eight districts were ravaged by his followers, and the Tartars made

* One hundred and fifty miles south of Taiyuen, and only 100 north of the Hoangho.

good their way back to Mongolia with 200,000 prisoners and an incalculable quantity of plunder. The Chinese historian records that after this expedition Yenta remained quiet for twelve months.

In 1549, Yenta experienced his first reverse in this frontier strife. The encounter took place during one of his periodic raids near the town of Taitong, and Yenta was compelled, after sustaining the attack of superior numbers, to beat a hasty retreat with the loss of some of his best troops. That the reverse was far from being crushing his return the very next year clearly showed, when his successes were greater than ever. On this occasion he marched in the direction of Pekiin itself, to which he was resolved to lay siege. The arrival of fresh troops sent from Leaoutung and other provinces to succour the capital compelled him, however, to draw off his force. But he executed his retreat with such skill that he succeeded in getting back without having suffered much loss.

Yenta desired for some reasons to come to an amicable arrangement with the Chinese Government, even though he may have possessed small hope of, or desire for, the conditions of any understanding being long observed. But these later years were occupied as much by the discussion of possible terms of peace as by active campaigning, and many thought that the hostility of the Tartar would be disarmed by the establishment of the horse fairs,* which he asked

* The trade in horses was the principal occupation of these Tartars. The Chinese disinclination to grant them further trade facilities was probably due to some reason of which we are

for. Yenta kept his paid spies at Peking, and he numbered among those in his hire Yensong, one of the most trusted of Chitsong's ministers. Yensong's intrigues were discovered and their author punished with death, and it may perhaps have been in consequence of this that Yenta's overtures were rejected. But no remedy was applied to the evil. The Chinese troops remained uniformly unsuccessful, the Tartars were persistently aggressive, and much of the northern frontier lay desolate.

Meanwhile, a new enemy appeared on the scene to add to the embarrassment and difficulty of the Peking Emperor. The Japanese had neither forgotten nor forgiven the unprovoked invasion of their country by the Emperor Kublai. It had become with them a traditional justification for any attack they might feel disposed to organise against the Chinese mainland. As soon as the Mongol power was seen to be on the wane the Japanese began to make descents on the coasts of Fuhkien and Chekiang, and these had continued during the century and a half which the Mings had held the throne up to the time of Chitsong. These attacks were little more than semi-piratical expeditions, annoying enough in their way, but constituting no serious danger. Various precautions were taken to defend the coast. Towers were erected at intervals and a militia was raised and trained for the purpose of resisting the descents of the Japanese. But no attempt was made to carry on the war on the

unaware. Yenta held the material benefits under his control, and the Chinese saw that they must get the worst of the bargain.

other element, and the Japanese naval superiority remained uncontested.

While this quarrel was in progress of slow development, other and more promising relations had been formed between the two peoples. Both nations, by natural disposition, were keen in the pursuit of trade, and a very considerable commerce had sprung up between them. But this was carried on by smuggling, as all articles were contraband save those imported by the tribute embassy once in ten years. The Japanese traders landed their goods on some of the islands off the coast where the Chinese merchants met them for purposes of trade; and the profits must have been very considerable, as the average value of a ship's cargo amounted to 1000 gold taels.* But although they derived many advantages from this traffic, the Chinese appear to have desired to acquire the monopoly of its benefits, and they were not always either fair or prudent in their business transactions with the foreigners. A flagrant act of injustice was the immediate cause of the troubles which arose towards the close of Chitsong's reign, and which continued under many of his successors; and it served to extenuate the unfriendly conduct of the Japanese† during previous years.

* Between three and four thousand pounds sterling.

† The Chinese historian translated by Mailla describes the Japanese as "intrepid, inured to fatigue, despising life, and knowing well how to face death; although inferior in number, a hundred of them would blush to flee before a thousand foreigners, and, if they did, they would not dare to return to their country. Sentiments such as these, which are instilled into them from their earliest childhood, render them terrible in battle."

The refusal of a Chinese merchant to give a Japanese the goods for which he had paid provoked the indignation of the islanders, who fitted out their vessels to exact satisfaction for this breach of faith. In 1552 they effected a landing in Chekiang, pillaged the country round Taichow, and maintained themselves in a fortified position for twelve months against all the attacks of the Chinese. They were ill-advised to attempt so obstinate a stand in face of the overwhelming odds that could be brought against them, and they paid the penalty of their foolhardiness by being exterminated. This reverse, if it can be called one, seeing that only a few men perished after inflicting vast loss on the Chinese, did not deter other Japanese from undertaking similar adventures, and at the very time when the mariners of England were trying to earn the supremacy of the seas in the school of Hawkins and Drake, another race of islanders was gaining the same celebrity in the Far East.

In the five years between 1555 and 1560,* the

* In 1553 died, on the Island of Sancian, near Macao, Francis Xavier, the celebrated missionary, who was canonised after his death. He had gone to China for the purpose of converting the Chinese, but died within sight of land and on the threshold of his enterprise. The Portuguese still monopolised the European intercourse—a fact most unfortunate for the happy development of friendly relations with China. "*The Portuguese have no other design than to come under the name of merchants to spy the country, that they may hereafter fall on it with fire and sword.*" In 1560 they obtained, however, the loan of the site on which stands their settlement of Macao, and in return for a rent of 500 taels per annum they were allowed to make it their principal station on the coast. The glory and the prosperity of Macao have both long departed.

Japanese made frequent descents on the coast, and even laid siege to Nankin. But they were beaten off in their last attempt, although all their minor enterprises succeeded, and the Chinese suffered as much at the hands of the Japanese on their eastern coasts as they did from Yenta on the northern borders during the dark days of the reign of Chitsong the indifferent.

In 1563-4, piratical bands, who have frequently infested the coasts and estuaries of China, had gathered to a head under the leadership of a chief named Hoangchi, and how considerable their power was may be inferred from the fact that they could place one hundred war-ships in line of battle. In face of their flotilla the local garrisons were helpless. The Japanese formed a temporary alliance with them, and in both the years mentioned they jointly made a descent in force on the coast. At first they carried everything before them, but when it came to serious fighting the Japanese found that the valour of their confederates speedily evaporated. The Chinese collected a large army, and attacked the invaders with resolution. Their commander Tsikikwang showed considerable talent, and the Japanese were driven back to their ships with loss. The pirates also suffered, and their power did not soon recover from the rude shock inflicted by Tsikikwang's activity.

The long reign of Chitsong, which extended over a period of forty-five years, was now drawing to a close; but the general opinion as to his personal qualities and capacity for reigning may be gathered from the

fact that memorials* were presented to him at this late period of his life and reign on the necessity of his devoting closer attention to affairs of State. The first impulse of the Emperor was to punish their authors, but time brought reflection. At the eleventh hour he might have reformed and become a model prince had his life been spared, but his death shortly afterwards, in 1566, dissipated that prospect. His last will, written on his death-bed, was a confession of fault, and a plea of extenuation to be favourably received by those who would have to judge his place in history. "Forty-five years," wrote the Emperor, "have I occupied the throne, and there have

* Of these memorials one from an anonymous author is quoted by Pauthier, p. 407; a more remarkable one is given by Mailla. It was written by Haichoui, a mandarin of the Tribunal of Tributes. "When your Majesty took possession of the throne, there was nobody who did not conceive the hope of a happy reign. . . . To-day all is changed; for more than twenty years the laws have not been respected, and each governs himself according to his caprice. The state and your august family are in imminent danger of ruin. Your Majesty and the heir apparent hold no communication together; the whole Empire murmurs at seeing the first duties of a father and a son, of a prince and a subject openly disregarded. Your Majesty finds pleasure only in the gardens of the west (of the palace) in the midst of a crowd of concubines, forgetful of the Empress, your legitimate spouse, who has been relegated to an interior apartment. Generals without capacity, and even without courage, are placed at the head of the troops; party and special favour alone obtain office; clever men go into retirement and fear to come forth to serve their country; ought we then to be astonished if our enemies despise our soldiers, and cause so many misfortunes as those from which the peoples both of the north and south have suffered? Your Majesty occupied with a chimerical secret is setting a dangerous example, and several of the principal of your mandarins have allowed themselves to be drawn into the same error. . . . All men are mortal, and cannot prolong their days beyond the time allotted by Heaven."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 331.

been few reigns as long. My duty was to revere Heaven and to take care of my peoples ; yet, actuated by the desire to find some solace for the evils from which I have continually suffered, I allowed myself to be deceived by impostors, who promised me the secret of immortality. This delusion has led me to set a bad example to both my magnates and my people. I desire to repair the evil by this edict, which is to be published throughout the Empire after my death." The confession of fault is a graceful weakness, or it may be the commencement of better days ; but it is an ineffectual remedy for the embarrassments of either an individual or a state.

Chitsong's third but eldest surviving son succeeded him, and assumed the title of Moutsong. At the time of his accession he was thirty years of age, and his first acts showed that he had not been an indifferent observer of the discontent produced by many of his father's acts. He released several mandarins who had been imprisoned for having remonstrated with Chitsong on the folly of his conduct, and he imprisoned those who had encouraged him to persist in his search for the elixir of life. His private character was above reproach, and the promise of his earlier years seemed indicative of a more prosperous era for China. The shortness of his reign afforded no time for the realisation of these hopes and anticipations ; but if it did not allow of great achievements being performed, it could not prevent the memory of Moutsong's brief reign passing into a national regret.

At the least this reign would have been remarkable

for the settlement of the long-standing dispute with Yenta the Tartar, who, now an old man, had not lost the energy of his youth, and whose reputation among his own race had been established and extended as his experience matured. In 1570 the defection of his grandson, who deserted to the Chinese, roused the apprehension of Yenta, and he presented a formal demand to the Emperor for his compulsory return. The only reply he received was to the effect that he must first restore those Chinese subjects whom he held in his power, and when, after some hesitation, Yenta complied with this condition his grandson was sent back to him. This successful negotiation proved the precursor of an amicable arrangement between these hitherto bitter foes, and Yenta accepted the title of a Chinese prince, and went through the form of making his submission to the Emperor. This long-existing feud was thus happily settled for this occasion, at all events, if not as a permanent question of frontier policy.

Moutsong was suddenly seized with a malady which proved fatal, and the realm was thus left to be afflicted by a recurrence of those evils from which it appeared to have escaped. Moutsong feared the consequences that might ensue after his decease, and in his last will* he implored his officials and subjects to unite in

* Moutsong's last words to one of the principal of his ministers and advisers were, "I have occupied the throne during six years; my end approaches. The heir apparent is still only a child; you must serve him as if you were his father, and you must assist him to be worthy of the throne. The State expects of you this important service."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 335.

assisting the young heir apparent and in promoting good government. His fears proved only too just, for the long reign of his son Wanleh was to witness the culmination of the misfortunes which had been accumulating during the lives of many of his predecessors.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LONG REIGN OF WANLEH.

Empress Regent.—Excellent Disposition of the Young Emperor.—Auspicious Commencement.—End of Yenta's Career.—The Revenue.—Revolt in North-west.—Popai.—Throws off his Allegiance to the Emperor.—Establishes himself at Ninghia.—Attack on Pinglo.—Siege of Ninghia.—Resolution of both Besieged and Besiegers.—Diversion of the Hoangho and Capture of Town.—The Japanese.—Fashiba.—His ignoble Birth.—Rises by his Talents to Supreme Power.—Resolves to invade Corea.—The Harbour of Fooshan.—Coreans routed.—Their Capital taken.—Flight of their King.—CHINESE TO THE RELIEF.—Chinese Reverse.—Bad Generalship.—Large Reinforcements sent from China.—Peace Party at Peking.—Li Jusong.—Assumes Command.—His great Ability.—Defeats Japanese.—Capture of Pingyang.—Li's narrow Escape.—Destruction of Japanese Stores.—Negotiations.—Corean King insults Fashiba.—Renewal of War.—Fall of Peace Party.—Doubtful Encounters.—Campaign barren of Results.—Incompetent Generals.—Japanese supreme at Sea.—Chinese Defeat at Weichan.—*Death of Fashiba*.—Withdrawal of Japanese Troops and End of War.—Corea remains isolated.—Cruel Murder of Two of Fashiba's Relatives by Chinese.—Insurrection in Szchuen.—Army marched across China.—Its Repression.—Intercourse with Western Peoples.—The Portuguese.—The Spaniards.—The latter in the Philippines.—The Massacres of Manilla.—The Dutch, French, and English.—Ricci.—Missionaries.—Practical Use to which they were turned by Chinese.—Reform of Calendar.—Maps.—Chinese Christians.—Small Pro-

gress of Christianity.—The Miaotze.—The Manchu Invasion the pressing Question of the Hour.—The Question of the Succession.—No Heir.—Proclamation of One.—Fou Wang.—His Intrigues.—Magnanimity of Chu Changlo.—Death of Wanleh.—Reflections.—The Tartars at the Gate of his Capital.—An Epoch in History.

As the young prince Chintsong, better known in history as the Emperor Wanleh,* was only six years old at the time of his father's death, his mother assumed the functions of Regent, and summoned to her council prudent and trustworthy ministers. In this latter respect she showed a laudable resolve to follow and carry on the policy of her husband Moutsong; and if her good sense did not avail to avert misfortune, the result must be attributed more to the impression of weakness produced by the minority of the sovereign, and to an accumulation of foreign complications, than to any shortcomings on her part. The young ruler himself was apparently actuated by the most laudable intentions, and showed himself very desirous of following the advice of men of experience. With touching simplicity he placed his person and the fortunes of his family in the hands of the ministers† whom his father had most trusted.

The tranquillity which happily prevailed at the

* The name given to the years of his reign.

† He said to one of these, "My father used to regard you as the most zealous and faithful of his subjects; on succeeding to his crown I have inherited his sentiments. I do not doubt that you will anxiously instruct me as to my responsibilities, and as to the manner in which I should bear myself." Another sentiment put into Wanleh's mouth was that "able men are a sovereign's most precious jewels."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 335.

time of Moutsong's death was not disturbed during the first years of the reign of his successor. Yenta, who had been for more than a generation the scourge of the northern frontier of the Empire, had either learnt moderation with growing years, or had found friendly relations with the Chinese authorities to be more profitable than the uncertainties of an arduous war. And with Yenta* passive there was no other border chief bold enough to disturb Chinese territory.

The results of this season of tranquillity were soon shown by an increase in the revenue† and by a proportionately full exchequer; and, as one of Wanleh's ministers observed, it was only necessary that care should be exercised in the national expenditure to preserve the finances in their flourishing condition. But it does not appear that either Wanleh or any of his ministers possessed the necessary forethought to closely supervise the daily expenditure of the palace and the government, and the gradual accumulation of external difficulties left them little or no leisure to

* The termination of Yenta's long career may now be summarised. In 1572 he sent an embassy, with 250 horses, to Peking, and in the following year he received the usual gold seal and present of money. In 1576 he made one of his sons pay a fine for raiding on Chinese territory; but about the same time Pintou, another of his sons, established himself in the country west of Shensi near Koko Nor. The family of Yenta was thus steadily expanding its limits. In 1583 Yenta died, after a career of exceptional length and success. His Chinese title of Prince of Chuny passed to his son Hoangtaiki, who in 1587 was succeeded in turn by his son Chilika. Yenta was another prominent type of the desert chiefs who have sometimes risen to the rank of great conquerors.

† In the first year of Wanleh there was paid into the exchequer the sum of 43,050,000 taels, and in the fifth it had risen to 44,090,000 taels, or nearly fifteen millions sterling.

devote to the dry and unattractive precepts of a sound financial policy.

Wanleh had not long occupied the throne when the Miaotze of the Szchuen frontier broke loose from the slight control maintained over them by the local officials, but none of the incidents of this rising have been preserved. A revolt on the part of some military adventurers in the north-west assumed larger proportions, and at one time appeared to threaten the security of even the Emperor's seat upon the throne. Popai, a soldier of fortune, of Tartar origin, had risen high in the Chinese service, and among the officers to whom was entrusted the onerous task of guarding the north-west frontier few ranked higher than he did. It would seem that Popai's good fortune and distinctions had brought him the envy and dislike of the officers of Chinese race, and, as his position was too secure to be easily shaken, these latter resolved to gratify their spite by injuring those of his relations who were also in the Imperial service.

A slight offered to Popai's son led to a quarrel that soon developed grave proportions, and these aliens, whose example of seeking their fortunes under the auspices of the Mings had been imitated by many of their kinsmen, imagining that there was a scheme afoot for their destruction, took up arms in their own behalf and declared against the Government. This extreme act was committed in a moment either of temper or of panic, and was unquestionably ill-judged. Had there been a prudent viceroy at the head of affairs in Shensi, this misconception might have been

easily removed, and the ruin of a few brave men averted, with much saving to the exchequer and to the Emperor's peace of mind.

Popai and his followers easily overcame the opposition of the local Chinese officials and their soldiers. They then exacted a summary revenge on those who had insulted them. After this open defiance of Wanleh's authority, they established their head-quarters at the important and favourably situated town of Ninghia, the capital of a prefecture, and one of the chief cities in Western China at this period. Nor did Popai's success stop with these achievements, for he captured, one after another, all the strong places on the upper course of the Hoangho. This bad news carried dismay to the Chinese Court, which at once ordered the despatch of a large force to Shensi to attack these audacious rebels. Before it reached the scene of action many reverses* had been sustained and much suffering had been inflicted on the people. On the arrival of the Chinese troops, however, Popai no longer felt able to keep the open field. He shut himself up in Ninghia, resolved to hold the place to the last.

The Chinese concentrated as much determination upon the capture of Ninghia as Popai did upon its defence. Round its walls were soon collected all the

* Popai met in this earlier portion of the campaign with only one repulse, and that was at Pinglo, a small town near the Hoangho and north of Ninghia. Pinglo was gallantly defended by Yanchi, the governor's wife, and, on two separate occasions, Popai had to draw off his forces, baffled by her determination.

available forces of the Emperor in the North-West, but Popai did not lose heart at the sight of the superior numbers of his foe, although he could find no prospect of succour from without. The siege was prosecuted with both vigour and audacity. Several assaults were delivered, and at one time the Chinese had gained a footing on the rampart. But the besieged showed equal courage, and these desperate attempts to carry the place by storm were all repulsed with great slaughter. The Chinese troops continued to blockade it, and their commander, Li Jusong, foiled in his endeavour to capture the place by the sword, turned his hopes and energies in the direction of engineering science for the accomplishment of his purpose. In this design he fared better, for by means of a trench or dyke he diverted the waters of the Hoangho against the wall of the town. All the efforts of Popai and his lieutenants to prevent the completion of this work were baffled, and the waters were rolled against the fortifications. The Chinese thereupon promptly delivered their attack, and overcame all resistance. Popai threw himself into the flames of his residence; but his body was rescued from the fire, and a soldier cut off the head and took it to Li Jusong. This siege had entailed the loss of many brave lives to the Emperor, but when it closed it left the insurgents completely crushed. The rebellion, which had assumed such formidable proportions under the leading of Popai, thus happily terminated.

This episode in the fortunes of government had hardly closed when a more interesting and a more

important complication distracted the attention of the Emperor and his advisers to the opposite quarter of the state. Beyond the sea the Japanese had reached a point of some material prosperity and considerable national greatness; and their growing activity had found a relief in adventures against the Chinese mainland, which have already been mentioned. Wan-leh had not been long upon the throne when the career commenced of probably the greatest ruler and conqueror whom Japan has known. He appeared at a moment when the Japanese were in the fit mood to turn a sympathetic ear to any proposal of adventure against either China or any of its dependencies; and his fame is principally associated with the exploits which he performed when he identified himself with this great national aspiration.

Fashiba* owed little to fortune. From the condition of slave to an individual of no high rank he raised himself by his own assiduity and resolution to be the despotic ruler of a brave and intelligent people. The story goes that he first attracted the attention of a Japanese daimio, whom the Chinese named Sinchang,

* Called by the Chinese Pingsiuki, and by his countrymen, when raised to the rank of Tycoon, Taiko Sama. Sir Edward Reed in his recently published "History of Japan" speaks of this Japanese hero as Hideyoshi. Here may be quoted the following passage from a speech of this ruler, as expressive not merely of his own views, but also of the traditional Japanese policy with regard to Corea. "I will assemble a mighty host, and invading the country of the Great Ming I will fill with hoar-frost from my sword the whole sky over the 400 provinces. Should I carry out this purpose, I hope that Korea will be my vanguard. Let her not fail to do so, for my friendship to your honourable country depends solely on your conduct when I lead my army against China."—Reed's "Japan," vol. i. p. 202.

by his neglect to pay the obeisance due to his rank. The daimio was on the point of inflicting a summary punishment for the slight offered to his person, when Fashiba pleaded his case with so much eloquence that the daimio's attention was soon obtained and his favour won. Fashiba then entered his service, and showed such excellent zeal and discretion in advancing his interests that in a short time he made his chief the most powerful among the lords of Japan. One success led to another and Fashiba did not rest content until Sinchang had become, by his aid, the virtual sovereign of the country. It was not until after the death of this master and benefactor that Fashiba came forward in person as the arbiter of the nation's destiny; and then, whether instigated by a desire to divert public attention from his own doings in the excitement of a foreign war, or impelled by his natural ambition, he resolved to prosecute an enterprise which would have the effect of extending both the influence and the power of his country, still young as an independent kingdom among the states of Eastern Asia.

It was in the year 1592 that Fashiba availed himself of the disorder prevailing in Corea from the weakness and incapacity of its king, Lipan, to begin his schemes of foreign conquest by seizing the important harbour of Fooshan,* which was the most conveniently situated landing-place for troops coming from the

* Fooshan, a harbour on the extreme eastern coast of Corea, facing the small island of Tsiusima. The Japanese still cling to the supremacy they established thus long ago over this port.

Japanese archipelago. Fooshan offered no resistance, and the hold which the Japanese then obtained on it has never since been completely relaxed. Having thus secured a gateway into this kingdom, Fashiba poured troops through it with the object of over-running the country, and of adding it to his dominions. The Japanese continued their advance opposed, but not retarded, by the rude forces of the Korean king, and the capital itself surrendered without a blow. The Japanese are said to have behaved with great brutality; all who attempted opposition were put to the sword, and the ancient burial-place of the Korean kings was desecrated. Lipan fled before the invaders to China, where he implored the assistance of the Ming Emperor to drive out this fierce people, who might fairly be regarded as a common foe.

There was no hesitation at the Chinese Court in arriving at the decision that this unprovoked act of aggression on the part of the Japanese must be resisted at all costs. It acquired double force from the remembrance of unpunished descents on the Chinese mainland, and it needed only common sense to perceive that the presence of a numerous and fairly-disciplined army in Corea constituted a standing peril of the most serious character to the peace of mind and security of the Emperor at Peking. An army was, therefore, at once assembled in compliance with the request of Lipan, and sent through Leaoutung to encounter the Japanese.

Flushed with its easy success the Japanese army marched rapidly northwards, and, undeterred by the

report that the Chinese Emperor had resolved to support the cause of Lipan with all his power, it reached the town of Pingyang,* which opened its gates without any attempt on the part of its garrison to stand a siege. By this time the first detachments of the Chinese army had entered Corea, and were marching towards Pingyang from the north. The Japanese went out to meet them, and a general action soon commenced. In this encounter the Japanese were victorious, but it does not appear that the loss of the Chinese was more than nominal. The latter attributed the reverse to the impetuosity of one of their commanders, who crossed a river in his front without support. The Japanese at once fell upon his brigade when it was separated from the main body, and they declared that they almost exterminated it.

This victory only served to show more clearly the serious character of this Japanese invasion, and to nerve the Peking Government to make greater sacrifices. A lull ensued in the campaign; for, while the Chinese were hurrying up more troops, the Japanese, either from the deficiency of supplies, or in the hope of obtaining reinforcements from Fooshan, retreated for a short distance. For one moment the peace party at Peking, which was led by Chesin, the President of the Tribunal for War, obtained the upper hand, and the despatch of the large reinforcements demanded by the general commanding in Corea, and required

* Pingyang near the western coast of Corea, and situated north of the Datong river. It is about 400 miles north of Fooshan.

by the occasion, was deferred. An attempt to carry on secret negotiations, and to arrange the terms of an amicable settlement of the quarrel by means of an emissary,* who had volunteered for the work, failed to attain its object, or only had the effect of revealing the exorbitant nature of the Japanese pretensions.

Then the despatch of fresh troops was no longer delayed, and the army which had distinguished itself at the siege of Ninghia, and against the rebel Popai was ordered to march against the Japanese. The charge of the war was entrusted to Li Jusong, the same general who had pacified the North-West; and Wanleh's commander, advancing by way of Kaichow, crossed the Yaloo river, which the Japanese had demanded as a frontier. The Japanese army was commanded by a general named Hingchang, under the immediate orders of the King Fashiba in person. Hitherto the Japanese had always been prompt to act on the offensive, but now, in face of a force so superior to their own; they felt compelled to stand on their defence. Li Jusong was not the man to waste time in unnecessary delays when the task entrusted to him was one of such vital importance, and immediately after his arrival he began his attack on Pingyang. The Japanese fought well and repulsed the first onset of their opponents, but the capacity of their general appeared at a disadvantage in comparison with that of Li Jusong. By a feint the latter attracted the

* Chin Weiking, a native of Chekiang, chosen for the task probably for his knowledge of Japanese, as Mr. Ross suggests.—“*Corea*,” p. 272.

attention of the defenders of Pingyang to one portion of the wall, while he delivered his main attack on the opposite quarter. The Japanese continued to make a brave defence, but availed themselves of the coming on of night to evacuate the town and to withdraw across the Datong river. The Chinese pursued them for a short distance, but the Japanese made good their retreat without suffering any serious loss during the pursuit.*

The remainder of this campaign was occupied in desultory fighting, the result of which was generally favourable to the Chinese. In one skirmish, however, the successes of the war were nearly all being lost by the imminent peril in which Li Jusong was placed of losing either his life or his liberty. He only succeeded in extricating himself from his perilous position by the prodigies of valour performed by himself and his chosen body-guard. Shortly after this affair the Chinese army was withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the capital to which it had advanced, and took up its quarters at Kaiching, where it awaited the arrival of further reinforcements and the abatement of the floods, which had rendered the low-lying country impassable for troops.

The following campaign commenced with a brilliant achievement, of which all the credit was due to Li Jusong. The Japanese had collected vast stores of grain and other necessaries in a small town near the

* Mailla returns their killed at 1,285 men in the town, and 362 on the line of retreat. In addition to these many were drowned in the river.

capital,* and Li Jusong succeeded in surprising this place and in burning all these stores on which the Japanese commanders mainly depended for the support of their troops. This great disaster necessitated their withdrawal from the capital, which the Chinese immediately occupied, but the Japanese still showed a bold front, and Li Jusong did not consider it prudent to attack them. They continued their retreat unmolested to the harbour of Fooshan, where they were in direct communication with their fleet and their own country.

Both sides were now tired of the war which had brought no practical benefit to either, and which had entailed an immense amount of loss and suffering on both. The Japanese first gave signs of a desire for peace by releasing the Corean magnates who were prisoners in their hands, and Chesin, the Chinese President of War, at once despatched an order from Peking for the suspension of hostilities. Alone among the members of the Imperial Council, Chesin was in favour of recognising Fashiba as King of Japan, but his influence was so great that he carried his point. As soon as this important matter was settled in favour of Fashiba's pretensions, the negotiations progressed at a rapid pace. Gifts were exchanged. A Japanese envoy was honourably received at Peking, and another Chinese official visited the Japanese camp. Fashiba expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the concessions of the Chinese, and returned the courtesy of

* Hangchang, or Saoul.

their recognition of his sovereignty by the despatch of costly presents, which the recipients accepted out of vanity, or from deep motives of policy, as a form of tribute. But although the main current of these negotiations flowed on satisfactorily enough, the actual relations of the two armies and their commanders in Corea were far from being equally satisfactory; and they were further complicated by the wiles of the intriguer Chin Weiking, who had again been entrusted with the task of personally conducting the progress of the negotiations.

All might yet have ended satisfactorily, for the self-seeking aims of Chin Weiking were beginning to be realised at Peking, when an unfortunate step on the part of the Corean king undid everything that had been accomplished, and re-opened the whole question. The envoy whom he sent as a messenger of peace to felicitate Fashiba on the assumption of the royal title of Tycoon of Japan was discovered to be an official of very inferior rank, and Fashiba showed no hesitation in resenting this act as a personal affront, and as a slight cast upon his dignity. In 1597 he ordered a fresh fleet of two hundred sail to proceed to sea, and made other open preparations for the renewal of his enterprise against Corea. These measures arrested the progress of the negotiations, and roused the indignation of the Chinese cabinet. Both Chesin and Chin Weiking were disgraced and placed in confinement; and preparations were made for the prosecution of the war on an extensive scale.

Li Jusong was not, however, entrusted with the

command, and, although a very large army was concentrated on the Yaloo river, nothing was effected. The Chinese and Japanese remained facing each other without being able to gain any advantage or willing to risk the consequences of a reverse. But if the balance of superiority remained doubtful on land, there was no uncertainty at sea; there the Japanese superiority was incontestable, and their navy swept the China seas and plundered the coasts of Fuhkien and Chekiang with impunity. The whole of the year 1597 was passed in desultory fighting, but the differences and jealousies of the Chinese commanders prevented their deriving any advantage from their greater numbers. Indeed, they suffered a distinct reverse at the siege of Weichan, a small town on the coast, but this untoward result was due to the sudden appearance of the redoubtable Japanese fleet. Although reinforcements were repeatedly sent from China, the incapacity of the commanders was so great that the Japanese were able to keep the field, and to all appearance possessed the advantage over the Chinese. The end of the struggle, which had continued during the winter of 1597-8, was apparently as far off as ever when the news came of the sudden death of Fashiba. This put a summary end to the contest, as the Japanese troops* were immediately withdrawn. The Chinese army also evacuated the

* The Japanese returned with an enormous quantity of booty, and, Mr. Mounsey ("Satsuma Rebellion," 1880, pp. 56, 57) says, with the ears of 10,000 Coreans. They also retained their hold upon Fooshan.

country, and, with the restoration of the native dynasty, the kingdom of Corea returned to its primitive existence, and sank again into a state of semi-darkness.

One further act alone remained to mark the termination of a war which, so far as practical results went, had been literally barren of achievement to all concerned in it; and the closing scene reflects no credit on the Chinese. The fortune of war had placed two Japanese officers, near relatives of the King Fashiba, in their power. They were sent with other prisoners to Peking, for their fate to be there decided. By some line of tortuous reasoning difficult to understand and impossible to approve, Wanleh's ministers decreed that Fashiba was a rebel, and that his kin must suffer death. With the murder of these unfortunate prisoners, the seven years' war in Corea closed. The motives of the Chinese in defending that state were alike prudent and honourable, and the commencement of the war promised them military success; but, as it continued, the incapacity of the commanders ruined all these favourable prospects. Its concluding stages were marked by lying bulletins of victories that were never won, and it was consummated with a disgraceful crime.

Misfortunes never come singly, and they descended rapidly on the devoted head of the unfortunate Wanleh, who was dearly paying for the faults of his predecessors. The revolt of Ninghia had been followed by the protracted war with Japan, and that contest had hardly concluded when a rising, destined

to prove of a troublesome character, broke out among the tribes in the western mountains of Szchuen. A hereditary chieftain there, named Yang Inglong, had gathered a considerable military force together under his orders, and, knowing the embarrassment of the Imperial Government, thought the time was opportune for putting forward his claims to independence. He raised a number of troops, with which he harried the borders and captured several towns from the Chinese. Thirty or forty thousand men were reported to obey his orders, and the Government attached so much importance to the movement that several of the generals and most of the troops who had been employed in Corea were directed to cross China and march against this new enemy of the State. The rebels fought with great bravery, and the difficult nature of their country rendered the task of reducing them one of time. Thanks mainly to the courage and skill of Liuyen, the Imperial troops succeeded in forcing their way through the hills to the fort where Yang had established his head-quarters. Terrified at the approach of the Chinese, Yang wished to surrender, but Liuyen refused to hold any communication with a rebel. With apparently no place to flee to, Yang resolved to commit suicide, but his son conceived it to be more honourable to be taken sword in hand. The execution of the latter, and the placing of a garrison in the captured hill fort, marked the close of this rebellion, which had been crushed with commendable promptitude. Its importance must not, however, be

lightly judged because the victory was so easily attained. In estimating the significance of this and other similar insurrections, the effort necessary to restore order must be remembered. Here we see that a rising among a petty people in the south-west required the despatch of soldiers who had already borne the hardships of several campaigns in the north-east. The consequences of this inadequate military power became very perceptible when the Mings were assailed by a formidable foreign foe.

During these years of disturbance there had been a remarkable development in the intercourse between the Chinese and the nations of the West. The Portuguese had as early as the year 1560* obtained from the local mandarins the right to erect sheds for their goods at a place near the mouth of the Canton estuary, which became known as Macao. Some years later this place had attained so much importance, that between five and six hundred Portuguese merchants, it is stated on good authority,† resorted thither annually for purposes of trade. This settlement continued to develop both in size and in the amount of its commerce notwithstanding the precarious conditions under which it was held; and by the regular payment of their rent‡ to the Government, as well as by a system of judicious bribing, the Portuguese long enjoyed the practical monopoly of the external trade of the great mart of Canton with the West.

* See *ante*, p. 146.

† The Jesuit, Michel Roger.

‡ 500 taels per annum.

About the same time that the Portuguese were thus establishing themselves on the mainland of China, the Spaniards had seized the Philippine* Islands, to which they gave the name of their king. They were not long in possession of these fertile islands before they came into contact with the Chinese, who had been in the habit of resorting thither from Canton for purposes of trade from a time much anterior to the Spanish occupation. In the train of Canton merchants came Chinese settlers, and the prosperity of Manilla was due as much to the latter's thrift and capacity for labour of all kinds, as it was to the profits of the commercial dealings with the former. The number of the Chinese settlers increased with startling rapidity, and soon the Spanish officials and garrison began to see in these tillers of the soil, who so far outnumbered them,† a formidable foe and a possible source of peril. The southern imagination having once entertained the possibility of a rising on the part of the Chinese immigrants, did not suffer the fear to slumber, and magnified into an immediate danger what was only a conjectural contingency. The arrival of three mandarins in the year 1602, with some indefinite mission from the Emperor, seemed to confirm these suspicions, and, after they had been as summarily dismissed as circumstances allowed, the Spaniards formed their plans for achieving another St. Bartholomew at the expense of the helpless and

* Manilla was declared the capital of this new possession by the Governor Legaspi in the year 1571.

† In 1602 there were 20,000 Chinese and only 800 Spaniards.

unoffending Chinese. In this design their fire-arms enabled them to succeed, and after a butchery which lasted several months it was reported that most of the twenty thousand unarmed Chinese had been slaughtered. The Spaniards attributed the success of this first massacre of Manilla to the presence of their national saint, St. Francis; but, while they congratulated themselves on their triumph, they had nearly ruined their colony, which owed all its prosperity to Chinese labour.

The Chinese Government was then, as now, indifferent to the fate of those of its subjects who went away to foreign states, and the Spanish explanations were accepted without any difficulty being raised, or even without many inconvenient questions being asked. Fresh Chinese colonists again flocked to those pleasant islands undeterred by the fate of their countrymen, and their numbers* soon increased to a greater extent than before. The Spaniards had recourse to the same violent remedy as on the former occasion; but this event belongs to a later period. The successive massacres of Manilla show, however, that the same principles of government which were carried out by the Spaniards in America against the Aztecs of Mexico and the Incas of Peru were enforced in the Philippines. In estimating the policy of the Chinese towards Europeans, much of their national dislike must be attributed to the impression produced by these massacres, and all other

* 33,000 in 1639.

countries have had to suffer in this matter from the brutal and cowardly cruelty of the representatives of Spain* in the Chinese seas.

While these events were in progress for the establishment of commercial relations, individuals urged by a laudable zeal to spread the truths of Christianity had succeeded in gaining admission into China, where they were received with more consideration than would have been shown in Europe to any who came to teach the doctrines of Sakya Muni, or to explain the ethics of Confucius. The advent of these foreigners attracted little notice, and they appear to have been regarded with the complacent satisfaction which a great people always finds in the arrival of strangers from remote countries, whose very presence is an implied compliment to their own fame. Of these missionaries, charged by the Pope to convert the heathen in China, the first to arrive in the year 1581 was Michel Roger, a member of the Order of Jesuits. He was followed two years later, by Ricci, who gained a ready way to the Emperor's favour by the presents

* The Dutch did not appear on the scene until some years later. In 1624 they arrived off Macao, but the Portuguese drove them away. They then established themselves on the west coast of Formosa, where at a later period more will be heard of their doings. The French did not arrive till a much later period (reign of Kanghi) except as missionaries. In 1596 Elizabeth wrote a letter to the Emperor, but it did not reach its destination. Other attempts were made, but English intercourse did not fairly begin until 1634 with Captain Weddell's voyage, which was chiefly remarkable for the discovery of the mouth of the Canton river, and for the valour shown by our sailors and the ability evinced by the commander.

of a repeating watch and a clock. Of Matthew Ricci* it may be said that he possessed all the qualities necessary to convey a favourable impression both of his religion and his race; and to his tact must be attributed the solid footing which the French missionaries obtained at Peking, and which they retained, with rare intervals, for nearly two centuries. Others followed in their footsteps, and of these the most notable were Adam Schaal and Verbiest.

The Chinese authorities seem to have regarded with a tolerant and half-amused curiosity these attempts to convert them, but, although two high officials at least were christened, and extended their protection to the foreign priests, very little progress could be reported in the work they had undertaken. On the other hand, the missionaries were, in a worldly sense, most useful. They reformed—on the recommendation of a Chinese official Li Chitsao, or Peter,† President of the Tribunal of Rites at Nankin—the Chinese calendar, and corrected several astronomical errors. The Imperial Observatory flourished under their direction, and more correct maps of the provinces were drawn under their supervision. In short, they placed at the disposal of the Peking ministers their superior information, and, in return

* A glowing eulogium on the virtues of Matthew Ricci will be found in the preface to the third volume of the "Lettres Edifiantes." Ricci lived in China twenty-eight years and died there in 1610. There is some doubt, according to the "Anecdotes de la Chine," as to Ricci's character as a zealous churchman, but the adverse criticism smacks of ill-nature.

† Himself a Christian.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 397.

for the practical benefits they were able to confer, they received the rights of residency and fair treatment. But the Chinese* remained cold in any advances towards Christianity.

Wanleh's difficulties had proved unceasing since the first days of his accession to power. Even the Miao-tze, those savage and unconquered hillmen of Kweichow, would not spare the anxieties of this unfortunate prince. As early as the year 1586 they had given the authorities much trouble, and obliged them to have recourse to extreme measures. More than thirty years later, in 1617, they broke out afresh, when the disturbances on the northern frontier embarrassed the Government, and under a leader named Mongchang they committed numerous depredations in the plains. This quarrel was apparently arranged, but the Emperor's representative accepted the amicable expressions of the mountaineers, and did not push the matters with them to extremities.

These petty risings were of very small moment in comparison with the great struggle which was going on in the north with the Manchu Tartars, and which was to give a fresh turn to the destinies of China. We have to consider this important contest in detail; but although it began while Wanleh was still reigning, the other final incidents of his reign may be here briefly summed up.

One of the principal sources of anxiety to Wanleh's

* As M. Huc, himself an ardent missionary, has put it—"A melancholy trait is it in the character of this people, that Christian truth does but glide over its surface!"

ministers was that, having no legitimate children, he had postponed the selection and proclamation of an heir. In 1590 he had been entreated to recognise one of his illegitimate* sons as his heir, but his inclinations did not point in that direction. He accordingly rejected the proposition.† Eleven years later the popular feeling on this subject had become so strong that Wanleh did not feel able any longer to run counter to it, more especially as there was then no hope of the Empress having a son. In 1601, therefore, Wanleh proclaimed the eldest‡ of his children Heir Apparent, and on the second,§ whom he secretly favoured, he conferred the title of Prince Fou Wang. This act of decision did not, however, bring the Emperor that domestic peace which he may have hoped for.

The Prince Fou Wang, whose ambition had been raised by his father's preference for him, did not conceal the dissatisfaction with which he regarded an arrangement that consigned him to a place of secondary importance. His party was composed of men who felt little scruple as to the means they employed to compass their ends so long as they were attained; and

* That is to say, children by one of the Queens, and not by the Empress.

† One of his ministers, after attentively regarding the countenance of the young prince, exclaimed, "What a pity not to endeavour to polish this precious stone, of which might be made one of the rarest jewels."

‡ Named Chu Changlo. He reigned one month as the Emperor Kwangtsong.

§ Three other sons are also named as receiving titles by Mailla, vol. x. p. 391.

the Prince Fou Wang himself appears to have been an accomplished intriguer. He doubled the guards attached to his person, and he spread abroad calumnies about his brother. At last he caused a proclamation to be issued affirming that the Emperor had only chosen Chu Changlo as his heir in consequence of the importunities of the ministers. This announcement excited great agitation, and the ministers insisted on its authors being discovered and punished. Accordingly, Wanleh published an edict to the effect that they should be dealt with according to their deserts, and without regard to either their quality or rank. Several arrests were made, and one courtier, although his innocence was clearly established, was executed; but the real culprits escaped. In 1615 an accident revealed the truth,* and the ambitious schemes of Fou Wang and his mother, the Queen Chingchi, were laid bare. Even Wanleh's partiality could not overlook so flagrant a wrong, and all the guilty would then have been punished with death but for the intervention of Prince Chu Changlo. To the man whom above anyone else they had desired to injure, they owed their lives and the condonation of their crimes.

Wanleh continued to reign until the year 1620, when he died as much from the consequences of mental distress as from any bodily ailment. The perils which had beset him from the first days of his accession to the throne had culminated in the invasion of the Manchu Tartars, and when he died he

* For the account of this revelation see Mailla, vol. x. pp. 399, 405.

left his realm exposed to the assaults of its northern foe. The standards of the enemy, to use the words of the historian of the dynasty, were already metaphorically, if not actually, at the gates of his capital. Several emperors of the Ming family, indeed, ascended the Dragon Throne before the final overthrow of the reigning house was completed, but with Wanleh's death a formal invitation to the Manchus to invade the country as conquerors was issued.

Were there no other event to mark out the reign of Wanleh as a distinct epoch in history, the first introduction of Europeans into the country in a character independent of the Government would suffice. Then began that contact with the nations of the West, which has resulted in the present vast commercial intercourse of China with the foreigner, and which has not, as yet, proved destructive to either the institutions or the power of this Empire. That intercourse has now been freed from many of the restrictions which hindered its development, and will yet attain proportions far in excess of those that it has at present reached. Its origin has been recorded, and the description of its growth will afford one of the most difficult problems in connection with the modern history of the country. We have again to turn our attention to the consideration of that Tartar invasion which was to be marked by another transfer of the ruling power, and which was followed by the accession to the throne of the family that now guides the destinies of the Chinese Empire.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MANCHUS.

Origin of the Manchus.—The Niuche and the Kins.—Meaning of the Term.—The Principal Residence of the Clan.—Its Insignificance as compared with the Mongols.—Valley of Hootooala.—Mythical Period.—Aisin Gioro.—The Chief Huen.—Noorhachu's Birth.—His Youth.—Inter-tribal Feuds.—Relations with the Chinese.—Nikan Wailan.—The Idea of Uniting the Niuche.—A Contest.—Murder of Huen and his Son.—Noorhachu vows Vengeance on all concerned.—Nikan's Hour of Triumph.—Noorhachu's Energy.—Pursuit of Nikan.—Chinese surrender Nikan.—His Execution.—Noorhachu's Progress.—Growth of his Military Power.—Vacillation of the Chinese.—The League of Seven.—Victory of Goolo Hill.—Boojantai of Woola.—Attack on Yeho.—Momentary Retreat.—Views of the Chinese.—Conflict of Authority.—Noorhachu resolves to invade Leaoutung.—His Army.—The Seven Hates.—Reflections.

WHEN the Mongols overthrew, in the thirteenth century, the Kin dynasty in Northern China, many of the fugitives retired northwards into the solitudes beyond Leaoutung, where they found themselves secure from pursuit. With the loss of imperial title and position, they lost also the name which their great conqueror Akouta had given them, and resumed

the earlier one of Niuche, by which Chinese writers had been in the habit of designating them.* The Niuche occupied most of the country stretching from the Chinese province of Leaoutung to the Amour on the north, and their settlements dotted the banks of the Songari and the Usuri. The Niuche were divided into innumerable small clans, none of which possessed either great numbers or much authority; and their management presented to the Chinese officials few of the difficulties that were of such frequent occurrence in their dealings with the Mongols or any other of the Central Asian tribes. Of these small clans, only that which was ruled by the ancestors of the Manchu† family claims our consideration; but upon its success the other clans assimilated themselves with it, and became merged in the military confederacy headed by Noorhachu.

The clan which was destined to rise to so lofty a pinnacle of power originally occupied a small district on the Soodsu stream,‡ and situated some thirty miles east of Moukden. The principal camp or stockade of this family—for, after all, it was little more—was in the valley of Hootoala, which lies below the Long White Mountains and between the Soodsu and Jiaho streams. The scene has been praised for its rugged beauty; and from the description of this remote

* See *ante*, vol. i. p. 407.

† Manchu means "the clear." It is synonymous with Tsing, the other and official name of the present dynasty.

‡ A tributary of the Hwun, which flows, together with the Leaou, into the Gulf of Leaoutung.

valley, protected on three sides by water, and on the fourth by the heights of a lofty range, we can imagine that it was well adapted to be the cradle of a race of conquerors. In many respects it corresponded with the original home of the Mongols on the upper course of the Amour, but its two radical differences were that it was on a much smaller scale, and that it was close to the Chinese frontier. The valley of Hootoola* was as much the object of the veneration and affection of the Manchus as that of the Onon had been of the Mongols.

In this particular district, which was surrounded by numerous others of similar character, there appeared as chief, about the middle of the fourteenth century, when Hongwou was busily engaged in his war with the Yuens, a man whose name has been handed down to us as Aisin Gioro. Aisin Gioro† was to the Manchus all that Budantsar‡ had been to the Mongols. He is said to have owed his birth to a singular and miraculous intervention of Providence. A magpie had dropped a red fruit§ into the lap of a maiden of the Niuche, and she having eaten of it conceived a son, who became Aisin Gioro. Calumnious writers have affirmed that this mythical hero was nothing more than a runaway Mongol, but at all events there is no

* Mr. Ross in his "History of the Manchus" (1880) has made known to us many facts connected with the early history of the Manchus.

† Aisin Gioro means "golden family stem," and in it we may trace the affinity of his family to the Kin.

‡ See *ante*, vol. i. pp. 449-50.

§ Ross's "Manchus."

question that he ruled as lord in the small and secluded valley of Hootooala. Five generations in descent from him came the old chief Huen, or, as his friends more boastfully called him, the Emperor Chintsu, and during Wanleh's life he ruled over the same territory, of which the dimensions may be inferred from the fact that its length did not exceed twelve miles. This state preserved amicable relations with the Chinese, who did not exact any tribute from it, and who allowed its inhabitants full and free commercial intercourse during the time of the fair or market held at Neuchang.

In the year 1559 an heir was born to the son of this chief Huen, whose name was destined to rise high on the list of great conquerors as Noorhachu.* Great anticipations were formed as to the glorious future in store for this boy. His personal appearance was remarkable, his strength enormous, and his determination of character attracted attention from an early age. When he was nineteen his step-mother gave him a small sum of money and sent him out into the world to gain his fortune, but her sympathy having been won over by his exceptional talent she speedily repented of her harshness. She wished him to return to her house, or at the least to accept further assistance; but he resolutely refused to avail himself in any way of her aid.

* Mr. Ross says of him (p. 4)—“Noorhachu, like all his successors, gave early indications of his subsequent greatness. He was a thirteen-months' child, had the dragon face and the phoenix eye; his chest was enormous, his ears large, and his voice like the tone of the largest bull.”

Feuds existed among these Manchu clans, and contests between them were far from infrequent. But it was not until the close of the sixteenth century that this inter-tribal strife attracted the attention of the Chinese, and then apparently it was as much in consequence of the importunity of one of the combatants as from any interest taken in this trivial matter. About this period, too, the ambition to unite the scattered clans and to weld the Manchus, or more properly the Niuche, into a single confederacy began to take form in the minds of several of these petty chieftains; and we may feel sure from his subsequent acts that such schemes were not foreign to the mind of the young Noorhachu. Neither his youth nor his opportunities allowed him to take the lead in this enterprise, and, indeed, his first appearance on the scene of public affairs was as the opponent of the man who took the initiative in the national cause.

In 1583, a chief named Nikan Wailan,* who ruled over a small district south of Hootooala, induced the Chinese commander in Leaoutung, to assist him in an attack upon one of his neighbours. The Chinese appear to have also had some grievance against the victim of this onslaught, and lent a small body of troops with the greater readiness for the purpose of his chastisement. The main object of their undertaking having been thus successfully performed, the Chinese soldiers would have been withdrawn, but that Nikan succeeded in persuading them to remain to

* Ross. Called Haida by Mailla.

assist him against another of his neighbours, whose overthrow he also meditated. Now it happened that this neighbouring chief had married the cousin of Noorhachu, and when the news of the approaching army of invasion reached Hootooala, the old chief Huen* and his son and heir, the father of Noorhachu, at once set off with such force as they could assemble to succour their kinsman, the chief of Goolo. At first they showed a wish to merely convey their relative to a place of safety until the cloud on the affairs of Goolo had blown over; but the chief would not allow the removal of his wife, probably for fear that he would then lose the support of Huen and his companions. They all, therefore, remained together to defend the place against Nikan and the Chinese.

The latter did not dare attack the town when they found it prepared for a resolute and protracted defence, but they had recourse to an act of treachery to gain their end. Simulating a desire for a pacific arrangement, they enticed a large number of the garrison outside the walls, when they fell upon and massacred them all. Among the slain were Huen and his son. Nikan had thus far accomplished much towards the attainment of his object, and he flattered himself that he held ultimate success within his grasp. The brutal and cowardly murder† of both his grandfather and father roused the indignation of

* The grandfather of both Noorhachu and the Goolo chief's wife.

† From the principal blame in this crime the Chinese may be absolved. It was done under Nikan's instructions, and probably carried out by him alone.

Noorhachu to the highest point, and he swore to exact a bitter revenge for it from Nikan and also from the Chinese.* Vengeance became the principal object of his life, and to the murder of his kinsmen must be attributed the origin of that danger which eventually cost Wanleh's successors their throne.

Nikan remained in possession of his first conquest, but Noorhachu was known to be making strenuous preparations to march against him in order to dispute the prize he had acquired by the aid of the Chinese. Noorhachu had already assumed the rights of the chiefship in his valley, and at his request the Chinese had restored the bodies of his father and grandfather for burial. Some compensation had also been allowed him by the Leaoutung officials, who disclaimed much of the responsibility for the slaughter of his parents; but Nikan still flourished on his crime, and the prominence of his position kept him in view as the mark of his rival's vengeance. Noorhachu's principal object now became to get Nikan into his power, either by force or by negotiation with the Chinese. He signally failed in his latter plan, and the Chinese authorities, who pinned their faith to the designing Nikan, not only ignored his requests, but created Nikan chief of all the Niuche districts. By this step Noorhachu was virtually stripped of his authority, and became one of the vassals of his hated rival. The measure of the Chinese was extreme, but

* Mailla says that he swore a terrible oath to immolate 200,000 Chinese in revenge for his father's murder. Vol. x. p. 407, note.

its very boldness might have ensured success, had they provided the necessary force to secure its execution. Li Chingliang, the Governor of Leaoutung, who made this creation of a new potentate, could at first congratulate himself on the success of his experiment, for on the Imperial proclamation becoming known among the Niuche many of Noorhachu's own people left him and attached themselves to the side of Nikan. Noorhachu himself still stood haughtily aloof, and fixed in his resolve to slay his father's murderer.

The Chinese did not support their nominee with any degree of vigour, and Noorhachu continued to carry on his plans for securing the person of Nikan. So persistently did Noorhachu pursue him that Nikan did not feel safe from his attack even in the interior of his stockaded camp at Toolun. Several times he made his escape only by a precipitate retreat into Leaoutung, and the Chinese at last grew tired of supporting a man who was apparently unable to defend himself. In 1586, therefore, they handed him over to Noorhachu, who at once killed him. The success which thus marked his plans, and which attended his performance of a sacred duty, raised Noorhachu's reputation to a high point among his countrymen; while, on the other hand, the fluctuating policy of the Chinese tended to diminish theirs and to weaken their authority. Noorhachu was still a young man when he thus accomplished the first object of his life. There yet remained for him to attain the purpose for which Nikan had striven—the supremacy over a Niuche confederacy.

His first care was to establish his place of residence at a spot well situated in the plain where water was abundant, and, having selected the site of his capital, he surrounded it with a triple wall. He also drew up a code of regulations adapted by their simplicity to the requirements and intelligence of his subjects; and he devoted all his leisure to the disciplining of his small army. With the Chinese he renewed the amicable arrangements that had long been in force, and accepted at their hands the titles and money gifts which the Leaoutung officials were willing, and indeed eager, to bestow upon him. While he thus secured the neutrality of the Imperial governors, he resolutely pursued his schemes for uniting the clans of the southern Niuche under his sway. In this he encountered less difficulty than might have been thought possible, but his triumph over Nikan had produced a far greater effect than the real extent of that victory justified. In 1591 he began the second portion of his career by the annexation of the Ya-looking district,* which, suddenly attacked, offered little or no resistance to his arms.

The success which attended this act of spoliation roused the apprehension of all Noorhachu's neighbours. Up to this they had passed their time in rivalries which led to petty wars, barren of result; but Noorhachu's well-prepared and vigorous measures were evidently directed towards the attainment of some higher object than the gratification of a feud.

* East of Hootooala.

These measures constituted, therefore, a common danger to all the other chiefs. When there went forth a voice among the common folk of Manchuria that Noorhachu was a wise and valiant ruler who gave his followers a share in the benefits of his own elevation, there also passed through the courts or camps of the other chiefs of the Niuche the fear that this energetic chief, with his new-fangled ideas, aimed at their annihilation. What had been a vague apprehension or a mere suspicion before the seizure of Yalookiang became a settled fear and a complete conviction after that event.

Seven* of the neighbouring princes combined and declared war upon Noorhachu. Thirty thousand Niuche and Mongols invaded his territory, and threatened to upset all the young chief's plans and calculations by his conclusive overthrow. Noorhachu was not himself appalled at the greatness of the approaching storm, but his followers and people had less faith in their leader's capability to repel the invaders than he had. In this crisis of his fortunes, the care which he had bestowed on his fighting force stood him in good stead, for in each man who followed his banner he possessed a faithful and well-trained soldier. The odds against him were apparently irresistible, for when he drew up his forces at the foot of Goolo hill† he had but four thousand men with which to oppose the onset of thirty. Their

* Of these Boojai, the chief of Yeho, a large district north of Hootooala, was the principal.

† According to Mr. Ross.

superior discipline and the resolution of their commander supplied to some degree this deficiency of numbers; but the confederated princes had every reason to feel elate. The battle began with a furious charge against the front of Noorhachu's line. Although Yeho and the principal of the Mongol captains headed it, the charge miscarried. Yeho fell from his horse and was slain, while the Mongol captain, having experienced a similar mishap, remounted his horse and galloped away. Noorhachu's opportunity had come, and he delivered home his attack. The large force of the confederates broke into disorder, and in the pursuit 4,000 of them were slain. Several chiefs were taken prisoners, and among the spoil several thousand horses and plaited suits of armour were counted, which came as an opportune help to Noorhachu in his schemes of army organisation.

The victory of Goolo consolidated the position which Noorhachu had gained in the valley of Hootooala, and in 1599 he followed it up by the conquest and annexation of Hada, an extensive and fertile district on his northern border. These signal successes excited the alarm of the Chinese who were beginning to protest against the rapid progress of Noorhachu's power. Noorhachu took this grumbling in ill part, and discontinued paying a tribute which he had engaged a few years before to send to the Leaoutung governor. The adjoining state of Hwifa shared the fate of Hada in 1607, and the following years were employed in deciding the destinies of the

Woola district which skirted the banks of the Songari. The chief of this territory, Boojointai, made a resolute defence, but his forces were no match for the cotton-mailed warriors of Noorhachu. Several engagements were fought before the decisive action came off, and then Boojointai, who had incurred the extreme displeasure of Noorhachu for an insult offered to his daughter, fled away and disappeared, never more to be heard of, in the mists of the northern region. These campaigns were but preliminary to the main attack on Yeho, the most powerful district of them all, just as the union of the Niuche or Manchu tribes was essential to the invasion of China; and in 1613 Noorhachu began his operations against this territory, whose ruler had foolishly remained inactive while he was collecting in his hands the power to crush him.

His success on this the first occasion did not reach his expectations, for the people of Yeho retired into their towns, and, assisted by the Chinese with money and arms, they were able to hold out until Noorhachu's followers, disappointed at the slow progress made against their foe, were withdrawn. In two other districts, those of Hoorha and Doonghai,* he fared better, for both either submitted to or recognised his authority. These successes resulted in the firm establishment of Noorhachu's power along

* Hoorha, on river of same name, north-east of Woola and the Songari. Doonghai was an adjoining district, meaning "east sea." These early expeditions were successful only so far as they went. It was not until 1643 that the whole of Hoorha up to the Amour was subjected.—Ross.

the whole of the northern frontier of Leaoutung. The Chinese thus saw that central authority set up among the Niuche which they had always affected to desire, but it had been no part of their plan that the man to wield it should be one who owed nothing to their support, and who it was shrewdly suspected nursed a latent hostility towards themselves. The dispensation of authority, which seemed natural enough to the Chinese when vested in the person of a puppet ruler like Nikan, assumed quite a different aspect when exercised by the vigorous chief Noorhachu.

After the repulse of his first attack on Yeho, Noorhachu devoted more attention even than before to the improvement of his army. Not content with dividing his forces into companies, several of which were composed of picked men, he also collected engines of war, which showed that he meditated some more extensive and difficult enterprise than any he had yet undertaken. And such indeed was the case. For reasons which the geographical position of the states will not sufficiently explain, he came to the decision that he could not conquer Yeho until he had first overthrown the Chinese authority in Leaoutung. It was in 1617 that he came to this important resolution, and when his military arrangements had been completed he drew up a formal indictment against the Chinese Government. His army, which had originally consisted of no more than one hundred men, now mustered over forty thousand strong, and these troops had been drilled under his own eye, and were individually known to him. The Manchu

archer and man-at-arms were both famed for their skill and intrepidity; and their equipment left nothing to be desired. The Manchu bow was a formidable weapon, and the cotton-plated mail of the horseman was proof to the shaft or the spear. Noorhachu's indictment of the Chinese took the form of a list*

* This list of grievances or "hates" is given by Mr. Ross in his "History of the Manchus." It may be quoted here as an interesting and striking historical document. The grievances were seven in number, and as follows:—

"1. Though my ancestors never took a straw from, nor hurt an inch of earth within the Chinese boundary, the Chinese were unceasingly quarrelling (with them?), and without just reason abetting my neighbours to the great injury of my ancestors.

"2. Notwithstanding such injuries it was still my desire to be on friendly terms with the Chinese Emperor, and I, therefore, set up a stone slab on the border, on which was engraved an oath, that whoever, Manchu or Chinaman, should cross the frontier must suffer instant death, and that if any man aided in sending back the trespasser, he would himself suffer death instead. This oath was disregarded by the Chinese, whose soldiers crossed to aid Yeho.

"3. At Nankiang and Beihai on the Ching-ho, the Chinese crossed the river every year, plundering all around, regardless of consequences. I carried out my oath to the letter and slew as many as were seen on our side of the river. Thereupon the Chinese annulled the treaty between us, reproached me with murdering their people, and at our very border murdered my ambassador to Kwangning with his nine attendants.

"4. The Chinese crossed the frontier to aid Yeho, and thus compelled men and women who were our subjects to return to Mongol allegiance.

"5. For many generations we have tilled the lands along the Chai river, and along the tripartite roads of Foongan mountain pass. The Chinese soldiers came and drove away the reapers when they went to gather in the harvest.

"6. Though Yeho sinned against Heaven, you continued to listen to their deceiving speech, and sent me a messenger with a letter upbraiding me, railing at and abusing me without restraint, causing me unspeakable shame.

"7. Hada of old assisted Yeho in battling against me, who had only my resources on which to rely. Heaven gave me Hada. You of the Ming supported them, causing them to return to their own

of grievances against their border lieutenants, but the peculiarity of the proceeding was in the accompanying ceremony. Instead of forwarding this document to the Chinese Court he burnt it in presence of his army, so that Heaven might judge the justice of the cause between himself and his enemy.

Thus were the slight power, insignificant resources, and scanty population of the Manchu districts raised to so high and vigorous a point by the thrift and ability of Noorhachu that the invasion of the great empire of China became a possibility. Notwithstanding the skill shown in husbanding and developing their strength, they could not have possessed any conceivable chance of victory had the Mings shown the smallest capacity; for the Manchus, unlike the Mongols, were very few in numbers, and their recruiting ground was extremely limited. While this war-cloud was gathering portent on his northern frontier, the Ming Emperor Wanleh was congratulating himself at paltry successes over rebel hillmen in the remote south; and

homes. But Hada was afterwards frequently attacked and robbed by this same Yeho. If these small kingdoms had obeyed the will of Heaven, they could not but abide and prosper; disobeying the will of Heaven they must be broken and destroyed. Can you preserve in life those appointed to die? I took Hada men; do you still desire to restore them? You are a prince of Heaven's appointment. You are the sole Emperor of all under Heaven, why do you envy me the possession of my small kingdom? When Hoolun kingdoms gathered against me to destroy me, Heaven abandoned them and aided me, because they fought against me without a cause. At that time you aided Yeho against me, and thus ran counter to the will of Heaven; you reversed my right and his wrong, and thus divided an unjust judgment.

"For all these reasons I hate you with an intense hatred and now make war against you."

he remained indifferent to the pressing danger at his very door. Noorhachu's invasion of Leaoutung awoke him from his delusion, while it also revealed the most formidable of the enemies who threatened the Ming dynasty with overthrow, and the Chinese people with the horrors of invasion.

CHAPTER IX.

WARS BETWEEN THE MINGS AND MANCHUS.

First Invasion of Chinese Territory.—Capture of Tsingho.—Retreat of the Manchus.—Yeho.—The Chinese bestir themselves.—Their great Army.—Bad Generalship.—Distribution of forces.—The Manchu Army.—Noorhachu's Skill.—Who shall first defeat the Tartars?—Signal Chinese Defeat at Sarhoo Hill.—Other Reverses.—Rapidly of Manchu Movements.—Malin Routed.—Defeat of Liuyen.—Total Chinese Losses.—The Consequences.—Capture of Kaiyuen.—Annexation of Yeho.—Reunion of the Niuche.—Hiung Tingbi.—A competent General.—His wise Measures.—Manchu Advance checked.—The Emperor Kwangtsong.—His early Death.—Tienki.—The Recall of Tingbi.—The Influence of the Eunuchs.—Yuen Yingtai.—A General who never heard a Shot fired.—Noorhachu seizes his Opportunity.—Capture of Moukden.—Western Artillery.—The Long Bow.—Manchu Tactics.—Attempts at Retrieval.—Leaouyang.—Stormed after arduous Siege.—Suicide of Yuen Yingtai. The Fidelity of a Class.—The Origin of the Pigtail.—Internal Revolts.—Szechuen.—Chetsong Ming.—A Chinese Penthesilea.—Suppression of Rising, but Escape of Leaders.—Other Seditions.—In Kweichow.—In Chantung.—Their Significance.—The Manchus again.—The Evils of a Dual Command.—Noorhachu crosses the Leaou.—Execution of Tingbi.—Slight Retrieval of Affairs.—Another General disgraced.—Defence of Ningyuen.—Chungwan's Defence.—The Manchus repulsed.—Chagrin of Noorhachu.—His Death.—His Character.—His

Successor.—Taitsong.—Negotiations.—Interesting Correspondence.—The Claims of the Empire.—Invasion of Corea.—Fresh Manchu Defeats at Ningyuen.—Death of Tienki.—Accession of Tsongching.

THE Manchus, under their great leader Noorhachu, crossed the frontier into Chinese territory in the year 1618, and they first advanced against the border town of Fooshun, where an annual fair used to be held for the Tartar tribes. This open invasion of the Empire took the local officials by surprise, and the slight preparations they had made to resist such raids as it was alone thought possible that the Manchus might organise appeared insignificant in face of Noorhachu's well-appointed army. The governor was slain while attempting to defend Fooshun, and the town surrendered to the Manchus. After this encounter Noorhachu sent* to the governor of Leaoutung, for the purpose of forwarding it to Peking, a list of his grievances, and it was said that he even promised to lay down his arms on his just demands being satisfied. The Peking Government did not appreciate the situation, and turned a deaf ear to the protests and minatory language of a petty Tartar chieftain, of whose name even the Court chroniclers pretended to be ignorant. Far from showing the least disposition to comply with his terms, the Chinese despatched an army to retake Fooshun and to expel the invader. Its movements were marked by little prudence, and the over-confidence and want of skill of the commanders were justly punished by their complete

* Mailla, vol. x. p. 409.

overthrow on the field of battle. The charge of the Manchus proved irresistible, and carried everything before it.

Noorhachu passed a portion of the summer in inaction to see whether the Celestial Government would make any move towards coming to a pacific arrangement with him, and while he remained in his quarters the report of his first successes over the Chinese brought him many fresh recruits to swell the numbers of his already elated soldiery. But when the autumn came without any sign of concession from Peking, Noorhachu broke up his camp and resumed his advance into China. This time he marched in an opposite direction to that which he had taken on the first occasion, and laid siege to Tsingho, where some preparations had been made for a siege. The place was in fact resolutely defended, and the Manchu assaults were several times repulsed. But a traitor opened one of the gates to the foe, and the Manchus thus succeeded in capturing the town when they seemed on the point of failure. More than 6,000 of the garrison and 10,000 of the townspeople fell by the edge of the sword. Other successes should have followed from this signal victory, but the clamour of his soldiers, who were anxious concerning the security of their homes, because of the presence in their rear of the hostile state of Yehou, obliged Noorhachu to return to Hingking* for the purpose of dealing with this neighbour.

* The capital of his dominions. He had built it, as his third capital, in the plain of Hootooala.

The invasion of Leaoutung had, therefore, little more than commenced when Noorhachu found himself compelled to turn aside from it, and to resume his operations against the last of the independent Niuche districts. The campaign against Yeho had only entered upon its earliest stages, when the tidings reached Noorhachu that a large Chinese force threatened his own capital, and he had to hastily retrace his steps for its defence. The successes of the Tartars at Fooshun and Tsingho had at last roused the lieutenants of Wanleh to some idea of the formidable character of the chief with whom they had to deal, and of the military force which he had created. When, therefore, they heard that Yeho was about to feel the full weight of the Manchu attack, they resolved to hasten to its assistance, and to assail Noorhachu before he had crushed his last opponent among those of the same race as himself.

Yangkao, the viceroy of Leaoutung, realised the full significance of the situation at a glance, and placed in the field an army of more than 100,000 men according to the lowest computation,* but it was unfortunate that he assumed the command in person, for his incapacity in the art of war was notorious. His very first step showed that he had not learned one of the simplest traditions of military science both in his own and other countries, that asserting that victory generally goes with the big battalions; for he at once nullified the advantage he possessed from

* That of Mailla.

superiority of numbers by dividing his army into four divisions without any secure means of communication between them. The advance of the Chinese naturally produced great panic among the Manchus and their allies; but Noorhachu's confidence, if it was ever shaken, returned as soon as he detected the fatal blunder of his opponent. The Manchu army consisted of about 60,000 trained soldiers, but it is doubtful if on the field of battle it would have proved a match for a well-equipped Chinese army of double its numerical strength. That point never arose, however, for practical decision, as Yangkao voluntarily surrendered his advantage by the distribution of his army in divisions, each of which was inferior in numbers as well as, the result showed, in other respects, to the Manchu force that could by rapid marching be brought against it.

Noorhachu proved his claims to be considered a great general by the skill with which he turned his central position to the most advantage. His tactics emulated those practised at epochs long after his by the two great European captains of modern times, Frederick the Great and Napoleon, who, in the crises of their careers, supplied the want of numbers by the rapid movement and concentration of their troops; and on the occasion we refer to they thoroughly disconcerted the torpid measures of the Pekin commanders. Yangkao had entrusted the command of the western and most important detachment to Tousong, an officer who craved to distinguish himself, and who set as little value on his foe as he

held a high opinion of his own abilities. His division was instructed to advance direct from Fooshun on Hingking, but the enterprising Noorhachu perceived that could he disperse it the flank and line of retreat of the other portions of the Chinese army would be exposed to his attack. Tousong moved by forced marches, but exact information of his approach reached Noorhachu's camp; and the Manchu advance to meet him was so timed as to make the meeting on the banks of the national stream of the Hwunho. Tousong, anxious to secure for himself all the glory that would accrue to the man who gained the first victory over the Manchus, hastened to cross that stream without reconnoitring the further bank. The passage was not effected without difficulty, as the waters were swollen, and neither bridges nor boats were available. Yet, notwithstanding the inadequate means of regaining the western side in the event of a reverse, the Chinese commander recklessly continued his advance; but he had not much farther to march, for the Manchu army was drawn up in battle array close to the Hwunho.

Tousong entrenched himself on Sarhoo Hill, while Noorhachu, whose disposable force comprised almost the whole of his army, made his final preparations for attack. Tousong, apparently ignorant of the impending storm, further weakened himself by detaching a small force from his main body to attack the neighbouring town of Jiefan. Here also the Manchus had been too quick in their movements and too well-informed for the Chinese, whose assault was repulsed with some loss.

Noorhachu then no longer deferred his attack upon the position round Sarhoo Hill, and after some hours' desperate fighting he drove the Chinese in irretrievable confusion into the Hwunho, where most of those who had escaped from the arrows and swords of the Manchus met with a watery death. Tousong paid the penalty of his rashness with his life, and, instead of being the first to obtain fame by the overthrow of the Tartars, his defeat* contributed more than any other achievement to spread their military fame.

Noorhachu then hastened to attack the other divisions in turn. That under the command of a general named Malin was the next to receive the brunt of his onset. At first Malin remained on the defensive in a position situated between two hills which he had fortified. On each of these heights he placed a strong detachment, and his main body was drawn up in the valley behind a triple tier of waggons. The position was chosen with judgment, and considerable art had been expended in rendering it more formidable. But the Imperialists had not yet learnt the habit of standing on the defensive, and the sight of the enemy outside their entrenchments proved too irksome to be endured. Malin left his position and advanced to meet Noorhachu in the open. So vigorous was the charge of the Chinese general that for a moment the Manchus recoiled, and Noorhachu himself was in danger; but the superior discipline of his soldiers

* Mailla's account of this battle is simply that one portion of Tousong's army crossed the river and was annihilated before help could arrive.

restored the day. The Imperialists suffered a severe defeat, and Malin was able to rally only a very small portion of his troops at Kaiyuen after the combat had concluded. The cup of Chinese misfortune was now full to overflowing, but yet another battle was to be lost before the disasters of the year 1619 were to end for the unhappy Wanleh. The third Chinese division under Liuyen, the officer who had distinguished himself by the prompt punishment of the Miaotze, had obtained a few successes while Noorhachu had been overthrowing his colleagues in the west. The turn of Liuyen to be attacked at last arrived, and his defeat, despite his valour, was not less complete and crushing than those of his brother generals already described. The Manchus triumphed in this battle as much by means of a stratagem as by their own courage. They dressed a portion of their army in the clothes taken from the dead bodies of Tousong's soldiers, and Liuyen's troops admitted them into their ranks in the belief that they were friends. In this they were soon undeceived, and, attacked on all sides, Liuyen's followers fled in utter rout after the fall of their gallant commander.*

Signal as were these victories, and great as was the effect they exercised on the destiny of the Manchus,

* The total losses of the Chinese in these combats were stated to be 310 general officers and 45,000 private soldiers. The baggage of these divisions remained as spoil in the hands of the victor. A not less important consequence was the withdrawal of 20,000 Yeho troops who returned to their homes. A detachment of 5,000 Corean troops went over to Noorhachu after the defeat of Liuyen.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 411.

Noorhachu did not waste much time in idle ceremonies at his capital. Within a month of these triumphs, which astonished even the Manchus, and which terrified the Chinese, Noorhachu again took the field. His first object of attack was the fortified town of Kaiyuen,* whither Malin had retired with the relics of his force. Kaiyuen was carried by assault, and the Chinese had to mourn the loss of a large number of prisoners† besides many officers, including their commander Malin himself, and soldiers slain in the fight. The Manchus then pressed on to fresh conquests, of which the last and principal of this year's campaign was that of Yeho, the overthrow of which state had been one of the principal objects of Noorhachu's original policy. The annexation of Yeho to his dominions completed the reunion of the Niuche, who, since the downfall of the Kin monarchy, had only been a collection of disunited and scattered tribes. It also supplied him with a fresh means of increasing his army, which the Yeho clan augmented by the addition of at least 30,000 men. This extraordinary development in the power of the Manchus had been effected partly by their material progress under the instigation of Noorhachu, and partly by the collapse of the Chinese authority under a succession of military disasters unparalleled in its history in this quarter of the Empire. When Wanleh‡ died in 1620, Noorhachu had firmly laid the foundation of

* Situated on the Yeho frontier, near the Siramuren river.

† Three days, it is said, were occupied in counting them.

‡ See *ante*, p. 176.

the subsequent power of his race, and was already meditating the invasion of Leaoutung, if not the capture of Peking itself.

Yet almost the very last act of the Emperor Wanleh had been one calculated to undo much of the evil of previous years of mismanagement. The measure was nothing more striking than the appointment of a competent general to the command of the army garrisoning Leaoutung. Hiung Tingbi, who was now sent with all despatch to restore the sinking fortunes of the Empire, was gifted in a high degree with those qualities of patience and resolution which, if Yangkao and his lieutenants had possessed them, would have saved the realm, and checked Noorhachu's power in its growth. But even he could do little towards openly opposing the Manchus with the demoralised fugitives of the armies which they had routed. So great was the confusion throughout the north-east that Tingbi determined to devote all his attention to the defence of Leaouyang, the capital of the province, and for several months he left the Manchus to pursue undisturbed their marauding expeditions throughout the rest of Leaoutung. Tingbi succeeded at last in restoring some degree of order to affairs, and his vigilance and energy raised the confidence and discipline of the Chinese soldiers. When he had fully provided for the safety of Leaouyang he proceeded to the other towns nearer the border, and set himself to work to restore their fortifications and to place in them sufficient garrisons. In a very short time he succeeded in arraying

along the frontier a force of 180,000 men, and in establishing a chain of fortified posts through which it would be difficult for any Manchu force to cut its way. In two years Tingbi had accomplished so much that the Chinese authority was again established throughout Leaoutung, and Noorhachu did not consider it prudent, so long as Tingbi remained in command, to attempt any fresh enterprise, although the greatness of his means in comparison with what they had been would have seemed to most men to justify a contempt for the Chinese power.

Wanleh had, in the meanwhile, been succeeded by his son Chu Changlo, who took the style of Kwangtsong. The new monarch during the brief period of his reign gave many proofs of the amiability and gentleness of his character, but it is doubtful if he possessed the resolution and sternness necessary to cope with the difficulties which he inherited. His death was caused by an attack of exhaustion from over-work, aggravated by the use of unsuitable medicines. The evidence is not clear whether we must assign his early death to the incapacity of his physician or to the machinations of his brother's mother. The suspicion of foul play was strong, but only slight proof in support of it could be produced; and if there were any criminals in the case they escaped the penalty of their misdeed. Neither did they reap any advantage from it, for the magnates of the capital assembled in solemn conclave and insisted on the elevation of Kwangtsong's son, a boy of sixteen years, to the throne. The son, without their few

redeeming virtues, possessed, unfortunately, the weaknesses and irresolution of both his father and grandfather; and the hesitation he showed in accepting the offer of the crown fitly represented the character of his reign. The new Emperor assumed the name of Hitsong, but he is best remembered in history as Tienki* the unhappy.

Tienki had not been more than a few months upon the throne when he was weak enough to sanction the recall of Tingbi, to whose energy and talent alone were due the Empire's preservation of its hold over the Leaoutung province. Tingbi was essentially the architect of his own fortunes, and having been always distinguished as a man of independence, standing aloof from palace intrigue and court factions, there were none among the corrupt ministers of the Ming to espouse his cause. His appointment had been some slight sign of returning prudence on the part of Wanleh, and it was reserved for that prince's grandson to greatly contribute to the fall of his dynasty by its reversal. Tingbi was removed from his post in deference to the clamour of the eunuchs, and Yuen Yingtai, who had never heard a shot fired, nor seen the flight of the Manchu arrows, was sent to take his place, and to defend an extensive border against the most warlike people and the best trained army at that time existing in Asia.

* From the name given to the years of his reign. One of his first acts was to give the year which witnessed the brief reign of his father the name of Taichang, by which Kwangtsong is often called.

While Tingbi remained in command Noorhachu had abstained from undertaking any enterprise; but no sooner was it known that he had been disgraced and that an inexperienced man of letters had been sent to take his place, than the Manchu leader saw that his opportunity had again come. He accordingly set out in the early spring of the year 1621, at the head of his forces, which had been strengthened in numbers by some Chinese deserters and by many Mongol adventurers from the West. His march was directed in the first place upon Fanyang or Moukden, where the large garrison left by Tingbi still remained to guard a town of much strength and importance. The commandant was a courageous man, but lacking in judgment; for when the Manchu columns came in sight, undeterred by the remembrance of former disasters, he at once marched out to encounter them. The step was doubly ill-judged, for not only did he thus lose the protection of the walls and towers of Moukden, but he thereby also deprived himself of the advantages of a superior weapon.* At this period

* About this time the Chinese received, for the first time in their history, military assistance from a European people. A Portuguese envoy, Gonsalvo de Texeira, happened to arrive at Pekin from Macao shortly after the Manchus had inflicted the first reverses on the Chinese. Texeira at once offered the Emperor the assistance of a small corps of Portuguese arquebusiers. The offer was promptly accepted, and 200 Portuguese were enrolled for the service. This corps was increased by the addition of an equal number of natives trained and disciplined by the Macao authorities. This small army, magnificently caparisoned, travelled in state across China, but on reaching Pekin it appeared too weak in numbers to be able to accomplish anything of importance against the numerous and formidable Tartars. The Portuguese were, therefore, sent back to Macao without

the Chinese were just beginning to substitute the musket for the bow, but they had not attained much precision in its use, nor could a favourable opinion be pronounced on the excellence of their new weapons. The Manchus still retained the long-bow,* in the manipulation of which they were unrivalled, and in the open field their superiority as archers over the Chinese musketeers was necessarily much more marked than in the attack on fortified places.

In the engagement which ensued with the garrison of Moukden, Noorbachu inflicted a severe defeat upon them, and then his followers succeeded in entering the city at the same time as the fugitives from the field of battle. Notwithstanding that treachery within

having been engaged. Their artillery might have availed to change the fortunes of the day in some of the engagements with Noorbachu; but either jealousy or pride prevented the Chinese availing themselves of a source of help which, had it proved efficacious, would have revealed the vast superiority of European soldiers over Chinese. The Portuguese cannon were, however, borrowed and others were cast in imitation under direction of the Jesuits.—See Mailla, vol. x. p. 409; also Du Halde and Pauthier, *passim*.

* To supply the inferiority in the character of their weapon, the Manchus had framed and practised a military exercise closely resembling the Roman *testudo* or the tortoise. It may be briefly described as follows:—They constructed a movable wall built of large planks fastened together, and this was carried by the first rank of the army. In advancing to the attack of a fortified place they were all more or less sheltered behind this rampart—the first rank carrying it, the duty of the second was to plant the ladders, and of the third to deliver the assault. In this Manchu practice may be seen an attempt to realise one of the first objects of a prudent general, how best to shelter troops when delivering their attack. It is still a knotty point among military authorities, showing that the main principles of military science remain unchanged, and correspond both in the East and in the West, although the details may vary and require modification.

the town combined to facilitate Noorhachu's operations without, the Chinese fought stubbornly and well. Moukden was only taken after most of its garrison had fallen by the sword, but its loss proved the precursor of several other disasters to the Imperialists. Two relieving bodies of troops were cut up with heavy loss, and after a week's fighting the active army was reduced to less than half the dimensions it had reached under the fostering care of Tingbi.

The Chinese were loth to lose Moukden without making a vigorous effort to recapture it. Although their losses had been very heavy, they made one more attempt to drive the Manchus out of the city which they had just taken. But this, notwithstanding the valour of the commander, Tung Jungkwei, and the execution committed by his artillery, failed not less conspicuously than either of the two previous attempts. Another Ming army was in this manner almost annihilated, and the Manchus forced their way over its fragments to lay siege to the provincial capital, Leaouyang, where Yuen Yingtai exercised personal command.

Here again the Chinese commander resorted to the same tactics that had proved so unfortunate on previous occasions. Although the defence of Leaouyang represented after all his main object, Yuen Yingtai quitted the cover of its fortifications, and endeavoured to oppose the Manchus in the field. He was compelled to beat a hasty retreat, but by this futile and ill-judged assumption of strength he had

lost many brave soldiers, and the survivors were discouraged by a further reverse. Similar efforts to retard the siege operations carried out under Noorhachu's own eye were repeatedly repulsed, and at last the Chinese garrison was completely shut up in the town. Either by an assault delivered across a road hurriedly constructed over the moat, or by treachery within, the Manchus gained a footing on the walls. The garrison made a brave but useless resistance, and perished almost to a man. Yuen Yingtai and most of the officers committed suicide, but those of the townspeople who were spared recognised the Manchu authority and shaved* their heads in token of surrender.

The capture of Leaouyang completed Noorhachu's triumph, for the remaining towns at once opened their gates. No further resistance was attempted, and the Manchu chief marked the completion of the conquest of Leaoutung by the removal of his capital to the site of his latest victory. Thus rapidly did their first great military conquest at the expense of China follow the reunion of the Niuche tribes under a single

* This is the first occasion on which distinct reference is made to the "pig-tail." After this period it became compulsory for all those who wished to avert death to shave their heads on the appearance of the Manchus, who were thus able to easily distinguish those Chinese who surrendered from those who did not. At the present time the custom is common to all parts of China with the exception of a few of the more remote or mountainous districts of the southern and south-western provinces. The origin of this practice has not been cleared up. It is not even an ascertained certainty whether it was a custom among the Manchus, or a happy device to distinguish the conquered Chinese from those who persisted in resistance.

head, and from his new palace in Leaouyang Noorhachu could speculate on how his next stride southward might carry him into the imperial city of Peking.

While the Manchus were thus arranging matters after their own fashion in the north, other enemies presented themselves in the south to cause anxiety to the Chinese Government. There is no evidence to establish a chain of connection between these two events, but it is only reasonable to suppose that the disasters in Leaoutung, by producing an impression that the power of the Mings was on the wane, encouraged the discontented and the turbulent in other parts of the country to resort to force for the attainment of their ends. In the mountainous tracts of Szchuen, which had often before nourished traitors and produced disaffected subjects, the clans had gathered round a local chieftain and assumed an attitude of covert hostility towards the Chinese authorities. Nor were the people of the cities and plains very staunch in their allegiance to the Emperor, although they looked with suspicion and apprehension on the movements of a race more prone to disregard than to respect the rights of property and the persons of law-abiding citizens.

The principal of the disaffected tribes in this province was that known as the Kolo, whose chief Chetsong Ming could raise an armed force of nearly 30,000 men, and in the time of the Manchu peril he had placed this body at the disposal of the Viceroy of Szchuen either to relieve a portion of the local garrison or to take the field against the Tartars.

That functionary either formed a poor opinion of their military capabilities, or indulged the promptings of his own caprice, for he disbanded many of these would-be soldiers without awarding them the slightest compensation. Chetsong's followers thereupon broke out into open insubordination, and, having murdered the Viceroy, took possession of several of the most important towns in Szchuen. Chetsong immediately placed himself at the head of this insurrectionary movement, and had the satisfaction of seeing his authority promptly established in Chentu and Chungking. Many of the people joined him, and the greater number of the mandarins put themselves to death in expiation of the disgrace of having found themselves unable to defend their posts.

The steps taken towards restoring Tienki's authority were necessarily slow, and the reduced numbers of the garrison rendered it a work of time to repress a rebellion that had been marked in its earlier stages by such decided successes. While on all sides there was abundant evidence of both treachery and incapacity, the noble conduct of Tsinleang,* a woman who had inherited the chiefship of a small district, afforded some proof that the nobler virtues were not yet wholly extinct among the tributaries and vassals of the Empire. She had raised a corps of troops and sent them to assist the Emperor in Leaoutung, where they

* Father Martin Martinius in his history of the Manchu conquest ("Bellum Tartaricum," or "The Conquest of China," London, 1654), which gives us contemporary evidence from an independent source, calls her the Penthesilea of China.

had suffered great losses, and where her two brothers had been slain. And now in face of this sudden emergency in her own province she raised another large force, and hastened to combine with those who were endeavouring to maintain, or rather to re-assert, Tienki's authority in the south-west.

The campaign fought with this object lasted throughout a greater portion of the years 1621 and 1622, and success was not assured until, after long sieges, both Chentu and Chungking surrendered to the Imperial arms. Chetsong escaped to the mountains, and, although baffled in his main undertaking, he could console himself with the remembrance of the infinite mischief which he had caused, and of what losses he had cost his conqueror. Chetsong's rebellion, however, did but apply the torch to the mass of disaffection which had long been seething in the south-west. In the neighbouring province of Kweichow a similar rising took place under the instigation of Ganpangyen, a local chief, who thought he saw in the embarrassments of the Chinese a short road to increased power. The successes obtained by this individual over the garrisons of Yunnan and Kweichow carried alarm throughout an extensive tract of country, and entailed the temporary subversion of the Emperor's authority in a great portion of these provinces. This insurrection might have attained much larger proportions, but for the valour and resolution of the commandant of the principal city of Kweiyang. For nearly twelve months the rebel chief laid siege to it, but all his assaults were repulsed. He broke his

strength against its fortifications, and his followers abandoned him when they found that he could not command victory. Ganpangyen was glad to be able to make a safe retreat to his own state, whither the Chinese were too exhausted to pursue him.

Much nearer the capital serious disturbances broke out in the province of Chantung, where a rebel leader, named Su Hongju, had gathered round him a military following of considerable numerical strength. He obtained several successes, plundered numerous towns, and for a time carried everything before him. But his successes happily proved ephemeral. The regular troops rallied, and returned to the attack. Su Hongju and his band were shut up in the town of Tênghien, where at length the rebels agreed to give up their arms and to surrender their leader. Su Hongju having thus run his brief career, was betrayed by his own followers and perished on the scaffold. In 1623 there was a renewal of the previous disturbances in both Kweichow and Szchuen; but the Viceroy, Wang Sanchen, succeeded in rendering a good account of the rebels, although for himself these later operations had an unfortunate ending. He was enticed with a small body of followers into an ambushade in the mountains, where he and his comrades, overwhelmed by numbers, were all slain.

These numerous risings in different parts of the empire, which were of little more than local importance in themselves, possessed a very distinct and tangible significance from occurring at the crisis in the history of the Ming dynasty. They served to

occupy a large body of troops who might have been employed against the foreign foe, and they also encouraged that foreign foe to proceed to greater lengths than he would otherwise have done in the belief that the country was disunited within itself. The Ming dynasty had during these last few reigns failed to satisfy the popular expectation, and it could no longer count on either the hearty or the unanimous support of the people. The corruptness of the Court no doubt contributed most of all to the downfall of the ruling family, which had enjoyed a brief, if exceptional, popularity; but the Government had to apprehend as much danger from the supineness of its subjects as from their hostility. Yet even at the eleventh hour, if the Emperor had awoke to the gravity of the situation, China might have been saved from the Manchus, and the Mings might have preserved their throne. But the wisdom that had left them so long was not to be vouchsafed in the time of their extremity, and the sands in the hour-glass of Ming existence were running very low in face of dissension within, and of open attack from without.

During this interval the Manchus had been principally engaged in the task of consolidating their power in Leaoutung, and in preparations for a further movement in the direction of the capital. The river Leaou marked the border line, beyond which Noorhachu had not yet attempted to advance, and the defence or passage of that stream became the foremost object with either combatant. The misfortunes which had resulted in the fall of Moukden and the loss of Leaou-

tung had compelled the Peking authorities to so far provide against the exigencies of the hour as to give Tingbi a fresh command on the frontier; but unfortunately the influence of the eunuchs or the Palace was so strong that the importance of this step was nullified by the simultaneous appointment of another general to an equal command. The latter, secure in the staunch support of the Palace, was able to ignore and override the decisions of his colleague, who had to stand by the aid of a weak, if well-meaning, king, and by the spasmodic and often inconsistent expression of popular approval. The plan of campaign suggested by Tingbi was simple and well-suited to the emergency. But his colleague would have none of it. His mode of operation was more pretentious and more audacious, and it might have succeeded against an inexperienced captain or a mob of soldiers; against the experienced Noorhachu and his well-trained legions it invited, and could but lead to, disaster. The Manchus crossed the Leaou, and drove the Imperialists and with them a large number of the inhabitants behind the Great Wall. But for the resolute defence of Ningyuen* even the Great Wall would hardly have restrained the torrent of Manchu attack. In face of this new discomfiture some further victims had to be offered up for the satisfaction of the people, who were beginning to see in the Manchus no longer a marauding tribe of the frontier, but an

* Ningyuen, a town seventy miles north-east of Shanhaikwan pleasantly situated and once of some importance; according to our latest information, it is now in ruins.

invader occupying the threshold and threatening the very existence of the empire. Tingbi, to whose wise counsel the nation might have owed a safe issue from its peril, but whose recommendations had been treated with indifference, was the first to feel the spleen of those who, in the safety of the capital, decreed what was right and wrong, what wise and foolish, in the command of armies in the field. The execution of Tingbi closed an honourable career, and it removed another of the few soldiers who might possibly have been a successful defender of the country. With Tingbi,* who had kept Noorhachu at the height of his success for two years at bay, disappeared the only commander whose skill had given any promise of restoring the inequalities of the struggle; but it is only a sorry satisfaction to remember that the eunuchs suffered in common with the nation, and that all their influence failed to save Tingbi's colleague from a fate similar to his own.

The Chinese lieutenants fared better than might have been anticipated, after so crushing an overthrow, in improvising a defence of that portion of the Great Wall, which approaches most nearly to the sea, and of which the town of Shanhaikwan†

* Mr. Ross, quoting from some work or document which he does not name, says, in his "History of the Manchus," that Tingbi sneered at the blunders of his colleague. When the latter was driven in headlong flight from Kwangning, Tingbi reproached him with the observation, "Had your Excellency massed your troops on Kwangning you would not have been in this plight to-day," referring to advice which he had himself offered.

† Shanhaikwan, meaning "sea and mountain barrier," the most eastern gate of the Great Wall. An interesting account of a

may be taken as the central point. Nor were their efforts wholly confined to this object, for, finding that the Manchus were fully occupied in disposing of the large population in their new province, a Chinese officer, named Chungwan, threw himself into Ningyuen with a small band to reinforce the garrison of that place. The courage shown by Chungwan, and the all-providing care and energy of the new viceroy, Chungtsung, served to again arrest the advancing tide of Manchu aggression. For the first time, indeed, it was not merely arrested, but rolled back, as Noor-hachu did not feel strong enough to retain the country west of the Leaou. He found it an easier and more grateful task to superintend the transfer of his capital from Leaouyang to Moukden.

Once more, when things were beginning to wear a fairer aspect, the Chinese ministers proved their country's worst enemies. The capacity of Chungtsung could not, in their eyes, atone for his indifference and dislike to the incapable statesmen who were impelling China towards her ruin; and at last he too fell a victim, like Tingbi, to their snares and intrigues. A successor was appointed with different aims, and pledged to pursue another line of action. Chungtsung's reputation had been won by the recovery of a large territory from the foe; his successor began his term of authority by its voluntary

journey in this quarter of China, from Tientsin to Moukden, will be found in Mr. George Fleming's "Travels on Horseback in Mantchu Tartary," 1863; and later information on the same subject is contained in Captain Gill's "River of Golden Sand," 1880, vol. i.

surrender, and by a precipitate retreat behind the Wall. Chungwan, the heroic commander at Ningyuen, alone refused to leave his post, and vowed that he would defend to the last the outwork of the Empire which had been committed to his charge. The intelligence of this general withdrawal reached Noorhachu, who at once recrossed the Leaou and proceeded to reoccupy the abandoned territory. The small garrison of Ningyuen represented all the hostile force with which he had to cope.

The Manchu conqueror paid but little heed to a place of such comparative insignificance, and continued to carry out his schemes for the annexation of the narrow but extremely fertile strip of country skirting the sea and extending up to the Great Wall. But he soon found that the garrison of Ningyuen, if unsubdued, would be a thorn in his side, and that the capture of that town was essential to his further progress. Round Ningyuen, therefore, the Manchus collected in their thousands, and their great leader spared no device known to his experience to effect his object. In Chungwan, however, he met an opponent worthy of his steel. That resolute soldier had, in the most solemn terms, registered a vow to shed his blood in the defence of Ningyuen, and all his men with laudable fidelity had followed his example. Strong in their own fortitude they also possessed in their artillery an invaluable source of material assistance; and Chungwan deemed it no disgrace to confine his efforts to the defence of the town without thinking of undertaking a foolish and useless offensive

in the field. For the first time in their career, therefore, the Manchus had opposed to them a general who neglected no means of turning his position to the best advantage, and who was not filled with an overweening self-confidence and contempt for his adversary. The outcome of these changed tactics and different views was disastrous to the Manchus and highly creditable to the military fame of the Chinese.

Noorhachu delivered two assaults in force with the greater portion of his army, and they were made the more vigorously in proportion as the resistance encountered was unusual and unexpected. Their repulse appears to have been chiefly due to the terrific discharges of the European cannon, which, perhaps, caused more panic than actual loss to the assailants. For the first and only time in his career Noorhachu had to call off his soldiers and to raise a siege. Other successes elsewhere failed to compensate the aged warrior for this rebuff; and sick with disappointed pride he retraced his steps to his capital to die. His death occurred at Moukden in September 1626 when he was nearly sixty-eight years of age. His descendants dated their dynasty from the year 1616, although the conquest of China had not then so much as commenced; and with the vanity of a new family they not merely assigned to their not very remote founder a semi-divine origin, but they gave to Noorhachu the posthumous and glorious title of Taitsou Hoangti.

Although Noorhachu was very far indeed from enjoying the reputation which he sought to acquire

as the conqueror of China, yet there can be no doubt that he deserved all the respect and honour which his people and family could pay him. But for his energy and perseverance the small clan of which he was titular chief might never have risen to fame, and the titles of Tatsing and Manchu never been heard of or invented. In many respects he accomplished for the Manchus what Genghis did for the Mongols. It was not his fault if his sphere was a smaller one and more circumscribed. The credit of having emancipated himself from it may, indeed, have been all the more conspicuous; and it certainly seems that Noorhachu achieved a great exploit when he extended his sway from a small valley of a few square miles over a vast territory including two Chinese or quasi-Chinese provinces, and stretching from the Great Wall to the Amour. If much of his extraordinary success must be attributed to the blunders and folly of his opponents, cannot almost the same be said of every conqueror from the days of Alexander to those of Napoleon? Noorhachu had the strength of will, seldom given to mortals, to know when to stop. His victories are not more remarkable than the vigour with which he made the most of their results, and with which he consolidated his authority in the new possessions that fell into his power. He built up the edifice of his empire step by step, and his successors had to thank him that he sank its foundations very deep in the affections of his own people, and in the possession of a well-trained and valiant army.

Noorhachu was succeeded by his fourth son, who

became known in history as Tait song* or Tienming; and the accession of a new prince afforded the opportunity for the resumption of negotiations with the Chinese authorities. Whatever his motives, it seemed that the new ruler was disposed to pursue a more peaceful policy than his father, and a return to the old condition of amicable relations with China was for a moment anticipated by the sanguine. Chungwan alone, who had been rewarded for the heroic defence of Ningyuen by promotion to the rank of viceroy and chief commander, received the protestations and overtures of the Manchu ruler with caution and evident disbelief. There ensued the usual despatch of embassies and the accustomed interchange of compliments on the occasion of the death of a mighty and neighbouring potentate; but no real sentiment of friendship existed behind these empty courtesies. The pretensions of Tait song, who wished to treat with the Ming Emperor on terms of equality, were quite incompatible with those of Tienki, who still asserted all his claims to supremacy based on a remote antiquity, and on the recognition of no equal authority save that of Heaven itself. The correspondence† became warmer as it

* Before his father's death he was called the Fourth Beira or Prince.

† In one of his letters Tait song said, "If your kingdom and ours have been so long at war, the cause must be attributed to the insufferable pride of the mandarins, who have governed Leaoutung. They regard their sovereign as a being raised above the heavens, and they consider themselves men very superior to everybody else, despising all neighbouring princes to whom Providence has entrusted the care of peoples, and not hesitating to

proceeded, and the open court paid by the chief of the Kortsin Mongols to Taitsong flattered his vanity

commit against them the worst outrages. Heaven considers only the justice of a cause, without reference to the vastness or the smallness of kingdoms. That is the reason why it has protected us, and allowed us to take vengeance for the injustice of your master and his officers. Our grievances are well known." Chungwan showed himself in his replies to be as skilful with his pencil as he had proved to be with his sword and in command. In one of these Chungwan exhibits all the skill of a practised controversialist. "I see with satisfaction that you are disposed to keep due respect towards this empire, and to abstain from further hostilities, with the view of binding your neighbours to permit your subjects to enjoy all the advantages of peace. This is a proof that you attach value to men's lives, and that you do not desire to shed their blood. Heaven cannot fail to reward you for it, by making your states to flourish. As to your grievances against us, permit me, Emperor of the Manchus, to express some doubt as to their being as serious as you make them out to be. I think, not only that the Emperor, my master, is unaware of them, but that you would do well to bury them in an eternal oblivion. You pass over in silence the ten years of constant war during which you have caused blood to flow in streams, and during which a vast extent of territory before thickly populated has been devastated. Are your wrongs to be compared with so many ravages? Your people, both of the north and of the south, of the east and of the west, have lost no more than ten men; and of all those who inhabited the borders of Leaoutung and Chin-yang there remains but one old woman, whom you have spared. If your wish for peace is sincere, evacuate the towns which you have taken from us, restore the mandarins, and the other subjects of the empire whom you have captured; and then you will convince us of the uprightness of your intentions, and of your respect towards Heaven. With regard to the silk and money which you ask for, by what right will you demand them since we ask nothing from you? Know, however, that the benefits of our great Emperor are extended in profusion to all strangers. You were not ignorant that Corea has long been tributary to the empire, and yet you have waged war with it; and hardly had you quitted it than you entered it for a second time as a foe. Let us talk no more of the past and let us come back to your letter. It undoubtedly contains expressions, through ignorance on your part, little suitable to the Emperor my master. He is a very enlightened prince, whose care and vigilance extend over more than ten thousand *li*; the goodness of his heart embraces all foreign nations. Those who serve him are struck by the

while it irritated the Chinese. Nor was the situation improved by the announcement that the Manchus were invading and rapidly overrunning the long faithful tributary kingdom of Corea.*

Finding that nothing could be gained by a wordy war in which his Chinese opponent enjoyed the advantage, and with a large portion of his army released by the overthrow of Corea, Taitson resolved on renewing the attack upon Ningyuen, and he threw his whole force against that place in a desperate resolve to succeed. Once, if not twice, he sat down before its walls, and led his picked Manchu veterans to the assault in person. But Chungwan was still there, and Taitson's efforts ended in his signal discomfiture. Again, for a second time, the campaign closed disastrously for the Manchus, who retired behind the Leaou. The ramparts of Ningyuen constituted a secure bulwark for the capital, and might have long continued to do so had not Taitson been seized with one of those brilliant ideas which sometimes flash across the minds of great commanders.

Meantime, the occupant of the Chinese throne had changed. Tienki, of whom nothing else has been

lustre of his virtues, and by the manner in which he governs his realm. Nothing happens without his being informed of it, and you cannot tell him anything which he would not already know."—Mailla, vol. x. pp. 437-8.

* The campaign in Corea was short. It began early in the year 1627 and was waged principally against a guerilla leader named Mao Wunlung. The campaign resulted in a treaty, by the terms of which the Manchus assumed that protectorate over Corea which had been the privilege and right of the Chinese.—See Mailla, vol. x., and Ross's "Corea."

preserved save his misfortune, had never been of robust health, and in 1627 his death made room for his younger brother, who is known to history as Tsongching.* Tsongching was to be the last ruler of the once-great family of the Mings, and on his head was to descend with tenfold force the retribution for his predecessors' weaknesses and crimes.

* Personal name Hoaitsong.

CHAPTER X.

THE GROWTH OF MANCHU POWER UNDER TAITSONG.

The Fortress Ningyuen.—Manchus baffled.—Taitsong's brilliant Idea.—The Kortsin Mongols.—A mythical Barrier.—The Manchu Banners.—Chungwan out-mancœuvred.—Rapid March on Peking.—Chungwan reaches Capital in time.—Taitsong's growing Pretensions.—Beleaguerment of Peking.—Disgrace and Removal of Chungwan.—Another Champion lost.—Fate of Capital apparently sealed.—Sudden Retreat of Taitsong.—Negotiations.—His Approximation to Chinese Ways.—Bids for Popularity.—Institutes Military Dignities.—The Baturu.—Artillery introduced among the Manchus.—Doubtful Successes.—The Incapacity of Ministers.—INTERNAL REVOLTS.—A mutinous Force.—Kongyuta.—Chantung overrun.—Siege of Laichow.—A Viceroy killed.—A Breach of Faith.—Peking roused at last.—The Rebels defeated.—Tengchow.—Kongyuta escapes by Sea.—Taitsong's Welcome.—The Invasion of Shansi.—The Two Walls.—Two Emperors.—The Mongol Tribes.—The Jade Seal of the Yuens.—Corea defiant, but speedily reduced.—Successful Expeditions.—Peking safe.—An impenetrable Quadrilateral.—Wou Sankwei.—Chungwan's worthy Successor.—Leaousi.—What was happening in China.—The Danger from within greater than that from the Manchu.—Taitsong's Death.—What he had done for his People.—The Country of the Eleuths to the Waters of Japan.—His Tomb at Moukden.—The Civiliser of the Manchus.

FOR a brief space it appeared that the Chinese had found in the hour of extremity a bulwark of safety

in the fortress of Ningyuen, and the Manchus after these several repulses were beginning to lose heart a little, and to doubt whether Taitson was a worthy ruler, and able to carry on the schemes of his father. There was no reason why the whole vigour of the Manchu tribe or confederacy should not be shattered and broken to pieces before the walls of a fortress resolutely defended and well-equipped in artillery. Disappointed in his expectations of success by a direct attack, Taitson was still resolved to succeed, and his hostility towards China was inflamed and increased by his personal antipathy to, and jealousy of Chungwan. But, like a prudent man, he resolved no longer to waste his strength by throwing his forces against Ningyuen. It was by some higher instinct than mere prudence, if not by a flash of absolute genius, that he came to the determination to ignore Ningyuen and to advance by another route straight on Peking. Taitson kept his own counsel, but he gave orders to the chief of the Kortsin Mongols, who had been one of the first to congratulate him on his accession, to get ready his forces by a certain day. Taitson then raised his own army to the number of 100,000 men, and moved into the districts of the Kortsin, which are situated west of Ningyuen and the Palisades.* Up to this point nobody knew anything of his design, but when he had gone thus far the necessity for further silence was removed.

* These Palisades are to be found only on the map. As Williamson, the traveller, says, they "exist only on the map and in the imagination of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of China."

The plan was too bold, for the reputation of China's power was still great, to obtain the general approval even of the Manchus, and all his officers and kinsmen endeavoured to dissuade him from a course of such extreme peril. But Taitson^g saw that the time had come, then or never, to strike a bold blow against the Emperor. In a few years the Ming would recover his lost vigour and overcome the Tartars by sheer weight of numbers. It was, therefore, high time, thought Taitson^g, especially as he had as yet done nothing, for him to strike a conclusive blow while the Emperor was bewildered and knew not how to utilise his vast resources. Taitson^g pressed on rapidly, and his course was not to be stayed by the counsels of the timid.

The Manchu army,* augmented by the fighting-men of the Kortsin Mongols, advanced rapidly through the Dangan Pass of the Great Wall towards the capital, scattering before it the small bodies of Chinese troops that were alone available to oppose them, and without being delayed for any time by the forts which had been constructed for the defence of this portion of the frontier. Taitson^g had forced his way across the mountains and had reached Kichow on the high road

* It was about this time that Taitson^g first divided the Manchus into corps known as Banners. The Manchus proper were divided among the eight banners, and each banner followed its own leader and had a distinct military system. Each banner had a special flag and trumpeter attached. The Chinese who deserted to Taitson^g were also arrayed under a single banner, but in their case the arrangement appears to have been one of military expediency rather than of any national significance.—See Mailla, vol. x. pp. 442, 494.

to Peking before Chungwan became aware that he had been outmanœuvred and that all his defences had been turned. Then he hastened back with all speed, and, having the advantage of the better road, he succeeded in outstripping the Manchus and in throwing himself with a portion of his army into the capital before Taitson had fully beleaguered it. The Chinese were further reinforced by a body of troops which arrived opportunely from Taitong.

Taitson issued a proclamation to the people and officials of China, in which he again recited his injuries, and dwelt upon the shortcomings of the Mings. In this document he first made an effort to prepare the public mind for his becoming the successor of their Emperor, for, having dwelt upon the humble origin of Hongwou, the founder of the Mings, he then naively demanded whether it were not possible that "Heaven had chosen him to be the master of the Empire and to succeed the Mings."* While this manifesto was being gradually circulated through the country, Taitson took up his position near Peking. He does not appear to have subjected it to any close investment, but contented himself with concentrating his troops in a single camp and with offering battle daily to the Chinese. His own head-quarters he established at Haidso, a pleasure-house of the Ming princes. The siege languished, and the Tartars would soon have been obliged to beat a retreat from the dearth of provisions, and the gradual increase of the Chinese forces, without effecting any of their objects, when

* Mailla, vol. x. p. 445.

Fortune, which had so often smiled upon their enterprises, came again to their aid. Peking was not taken, it is true, but the disgrace and ruin of Chungwan were equal to a great victory.

Chungwan,* whose reputation and great qualities made him a host in himself, had so well supplied the deficiencies of the Chinese position at Peking that it looked as if the balance of victory would incline to their side. Taitson, foiled in the field, resolved to effect his purpose by compassing the ruin of his most formidable opponent, and the machinations of eunuchs who were bitterly inimical to Chungwan greatly facilitated his object. A plot was soon formed between the Manchu leader and a party in the palace to procure his disgrace and removal from the command; and it succeeded only too well. The eunuchs found, and availed themselves of, the opportunity to poison the Emperor's ear against the general who was valiantly defending the country against a victorious invader; and, apparently on the theory that the more improbable the charge the more it will obtain a temporary credence, Chungwan was accused of holding secret communication with the enemy. Invited to visit the Emperor on a pressing matter of state, he hastily left his post for the palace, where he was seized and placed in confinement. Nothing more was afterwards heard of this brave soldier, and his execution† in the middle of the

* Called by Mailla, Yuentsong Hoan.

† Mailla says he was kept in confinement nine months, but it is much more probable that he was slain immediately.

streets removed another of the few men whose courage and ability might have availed to equalise the struggle with the Manchus.

Simultaneously with this event Taitson drew off his forces for a short distance, and proceeded to invest several places offering fewer obstacles to speedy success than the capital. The removal of Chungwan from the command recalled him to his former post at Haidso, and when he found that he was freed from further apprehension on the ground of his old and successful opponent at Ningyuen, he delayed no longer in making his dispositions for the assault. A fierce battle was fought outside the city, and a Chinese corps of forty thousand men failed to make any stand against the Manchus. Chungwan's successor, a brave but unskilful officer, was among the slain; and the fate of Pekin seemed to be sealed. Taitson himself had, however, difficulties of his own to contend against, although we are not cognisant of their exact nature. That they were sufficiently grave may be inferred from the fact that, when he seemed to hold complete victory within his grasp, he suddenly drew off his forces and retreated beyond the Wall. Pekin was saved for this occasion from its northern foe.

Another lull ensued in the contest, and Taitson resumed those proffers of a pacific arrangement which he had consistently made from the first days of his reign. Towards the Ming Emperor he adopted an attitude of equality tempered by the respectful expressions which he expected to have reciprocated; but his ulterior aims were foreshadowed in the per-

sistency with which he recurred to the injuries of a misgoverned and oppressed people. Already he was putting himself forward in the guise of a champion of the subjects against the sovereign. While thus actively engaged in giving to his diplomacy an air of disinterestedness, he took other steps to attract to his side a certain amount of sympathy and regard from the Chinese people. The Manchus had before this adopted the Chinese character in their writing, and Taitson^g continued the same line of policy by instituting schools and a course of examination similar to those existing in the Middle Kingdom.* Nor did he stop at this point in the measures which he was taking towards identifying his person and family with the traditions and customs dear to every Chinese subject. He had the sense to perceive that the conquest of China would be impossible for him unless he attracted to his cause the sympathetic support of a portion of its people. His proclamations, his daily life, were directed so as to produce the required result in the case of the multitude; but he trusted to other means to draw to his side those who had served in the administration, and who, knowing the corruptness and incapacity of the Ming system, might be the more readily induced to see in him the reformer of the morals of a profligate court, and the Heaven-sent champion of an afflicted country. With these ends in view he drew up a list of military dignities† precisely

* A name given by the Chinese to their country as being in the middle of their globe.

† These must not be confounded with the Manchu national title of Baturu. The Baturu was an order of knighthood given

similar to those of the Chinese Empire, and by conferring on the officers who deserted to him a grade higher than the one they possessed under the Mings he succeeded in inducing many to abandon their allegiance to the Chinese Emperor and to take service under him. But what he thus gained in actual numbers was small, indeed, in comparison with the impression produced among the Chinese by this close imitation of the conduct of the greatest and most popular of their former rulers.

During the four years* following his first attack on Peking, Taitson^g was engaged more in the working-out of this astute policy than in the conduct of military operations. True it is that little or no cessation occurred in the strife on the border, for the Chinese ministers, with singular obtuseness or out of a headstrong and uncontrollable prejudice, refused to so much as even reply to the numerous letters which Taitson^g addressed to them. The retreat of Taitson^g and a small success† gained in a border skirmish, where one of Taitson^g's brothers failed to sustain the reputation of his family, sufficed to restore the

only for some special act of bravery on the field of battle (see Ross, pp. 68-9). The title appears to go back to an earlier stage of history, and it still survives among the Turcomans of Central Asia (*teste* Ekman Batyr and Kara Batyr, Turcoman chiefs of Akhal).

* About this time the Manchus were beginning to supplement their long bow with the artillery they captured from the Chinese. In 1631 they constructed their first cannon.

† This was more than retrieved by a signal victory at Taling-hoching, when Taitson^g defeated a general named Tsotachow. Many officers surrendered and entered the service of the victor, while the spoil was immense.—See Mailla, vol. x. pp. 450-54.

natural presumption of men who knew nothing of affairs and who had no acquaintance with the exigencies of a perilous situation. The eunuchs received all Taitsong's protestations with contempt, and did not deign to make any reply; but it would have been better for them had they assumed a less defiant tone and adopted a few simple precautions for the defence of the realm. Their pride was grand and not altogether without justification, but their inaction was the measure of their incapacity.

While the state of affairs remained thus critical on the Manchu frontier, events of the very gravest importance were happening in other parts of the country. At an earlier period in the struggle the report of Imperial defeats had sufficed to raise up numerous enemies in different quarters of the wide-stretching territories of the Ming. They had fortunately been put down, but the assertion of the Emperor's power had not been effected with that degree of ease and rapidity which would alone have deterred the discontented in other parts from imitating these insurgents. The danger from the Manchus had increased instead of diminished, and it was only in the natural course of things that those who before had the inclination to rebel should find that impulse greatly strengthened by the embarrassment threatening the stability of the Empire.

The first of these internal troubles might by wiser action have been avoided, for it was caused by the neglect to pay* a body of troops which had been sent

* A eunuch had appropriated the money, it was said.

to reinforce the army on the frontier. The soldiers broke out into open mutiny, and their commanders might have fared badly had they not come to the resolution to take the lead in the direction which their men had marked out for them. Of these officers Kongyuta was the principal and the most active, and to him was entrusted the main part in leading the insurgents. The province of Chantung became the principal scene of their exploits, and for a time they there carried everything before them. One viceroy was executed, and his successor set out with loud vaunts of the rapidity with which he would quell the rebellion. The acts of the new governor fell far short, as is often the case, of his protestations; for while the insurgents held the open country, he was compelled to confine his operations to the defence of Laichow,* a small port on the Gulf of Pechihli. Even in this restricted sphere he was not destined to attain any great success, for he was killed by a cannon-shot while conducting its defence. The siege continued, and the rebels, having enticed under a show of negotiation several of the principal officers of the province into their camp, gained a momentary accession of strength by arresting and then executing them. But this breach of faith, which for the time seemed to answer their ends, proved fatal to their prospects, not only because it excited the indignation of all honourable men, but also because it roused the Peking Government into a fit of energy.

* Mailla states that Laichow was defended by several pieces of artillery, carrying balls of 10 lbs.

A large army was sent against them, and all the resources at the disposal of the Empire were devoted to the task of crushing this rebellion. Several battles were fought and won. The insurgents, so lately rejoicing with all the arrogance of victory, were driven from one place to another, until at last there remained to them only the harbour of Tengchow, which also surrendered to the Imperial lieutenants. Most of the insurgents were taken alive, to suffer the fate of rebels; but Kongyuta,* more fortunate than his supporters, made good his escape by sea to the opposite coast of Leaoutung, whence he hastened to pay his court to Taitson, who gave him a hearty welcome.

In 1634 Taitson commenced his next campaign with the invasion of Shansi at the head of an army composed equally of Mongol auxiliaries and of his own Manchu levies. The Chinese failed to make any stand against this invading force. No attempt was made to guard the outer wall save at Taitong which was too formidable to be lightly assailed, and Taitson experienced little difficulty in capturing most of the towns adjacent to the

* Kongyuta was accompanied by 100,000 persons in several hundred vessels containing a considerable amount of arms, provisions, and household goods. Taitson gave him and his principal officers high appointments, and it was at this period that he published the following edict, addressed especially to those strangers who had entered his service:—"No thought of regret should enter your heart (at entering my service). With the help of God I hope to procure for us all a great empire, and if I succeed there are no honours or riches to which you cannot look forward, if you serve me faithfully."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 461.

inner wall.* Although the Manchus thus transferred the scene of their operations to a province which had been comparatively free from the presence of an enemy for several centuries, and notwithstanding that the northern borders of Shansi present exceptional facilities for defence and difficulties to an invader, Taitsong met with little resistance from either the people or the local garrisons. One Chinese officer published a boastful report of a great victory which he declared that he had won; but Taitsong intercepted the letter, and at once sent off a challenge offering to match 1,000 of his men against ten times their number of Chinese. The bold offer was not accepted, and the Manchus continued to carry everything before them in Shansi.

It was at the close of this campaign, in the year 1635, that Taitsong assumed for the first time the style of Emperor of China. Events had long been shaping themselves in this direction, but an accident alone induced him to take the final step. The jade seal of the Yuen dynasty had at the time of its expulsion been carried beyond the wall, and lost in the wilds of Mongolia. More than two centuries later a Mongol shepherd had chanced upon it and handed it to his chief, whence in due time it was passed on to Taitsong. As soon as it became known among

* The Great Wall extends from Sachow beyond Kansuh to the gulf of Leaoutung near Shanhaikwan, but it is also supplemented by other barriers. This occurs in the west of Kansuh, where a district north of Lanchefoo is surrounded by a wall and also in Shansi. Peking is thus defended on the north-west by two walls.—See Williamson's travels.

the Mongol clans that the Manchu conqueror was the fortunate possessor of this treasured gem they all hastened, to the number of forty-nine separate chiefs, to pay their allegiance to Taitson. Strange as it may appear, they demanded, as a kind of ratification to their own act, that the King of Corea should likewise pay his court to the new emperor. The king of that state having heard the nature of the letters from the Manchu capital refused to open them, hoping thus to extricate himself from what promised to prove an unpleasant dilemma. But the Manchus could ill brook this show of independence from one who had already proved unable to resist them. An army was accordingly sent to chastise this indifferent if not defiant potentate and to exact from him at the point of the sword the allegiance which he had so haughtily evaded. Taitson's lieutenants carried out their master's plans to the letter, and Corea* followed the example of the western Mongol clans and recognised Taitson as Hoangti.

The remaining years of Taitson's life were passed in conducting repeated expeditions into the provinces of Pechihli, Shansi, and even Chantung, although he never again molested Peking, and the fortresses of Ningyuen and Shanhaikwan continued to form on the east insuperable obstacles in his path. The

* This second invasion of Corea began in January 1637. The capital was soon entered, and as the Chinese could not send assistance the king agreed to surrender. His overthrow was made the more complete by the surprise and capture of his wife and family whom he had sent for safety to the island of Gangwa.—Ross's "Corea," pp. 283-5.

loss inflicted on the Chinese was immense, and the amount of spoil carried off incalculable; but so far as the Emperor and his Court were concerned the situation remained little changed. Taitson was greatly assisted in his plans by the numerous internal troubles which were disintegrating the Empire, and at last he found himself again able to begin a forward movement in the direction of that Ningyuen which had hitherto baffled him. But before he could reach that town it was necessary for him to capture Kingchow which was held by a resolute garrison, while the skilful general Wou Sankwei occupied the place of supreme command over the Quadrilateral of Leaousi.* Kingchow, and Songshan were taken after several severe actions, and at the cost of a vast amount of bloodshed; but Ningyuen, with its new commandant Wou Sankwei, remained defiant as of old.

Taitson had, therefore, to resort in the year 1642-3 to his former tactics of despatching expeditions into Shansi, which carried everything before them, it is true, but which contributed only very slightly and indirectly to the weakening of Chinese power at Ningyuen. The return of the last of these expeditionary forces had hardly been received and signalised by the usual festivities at Moukden, when Taitson was seized with what proved to be a fatal illness.

Before his death events yet to be described had brought the Ming Empire to the verge of dissolu-

* Cis Leaoutung. The Quadrilateral were Kingchow, Ningyuen, Songshan, and Shanhaikwan.

tion. The days of Tsongching were numbered, and his capital was at the mercy of a cruel and relentless rebel. The Manchu, who had so long appeared the most formidable of his enemies, did not prove the instrument whereby his fall was effected. Taitson was not destined to be the scourge of Providence to purify a corrupt court, and to reform a profligate society. Indeed his death* preceded the suicide of the last Ming Emperor by some months.

Taitson was only fifty-two years of age at the time of his death in September 1643, and when he died he left the main object of his life apparently as distant from realisation as when he took up the scheme committed to him as a legacy by his father Noorhachu. The Manchus had inflicted an incalculable amount of injury on the Chinese, and Taitson had enjoyed the empty honour of having laid unsuccessful siege to Peking; but the conquest of China remained a feat to accomplish which all the military powers of the Manchus aided by the great talent of their leaders had as yet proved inadequate. On the very eve of its attainment the balance of chances seemed, humanly speaking, greater against the Manchu ambition than it had been at any time during the previous generation; and by the irony of fate the triumph which had been denied to both Noorhachu and his son† was reserved for a child, the grandson of the former and the son of the latter.

* Mailla makes Taitson to have died in 1636. The explanation of the mistake (vol. x. p. 503) may be a misprint of *années* for *mois*.

† Taitson and Taitson.

Taitsong was buried at Moukden* in the midst of the people whom he had helped to make great. He had made his authority recognised among all the Tartars from the districts of the Eleuths to the waters of Japan. Corea was his vassal, and Leaoutung one of his provinces. Famous as a warrior, he deserved to rank still higher as the civiliser of the Manchus. It was not his lot to conquer China, but he at least indicated the only way in which it could be subdued. The Chinese themselves recognised in him a man who strove above all things to adapt his ways of government to the customs of those he aspired to govern. In Taitsong's hands the ambition of his family lost nothing of its dignity and grandeur; and he passed it on to his successors in a more tangible and definite form. Taitsong may fairly be held to have directed, as well as quickened, the growth of Manchu power, and, but for his energy and good judgment, it may be doubted whether his race would ever have been elevated to the high position of occupying the Dragon Throne.

* Moukden is now known to the Chinese as Shinyang. For the eulogy of this capital of the Manchus see Keen Lung's poem in Amiot's "*Mémoires Concernant les Meurs, &c. des Chinois*," Paris, 1776. An account of modern Moukden will be found in Fleming's travels already cited. The tombs of the early Manchu emperors were then (twenty years ago) reported to stand in need of repair. A dynasty totters on the throne when the monuments to its founders and progenitors are neglected.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CONQUEST OF CHINA.

Condition of the Country.—Li Tseching.—His Origin.—A great Famine.—Chinese Mahomedans.—Li aspires to the Throne.—The Horrors of Civil War.—Li's Successes and Repulses.—Kaifong.—How it was captured.—Honan lost to the Emperor.—Disputes among the Rebels.—The Fortress of Tunkwan.—Seized by a *coup de main*.—Singan becomes Li's capital.—Proclaims himself Emperor.—Shansi overrun.—Likintai.—Taiyuen.—The Advance on Peking.—State of Things there.—Divergent Counsels.—Tsongching's Opinion.—The Capital Defenceless.—The Eunuchs.—Li encamps outside Peking.—Scene in the Palace.—One brave Officer.—Suicide of Emperor.—His last Protest.—The Episode of Li Kweiching.—Li's Triumph.—Wou Sankwei.—His Position and Decision.—Calls in the Manchus.—What they had been doing.—They occupy Ningyuen.—The Summoning of the Manchu Forces.—To Peking.—Is Li to have the Empire?—Wou strikes the First Blow and wins.—Li takes the Field.—The Battle of Yungping.—The Result doubtful.—Manchu Contingent turns the Day.—Wou reaches Peking.—Murder of his Father by Li.—Wou goes in Pursuit.—Slaughter at the Likao Bridge.—Li turns on his Pursuer.—Battle of Chingting.—A drawn Fight.—Li's gradual Overthrow.—Taken Prisoner and executed.—The greatest of Chinese Robbers.—What will the Manchus do now?—The Manchu Emperor, Chuntche.—His noble Address.—Ama Wang.—A Native Ruler at Nankin.—Fou Wang.—The Ming Cause not yet hopeless.—Shu Kofa.

—A Reputation for Integrity.—His Measures and Advice.—A weak King.—Why not Two Empires?—A War of Words.—The Advance of the Manchus.—Shu Kofa's End.—Nankin taken.—End of Fou Wang.—The Shaven Head.—Hangechow.—Treachery.—Chinese thoroughly discouraged.—Tang Wang.—Ching Chelong.—His early Career.—Defence of Soochow by a Manchu Detachment.—Ching's Ambition.—Disappointed.—Abandons Tang Wang.—Vows of Vengeance.—“Troubled Waters.”—Ching sent to Pekin.—His Son Koshinga.—Fall of these later Mings.—Defence of Kanchow.—Massacres.—Other Princes proclaimed.—Rivalries.—Yu or Kwei.—Defeat of former.—Capture of Canton.—Execution of Yu.—Further Manchu Successes.—Sudden Change of Fortune.—Reverses at Kweiling.—Kiuchessa.—Defection of Chinese Allies.—Li Ching Tong.—Kinch Hoan.—Rapid Subversion of Tartar Power in the South.—Kwei Wang's Chance.—Discontent of Chinese Troops.—Rising in Fuhkien.—Retrieval by Manchus.—Fuhkien subdued.—Kwei's Generals defeated.—Their Fate.—The Manchu Defence of Kanchow.—The Result assured.—A few Reflections.—The Magnitude of the Manchu Triumph.—The Insignificance of the Means.

THESE long years of misgovernment had allowed so plentiful a crop of private grievances and public misfortunes to accumulate in China that no difficulty was experienced by adventurers in attracting to their fortunes large numbers of followers under one plea or another. An individual had but to give out that he desired to redress any one of the many national evils, and forthwith he found himself at the head of an armed force, which, if not very formidable against trained battalions, more than sufficed to overcome the small, unpaid, and semi-mutinuous local garrisons. Several of these insurrectionary movements have already attracted passing notice while the Manchu danger seemed more pressing and immediate; but, as

a lull ensued in the bitterness of that contest after Taitson's retreat from Peking, the internal peril thrust itself more prominently into view, and assumed larger and more formidable proportions. There were, no doubt, many who thought that the worst consequences of Tartar invasion had been realised, and that, although the end of the Ming might be at hand, the Manchus would not be strong enough to usurp their inheritance. Such a conviction was a direct incentive to the ambitious to seize the golden opportunity for finishing the Mings out of hand, and so it seemed, at all events, to Li Tseching, who now comes more prominently forward as one of the chief arbiters of China's destinies.

Li Tseching was the son of a peasant* of Yen-an in the province of Shensi, and, at an early age, he betook himself to the practice of arms, being renowned both as a horseman and as an archer. As early as the year 1629 he appears on the scene as one of a band of robbers, but at that time the Emperor's lieutenants were able to assert their master's authority, and Li Tseching was fortunate to make his escape from an encounter in which most of his companions lost either their lives or their liberty. The very next year, however, found him high in the command of a large force of rebels which assumed almost the proportions of an army. After a few years' service as lieutenant he succeeded to the command in chief on the death of his leader. In this capacity he gained many

* Ross, p. 134.

advantages over the Imperialists, and a large extent of country* was subject to his exactions. Sometimes he acted in concert with Chang Hienchong, a Mahomedan† chief, whose career closely resembled his own; but more generally he carried on his operations without the assistance or the cognisance of those having similar objects to attain. For it was the characteristic mark of his system that while he resorted to violence to carry his ends he often turned danger aside and extricated himself from a perilous situation by simulating a desire to come to terms with the authorities. Other insurgents obtained marked successes and then after an interval disappeared. But Li Tseching remained, and the growth of his power was steady and sure.

The details of his career claim not our attention until, from the position of a robber chief in the mountains of Shensi, he raised his aspiring glance to the throne of Peking itself. In the year 1640, when it was computed that nearly half a million of men obeyed his orders, he first began to turn his thoughts in the direction of ousting the Ming. And his first step was to undertake the siege of the important city of Kaifong, one of the principal places in Honan, and once the capital of China. Before he could attack

* The horrors of this internal strife were enhanced by a terrible famine which caused the most frightful ravages among the people of Shensi. Several years passed before the sufferings of the unfortunate inhabitants in any way abated.

† There were many Mahomedans at this time settled in Shensi and Kansuh. They were known as Tungani, and their origin must be attributed to the intercourse kept up across Gobi with the states of Turkestan.

Kaifong he had first to besiege and take Honanfoo, where he was received with resolution, and long delayed by the valour of the governor. Treachery within at last effected his purpose for him, and the town of Honan no longer constituted an obstacle in his path. The place appears to have been handed over to the soldiery, when horrors that cannot be described are reported to have been perpetrated. At Kaifong, which is represented as having been at this period one of the strongest fortresses in China, he did not fare as well, for after laying siege to it during seven days he beat a retreat pursued by an army sent from Peking to the succour of the central provinces.

Li Tseching does not appear to have been much awed by the extensive preparations made against him, and although the Emperor placed four armies in the field he boldly assumed the offensive. The Imperialists, in dealing with the rebels, appear to have resorted to the tactics which had proved so fatal to them in the case of the foreign invader; and the consequences were similar. Li Tseching met their armies in detail and overthrew them. Many thousands of the soldiers refused to fight and joined the ranks of their opponent. After these decisive successes Li Tseching again invested Kaifong, and so greatly had the terror of his name increased, that he might have captured it, had he not been compelled to suddenly raise the siege in consequence of a severe wound inflicted by an arrow.

Several times after this second withdrawal Li returned to lay siege to Kaifong, and at last towards

the end of the year 1642 an accident placed it in his possession. The governor who had defended the town with such intrepidity had, among other precautions, flooded the moat by means of a canal from the Hoangho, and this extra barrier of defence had no doubt greatly contributed to the discomfiture of Li Tseching. But in the result it was to prove fatal to the Imperialists. The Hoangho, at all times capricious in its movements, and the source of as much trouble as benefit to the provinces it waters, rose suddenly to the dimensions of a flood, and, overflowing its banks, spread over the country. Li's camp was speedily under water, and many of his soldiers were drowned; but most escaped to a neighbouring eminence. The garrison was not so fortunate. The waters of the river bore down the walls and flooded the streets. Thousands perished at the time, and thousands more were slain by the rebels outside. The formidable defences of the city were levelled by the shock of nature, and of the once famous Kaifong* there remained only the ruins left by this deluge.†

The loss of Kaifong entailed the collapse of the Emperor's authority throughout the great province of Honan, for the prefectural city of Nanyang made no

* Kaifong has never since recovered. It is now a place of slight importance, and the surrounding country is still subject to the ravages of the river.

† Mailla's account of this affair is that a Chinese general, sent to relieve the place, not knowing what to do, cut the trench, and thus destroyed the countrymen whom he wished to help. Mailla's accuracy is as a rule astonishing, but Mr. Ross's account seems the more probable, and that given above is based upon it.

attempt at a resistance which it was seen would be futile. Numerous other successes followed, and recruits flocked in in thousands to join the great rebel leader. But some of these new allies were men whose support was of doubtful advantage, and who were actuated by ambitious motives of their own. Quarrels ensued from petty jealousies and rivalry; and, as might be expected from the character of the society in which they occurred, they ended as a rule in bloodshed. Li Tseching was not above suspecting the good faith of those in his service, and to incur his suspicion was tantamount to receiving one's death-warrant. Those he marked as his victims were always men whom he had reason to fear, and he issued from each trial of strength and authority with increased reputation and a more unquestioned command.

The first stage in his career closed with the capture of Kaifong; the second began with his attack on Tunkwan,* the most famous of all Chinese fortresses. His fortune here stood him in good stead, for he might have been delayed by this fortress a much longer time than he had been kept at Kaifong, had he not succeeded in making his way into the city at the same time with a fugitive army which he had defeated outside. The fall of Tunkwan naturally

* Tunkwan situated in the mountains dividing Honan and Shensi. Strong by position, the art of centuries has been devoted to rendering it formidable. For an interesting account by one who has seen it, the reader may refer to Williamson's "Travels," vol. i. pp. 364-5.

produced great confusion and trepidation among the Imperialists, who then found themselves obliged to confine their operations to the defence of Singan, the metropolis of the West. The garrison wished to defend the place, but the inhabitants, terrified at the severity which Li had shown elsewhere, refused to stand a siege; and when the officers manifested an intention to hold out they rose and massacred them. Singan thus easily shared the fate of Tunkwan and passed into the possession of Li Tseching. The rest of Shensi did not long hold out against the attack of this determined chief, and even the distant Ninghia on the remote north-western marches surrendered to the terror of his arms.

Thus secure in his rear, and with several strong places at his disposal, Li Tseching was able to turn his attention to the east, where the Ming Emperor was fast succumbing to an accumulation of difficulties. Before turning his face towards the yet unsubdued province of Shansi and the capital, Li Tseching took the final and extreme step of proclaiming himself Emperor. Master of more than one-third of China, and feared throughout the rest, the leader of the biggest battalions in the realm felt justified in assuming the style of Emperor,* which, but for the Manchus, he might have maintained as the founder of a dynasty.

The invasion of Shansi proved a promenade of

* He called his dynasty the Tachun and gave the name of Yongchang to the years of his reign.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 483.

bloodless and easy victory. Town after town opened its gates without attempting any resistance to the terrible invader, and the city of Taiyuen alone arrested for a few days the onward progress of the conqueror. The governor of Taiyuen stood to his post bravely, but he could do little without assistance from outside, and there was none to come to him. One body of troops under the minister Likintai had indeed been despatched from Peking, but the principal hope of its commander had been to raise an army on his own private estate, and to organise a defence among the people of Shansi. Long before his arrival on the scene of action he learnt how affairs stood in that province. His family had been massacred, his property was destroyed, the people of Shansi and their country were both at the feet of the rebel, and Taiyuen itself was on the eve of capture. Likintai had no choice left save to make a discreet retreat on the near approach of Li Tseching.

From Taiyuen Li Tseching, acting on the sound principle of making both his rear and flanks secure, proceeded to attack Taitong and the other fortified towns on the northern border of Shansi before marching on the capital. At Ningwoukwan fortune hung for a moment in suspense, and it was only by the lavish expenditure of some of his best men that Li Tseching found himself able to carry the place by storm. But one determined defence meant half a dozen voluntary surrenders. The fortress of Taitong was handed over to the victor of Ningwoukwan by a garrison more anxious for the safety of their lives

than for the performance of their duty. With Taitong in his possession there remained no further reason for Li Tseching to delay the advance on Peking, where by this time confusion and terror reigned supreme.

Tsongching, the Emperor, hastily summoned all his ministers and officers to consult with him how the Empire was to be saved and in what way they might yet be able to extricate themselves from their perilous position. Likintai, who still kept the field although he had not yet struck a blow, sent the advice that the Emperor should at once withdraw to Nankin and renew the war in the valley of the Kiang. This counsel was not merely the most sensible, but it was the only advice that could have been given by a conscientious man under the circumstances. Yet it was not followed. The fatuity not so much of the Emperor as of his ministers was extraordinary and unparalleled. They came to the conclusion, after much wrangling, that the Emperor should not leave Peking, and that they would all await there the progress of events. Well might Tsongching exclaim that it was the folly of his ministers which was responsible for the destruction of the Empire.* A trust in Providence may be classed among the virtues, but in great crises it will hardly condone supineness or inaction. The councillors of the Ming

* Tsongching said, "I now perceive that I am only the Emperor of a dynasty which is about to end. My chief grief is to see in you so much lukewarmness towards your master. Where are the zeal and fidelity which you owe him?"—Mailla, vol. x. p. 487.

could devise no remedy for the situation, nor did they take any energetic measures towards placing Peking in a fit state to sustain a long siege. Almost before they had realised that Li Tseching would not hesitate to attack the Imperial city, they found that their own troops could not be trusted, and that there were traitors in their very midst. The tyranny and incapacity of the eunuchs* and other Court officials had disgusted the people and the army, and in the hour of need there were none on whose fidelity the unhappy ruler could rely.

Li Tseching pitched his tent before one of the western gates of Peking, and sent an envoy to Tsongching demanding the surrender of his throne. If we are to form an opinion from the indignation shown by the Emperor at this request, we shall be justified in assuming that Tsongching only then understood the gravity of his position. He was still hesitating as to the course that would be most becoming to his dignity to pursue, when the news was brought him that the guards of one of the city gates had deserted their post, and opened a way for the insurgents. Then he saw that all was lost, and that his last chance of personal safety lay in immediate flight. In this moment of extreme peril the thought of empire became subordinate to considerations of personal security.

Tsongching summoned round him in the palace the members of his family and the most faithful of his

* An indefinite rather than a precise meaning must be attached to this term, as many non-eunuchs had joined the ranks of the eunuchs to share and enjoy their privileges.

servants, and having called for wine filled a goblet and passed it round. Then turning to his attendants he entrusted to their charge his sons, whom he desired them to convey with all despatch to their mother's kinsmen. He next exclaimed to his wife, "All is lost for us," and she, with the fortitude worthy of her race and her position, retired to her apartments where she hanged herself. Tsongching finally addressed his daughter, a girl of some fifteen summers, "Why were you born of a father so unfortunate as I am?" and with the words he drew his sword and struck her* to the ground. By his order all the wives, princesses, and women of the palace were slain to save their honour; while he, to whom some faint hope of attaining a place of refuge still remained, hurried off to see if he could not make his escape from the city. Followed by a few guards he sped from one gate to another; but wherever he turned his steps he found that the rebels were in front and in possession of all the avenues by which he could alone gain the outside country.

Baffled at all points Tsongching retraced his steps to the palace, ignorant apparently of the fact that the brave Li Kweiching with a small body of troops was resolutely defending one part of the town. All had left the palace, whither it was feared that the conqueror would first make his way, and when Tsongching sounded the gong to summon his courtiers there was

* She recovered from her wound and escaped. The next year she married a magnate of the court whom she had long loved.—Mailla.

no reply. The Emperor then withdrew to the Wansui hill, a favourite spot of his beyond the north wall of the palace, and, having written out his last protest* against the iniquity of his advisers and the harshness of fortune, he hanged himself with his own girdle. One eunuch, more faithful than his class, shared these final perils and his master's death. With Tsongching disappeared the last ruler of the line of the Mings, and the end presents all the dramatic features that comport with the fall of a great reigning family and with the dissolution of an empire. When Tsongching completed the last act in his sad history the condition of the country was such as to discourage all but the most fervent believer in its destinies. It might well have been with a sigh of relief that the last Ming Emperor, generally recognised as such, shook off the trammels of such a world as he had found it.

While these events were in progress in the interior of the palace, Li Tseching was fast making himself master of the capital. One officer, Li Kweiching, alone disputed for a time its possession with him, but he was soon overcome by superior numbers and taken

* It ran as follows:—"Seventeen years have I occupied the throne, and rebellious subjects are come to insult me even in my capital; and that which is happening to me is evidently a punishment sent by Heaven. I am not the only one who is guilty; all my ministers are so in a worse degree than myself. They have ruined me by concealing from me the exact position of affairs. With what countenance shall I after death be able to appear before my ancestors? You who reduce me to this unhappy pass take my body, if you will, and hack it to pieces. I shall make no protest. But spare my people, and refrain from doing them injury."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 492.

prisoner. Brought into the presence of his conqueror, who praised his courage, he was invited to take service under the new Emperor; and this he consented to do on condition that Tsongching's body was given honourable burial, and that the surviving members of the Ming family were spared. Li Tseching granted him all his requests; but, at the funeral of the Emperor, Li Kweiching was seized with qualms of conscience and, sooner than serve under a rebel, committed suicide. Then Li Tseching, disappointed at the loss of an officer from whom he had expected useful aid, gave vent to his natural passions. The ancestral temple of the Mings was plundered and laid level with the ground, and all who had any connection with that family were summarily executed. Thus speedily ended the siege and capture of Pekin,* and the city which had defied Taitson and his Manchus passed, after a few days' attack, into the hands of a rebel, whose origin was most ignoble, and whose principal object appears to have been plunder. For a time it seemed as if there was no force in the country capable of coping with his, and that he was the virtual master of China.

While most of northern China had fallen into the hands of the rebel Li Tseching, there still remained in the undisturbed possession of the Ming the strip of territory embracing part of Pechihli and Leaousi and extending to the Manchu border. Here the

* For a very interesting and complete description of the city of Pekin see that given by Dr. Edkins in an appendix to Williamson's "Travels."

fortresses Ningyuen and Shanhaikwan offered an effectual bar to the invader, and the skilful general Wou Sankwei preserved the peace with an iron hand. In the moment of his extreme peril Tsongching had at last yielded to the advice of those who had urged him to summon to the defence of the capital the troops stationed on the north-eastern frontier; and Wou Sankwei had been ordered to evacuate Ningyuen, leave a sufficient garrison at Shanhaikwan, and march in all haste with his remaining troops to Peking. Wou Sankwei had little more than completed half the necessary arrangements when the news reached him that Peking had fallen into the hands of Li Tseching, and that the last of the Ming emperors had been slain. There remained for a faithful subject and soldier no master to assist, but only one to avenge. Li Tseching made overtures and sent lavish promises to Wou Sankwei for his support, but they were all rejected. Placed between two opponents Wou Sankwei had only a choice of evils, but he decided that it was preferable to ask the aid of the Manchus in chastising a rebel, than to become a partner in the crime of placing the Empire at the mercy of a robber like Li Tseching.

The Manchus themselves, to whom the main interest in the story again turns, had watched with feelings of delight the retirement of the Chinese from the fortress which had baffled them for so many years; and Wou Sankwei's troops had not long quitted Ningyuen when their place was taken by Manchus sent across the Leaou. It was thus made evident that, although

these Tartars had lost their prince and were under the nominal rule of a boy, they had not given up their old ambition, and also that they were as resolute as ever to take advantage of every symptom of declining vigour on the part of the Chinese. There was, therefore, no room for Wou Sankwei to flatter himself that the Manchus would remain passive while he tried conclusions with the robber Li. They were evidently determined to make the most of his embarrassments; and he could not hope to resist their attack on Shanhaikwan with the few troops that he could spare for its defence, should he undertake an active campaign against Li Tseching.

The Chinese general did not waste time in coming to a decision. The situation was urgent, and he at once sent off a letter to the Manchu court requesting it to send an army to join his in putting down Li's rebellion, and in restoring peace and tranquillity to the Empire. The request was at once granted, for the Manchus saw at a glance that their opportunity had arrived. The man, who, more than any other, had kept them out of China during these later wars, had sent them an invitation to enter that country as his friends and as the champions of the oppressed. Not merely did they thus obtain his services and those of his brave troops, but they also gained an easy and bloodless possession both of the Great Wall, and of the two principal and only remaining fortresses constituting the famous Quadrilateral which had alone prevented their conquering those northern provinces of China that they had so frequently

plundered and devastated under their leader Tait-song. Wou Sankwei's letter was barely perused before orders were given for the march to Shanhai-kwan of those of their troops who were already in the field, and for the immediate assembly of the whole fighting force of the nation. It was no longer for a mere marauding expedition, or for a trying and unsuccessful siege, that the summons had gone forth to the Manchus to gather round the banners of their chiefs. The campaign for which they were called to arms was one, presenting every likelihood of success, for the conquest of China, and in the towns and camps of these Tartars and their allies the cry was raised with a common voice, "To Peking!"

The first brunt of the fighting fell upon Wou Sankwei and his small but veteran force; for when he heard that a Manchu contingent was on the march to join him he delayed no longer, but set out for Peking. Li Tseching, who remained in the capital* to enjoy the power and dignity which he had won, sent, under the command of an officer, whose instructions were to negotiate quite as much as they were to fight, a portion of his army to meet Wou Sankwei. Against

* Mr. Ross tells a characteristic story of Li after he had made himself master of Peking ("Manchus," pp. 191-2). Its substance is as follows:—When Li entered Peking with bow in hand he passed under a gate above which was the character "joong," or middle. Drawing his bow he said, "If I hit this joong in the middle it is a sign I have gained the whole empire, as the empire is joong," the middle kingdom. The arrow flew but missed the mark, at which Li was naturally vexed and disappointed. A ready courtier explained that it signified that the empire would be divided, at which Li was partially satisfied.

this corps Wou marched with all rapidity, and the superior discipline of his men combined with his own skilful dispositions turned the fortunes of the day in his favour. As is always the case with a body of men who are subjected to none of the restraints of a severe discipline, the instant Li's men, although accustomed to victory by a series of unbroken successes, found that the day was going against them they lost all heart and broke into hopeless confusion. The battle became a scene of butchery. Wou Sankwei's troops gave no quarter, and more than twenty thousand rebels encumbered the plain. The news of this preliminary disaster came as a warning to Li Tseching; but, as he still possessed an army greatly exceeding that of his adversary in numbers, there was no reason why he should yet despair of the result. So far as we are aware Li Tseching then knew nothing of Wou Sankwei's arrangement with the Manchus, or of the concentration and approach of a Tartar army.

Li Tseching left Peking in person at the head of 60,000 men, the pick of his army, and taking with him the two eldest of the Ming princes and Wou Siang,* the father of Wou Sankwei. On the news of the advance of this formidable force Wou Sankwei

* Li Tseching made use of this one of his captives, although he had taken an oath of fealty to him, to bring pressure to bear on Wou's feelings. In this he utterly failed, nor was he more successful by means of Yuenyuen, a young and beautiful lady with whom Wou Sankwei was in love, and whose imprisonment and romantic escape and marriage to Wou are related by Mr. Ross.

halted at Yungping, near the scene of his first victory, where he made all the preparations he could to resist the enemy, and whence he sent urgent messages to his Tartar allies to hasten their advance. The town of Yungping is situated only a short distance southwest of Shanhaikwan, and lies a few miles from the northern bank of the Lanho, a stream difficult to cross at certain seasons of the year. The details of the battle that have come down to us leave obscure the part which this river played in the fortunes of the day, but it must have been considerable. Wou Sankwei's army was greatly outnumbered, and it is probable that he had to meet threefold odds, while the Manchu troops although known to be near at hand had not joined him. Under these circumstances it was Wou's policy to defer the action, but Li was no less eager to commence the attack. The latter adopted the traditional tactics laid down in the standard military treatise* of forming his line in the shape of a horn or crescent and overlapping the wings of the enemy. By compressing the extremities the opposing force is not merely outflanked but almost surrounded. Wou Sankwei was no inexpert or craven captain to allow a foe to acquire an advantage which either skill or courage could prevent; but here he found himself unable to check the movement of his more numerous enemy, who had soon the satisfaction of perceiving, from the hill where he had taken his stand with his

* The "Kiau Ping Siu Chi." For a summary of its maxims the reader may be referred to a paper in the first number of the "Army and Navy Magazine," November 1880.

state prisoners, that his army completely surrounded Wou Sankwei's small force. Victory seemed to be within his grasp, for, although Wou's troops resisted valiantly, it was clear that they could not long hold out against the very superior numbers of their assailants; when the fortunate arrival and impetuous charge of a Manchu corps carried terror into the ranks of Li's troops, and converted what promised to be a decisive victory into a signal overthrow. Li Tseching escaped with a few hundred horsemen from the fray, but thirty thousand of his best men had fallen. The defeat of Yungping destroyed at a single blow all the plans which Li had been forming for the consolidation of his authority throughout China. He escaped to Peking where his authority was still recognised, but it was evident that he was in no position either to stand a siege at the capital or to risk a second battle in its neighbourhood.

After the victory of Yungping the arrival of fresh Manchu troops was continuous, and Wou Sankwei, who still retained the principal command, was able to follow hard upon the traces of the defeated Li. Again did the baffled robber strive to induce Wou to detach himself from the side of the Manchus, but the latter received all his overtures with silent disdain. When he reached Peking and pitched his camp over against the eastern ramparts he was greeted with the spectacle of his father's head upon the wall, Li having wreaked his vengeance and disappointment on the person of Wou Siang. From that time a new bitterness was imparted to the struggle, and henceforth

any reconciliation between these two leaders became altogether impossible.

Li Tseching made no attempt to defend the city which had witnessed his coronation and brief reign, but confined all his efforts to escaping from Peking with as much of the plunder which he had accumulated there as he could collect and convey. Li's flight was precipitate, but it was not conducted with sufficient rapidity to enable him to escape the attack of his vigorous and energetic opponent. Wou Sankwei pressed hard upon the retreating force, and, making a detour round the city, came up with Li Tseching's rear-guard at the bridge of Likao.* The soldiers of Wou Sankwei and their Manchu allies threw themselves with fury on those to whom the charge of the unwieldy baggage train had been entrusted, but the resistance they encountered was made with only a faint heart. More than ten thousand of Li's followers were there slaughtered to the manes of Wou Siang.†

Li's line of retreat lay along the main high-road into Shansi, and, as he retired, his ranks were strengthened by the junction with him of the garrisons which he had placed in the different fortified towns of Pechihli. At Paoting in particular he was joined by a considerable detachment, but it was not until he reached Chingting‡ that he felt able to

* The bridge which at a much later period in history gave a title to the French general Montauban (Comte de Palikao).

† Mailla.

‡ Chingting in Pechihli, south-west of Peking and about half-way between that city and Taiyuen, the principal town of Shansi.

make a fresh stand and to face his pursuers. The reasons which induced Li to again tempt fortune on the field of battle, when he held in his possession so advantageous a scene for renewing the contest as the western provinces, were more probably the impulses of disappointed vanity than any fears of his force disbanding. The latter danger was the more remote because his followers knew that little sympathy was felt towards them by the mass of the Chinese people, in whose eyes they were nothing more than marauders and swashbucklers. When Wou Sankwei discovered his enemy in position near Chingting, he was not grieved to find him ready and willing to accept battle, for his own army had been raised by the arrival of eighty thousand Manchus and by numerous Chinese levies to close upon two hundred thousand men. Li's troops began the battle by a desperate charge led by their chief in person, and then the contest became general. Both sides fought with extraordinary courage and marked bitterness, and even Wou himself was compelled to express admiration at the fortitude of his adversary, who, after three reverses, appeared as eager for the fray as ever. Night closed on the struggle without leaving either party with a decisive advantage over the other; but the loss of forty thousand men, among whom were numbered many of his bravest and most faithful officers, compelled Li Tseching to order a retreat during the night. From Chingting he retired with such rapidity that he and his exhausted troops gained Shansi without further molestation.

With his defeat at Chingting Li's fate was virtually decided, and the closing scenes of his career need only be briefly touched upon. From Shansi he was driven into Honan, and from Honan into Shensi. Several times he ventured to engage his pursuers, but Wou Sankwei was ever at his heels and always the victor in these encounters. The fortress Tunkwang, on the easy capture of which Li had been wont to congratulate himself, fell now not less easily into the hands of his opponent. These repeated defeats, and this rapid flight from one extremity of the country to the other, destroyed the confidence of his followers, and when Li wished to make a final stand in his western metropolis of Singan, to which he had given its historic name of Changan, he discovered that his troops would not obey his orders, and that they were only anxious to obtain terms from Wou Sankwei. Li Tseching then fled to the mountains with a mere handful of men, and after having effected the overthrow of a dynasty, and for a time indulged a reasonable hope of establishing his own family as its successor, he was thus compelled to return to the old robber-life of his youth. Even in this fallen state he was not destined to enjoy any long lease of personal safety. An active pursuit was still kept up on the traces of the arch-rebel; and his band lost heavily in repeated combats with the pursuers. The necessity of procuring food obliged him to frequently quit the mountains and it was while on one of these foraging expeditions that he was surprised in a village and surrounded by a superior force. Li Tseching was one

of the first to fall, and his head was carried in triumph to the nearest mandarin. Such was the end of this remarkable man, who, with no other redeeming quality than courage, so nearly subjected the Chinese to his brutal and unenlightened rule. One of his sons attempted to revive his party, but the design fell through without meeting the slightest support. The Chinese might be divided in their predilections as to other parties, and might regard the Manchus with tolerance or aversion; but they were unanimous in their detestation of the robber Li. He had very nearly attained success, but it is most improbable that any mere robber chief, such as he was, with no redeeming motives and representing no party save that of plunder, will ever again be in a position to so nearly menace the liberties and dearly prized privileges of the Chinese people.

Wou Sankwei had performed his task nobly. He had avenged the Ming, and had crushed the most formidable of the public enemies. His invitation to the Manchus had been the means of attaining these results, but as soon as he found that Li had ceased to be formidable he began to show anxiety for the departure of his Tartar allies. The Manchus, it is hardly necessary to say, were fully resolved not to comply with his solicitations. They had taken possession of Peking, and they meant to stay there. On the other hand, they did not wish to give umbrage to Wou Sankwei, whose ability they respected, and whose co-operation would be invaluable to them in the task of extending and consolidating their autho-

riety throughout the Empire. All their efforts were, therefore, directed to the object of keeping Wou Sankwei in good temper, and they also sought to popularise their government with the people. In both these respects the excellence of their tact and good judgment was conspicuous. Wou Sankwei, half won over by his animosity to Li, and gratified by the receipt of honours* and titles, was rendered still more disposed to throw in his lot unreservedly with the foreign House, because he found so much in its conduct to approve. As a practical man and experienced administrator he felt bound to ask himself the question—what preferable candidate could he name for the throne to the young Manchu prince, who was evincing a sagacity beyond his years, and who was surrounded by wise ministers and tried soldiers? Wou Sankwei had to confess that he knew of none; but deep in his heart there existed a patriotism too pure to leave him well-satisfied with himself at having been the means of introducing the foreigner into the Empire. For the time he kept his peace, and confined himself to the duties of his government in Shensi; but his mind was evidently ill at ease. We shall hear much more of this gallant soldier later on; but for the present we can leave him resting on his laurels in his provincial capital of Singan while we describe the course of events in the eastern provinces

* He was created Ping-si Wang, meaning Prince Pacifier of the West. The Manchus left him the principal active command in the west, and he established himself in the capital of Shensi.

of the country where the Manchus were rapidly extending their sway.

As soon as the leaders of the Manchu army felt themselves firmly established at Peking orders were given for the removal thither of the capital from Moukden; and their boy ruler, the infant son of Taitson, was summoned to take up his residence in his new city. The governing power was vested in the hands of Taitson's brother Prince Dorgun, better known by the name given him by his nephew of Ama Wang, the Father Prince. One of the Regent's first acts was to proclaim* his nephew Emperor of China under the style of Chuntche, and to announce the event with all due solemnity to the neighbouring potentates of Mongolia and Corea. The

* Chuntche, although a mere child, delivered the following spirited address in the hall of the palace to the assembled ministers and commanders of his people:—"Princes, my uncles, and you illustrious generals of my armies, you have seen me ascend with a tranquil and firm step the throne to which you have elevated me. Do I derive that sense of security, that degree of assurance, which I have exhibited, from my own virtue, from my own capacity, or from my own talents? I am only a child, and your suffrages alone have constituted me your master. Too young to have yet had an opportunity to justify your choice by some exploit worthy of you, I still feel myself superior to the weakness of my age, when I perceive so many heroes assembled round my throne. By your valour and wisdom you have raised our nation from obscurity to carry it to a height of power which all the kings, our neighbours, admire, and to crown the glory you have placed the Empire of China at the disposal of my family. Hence comes the confidence which you yourselves are perhaps surprised to find in a child. What may I not expect from your courage and experience? Already I can see myself master of all the provinces of this great empire. Do not think that I am ambitious, solely for my own ends, to possess these vast estates. I desire them only in order to give peace to the many peoples who have suffered much during these later years, and also to reward your zeal and services."—Mailla, vol. x. p. 504.

Manchus, who up to this point had left their Chinese allies to perform most of the fighting, now commenced military operations in earnest, and they sent several armies into Shansi and Chantung to establish their authority on a firm basis in those provinces. This had become all the more necessary because a native ruler had been proclaimed at Nankin and his sovereignty had been recognised by the inhabitants of all the southern and central provinces.

The choice of the Ming officials stationed in the south of China for a prince of the native dynasty to fill the throne fell upon Fou Wang, a son of Wan-leh's son of the same name, who, many years* before, had been mentioned in connection with the crown. The character of Fou Wang was not one to inspire his adherents with much confidence. Before his elevation to power he had obtained a reputation for dissolute conduct, and his tastes were too confirmed when summoned to assume the paramount position to leave those who knew him best any hope that he would forego his accustomed license and devote himself with the requisite energy and determination to the difficult task that lay before him. Yet, such as he was, it was to his hands that the destiny of the relics of the Ming cause had been confided. Had the Chinese even at this emergency possessed a capable prince, who could have recalled Wou Sankwei to his allegiance, there can be no doubt that the Manchu tide of invasion would never have advanced south of

* See *ante*, p. 175.

the Hoangho, and it may even be doubted whether within a few years it would not have been rolled back beyond the Great Wall.

Just as Wou Sankwei had been the pillar of the state on the north-east frontier, so did the able and honest minister Shu Kofa prove the prop of the new throne at Nankin. His reputation for integrity stood so high that it supplied the deficiencies of his master, and his intense patriotism attracted to his person the enthusiasm of a people eager to support with their blood a native ruler, but cooled in their ardour by the weakness, indifference, and sensuality of the Ming. Shu Kofa laboured at this critical moment under the disadvantage of being a civilian, and not a soldier; and as all his efforts* to induce Wou Sankwei to desert the Manchus and to declare for Fou Wang failed, he laboured under this disadvantage to the end. The Manchus, still bent on their policy of propitiating, rather than of attempting to crush, the people of China, made overtures to Shu Kofa, but that minister stood resolute in his allegiance to his native sovereign, although Fou Wang was making it clear by his daily life that, as a wise and just ruler, he was not to be compared with the boy Chuntche or the Regent Ama Wang. A pretty war of words† ensued between the Regent Ama Wang‡ and Shu Kofa, in which the

* He sent Wou the patent of a duke and a large present in money.

† For this correspondence see Mailla, pp. 512-20. Mr. Ross gives an interesting commentary on Shu Kofa's letter by the Emperor Keen Lung, who was the first to discover it in the archives more than a century after it was written.

‡ His Chinese title was Tse Ching Wang.—Mailla.

former dwelt upon the necessity of uniting the Empire under a single sway, while the latter contented himself with pointing out how long China had been divided between the Sung and the Kins. Although the doubtful honours of this verbal controversy may have remained with Shu Kofa, the Manchus could say that they had acted throughout with consistency and moderation. It was not they who were to be blamed if the obstinacy of a few ministers, who should have seen that their master's folly could end only in ruin, plunged provinces that had yet escaped the horrors of war into all the confusion entailed by a bitter and protracted strife.

When Ama Wang discovered that there was no hope of gaining over to his side by fair words or promises the minister Shu Kofa, he turned all his attention to the preparations necessary to effect the overthrow of the rival sovereignty at Nankin. While the Manchu troops were assembling from different quarters for the passage of the Hoangho, and while fresh levies were being raised among the northern Chinese, all was confusion at Nankin. Jealousies between the commanders, none of whom possessed much merit or experience, bickerings among the ministers, apathy on the part of the ruler, and bitter disappointment and disgust in the ranks of the people, all combined to precipitate the overthrow of the ephemeral throne that had been erected in the southern capital. Ama Wang waited patiently to allow these causes of disintegration time to develop their full force and to contribute to the ruin

of the Mings; but in the winter of 1644-5 it was clear, from the tidings received from the south, that the time had come for the resumption of active military operations.

One army, which had been employed in pacifying Chantung and which had distinguished itself at the siege of Sioochow, in Kiangsu, was directed to cross the Hoiho and to march on Nankin. Its march was unopposed, and, making full use of the great canal, its approach to Yangchow* was soon reported in the terrified streets of Nankin. Another army had entered Honan from Shansi in several detachments, which had been concentrated in the neighbourhood of Kaifong. Some preparations had been made for the defence of Honan, but the feuds between the commanders were bitter. Nothing had been done to devise a common plan of action, and, when the Manchus crossed the Yellow river, the Chinese were wholly unprepared to receive them. Without any attempt at resistance the principal towns opened their gates, and within a few weeks the extensive and important province of Honan was added to the possessions of the Tartars.

The peril had now become so near and so grave, and his advice had so long fallen on unheeding ears, that the minister Shu Kofa determined to take the

* Yangchow is an important place of trade on the Grand Canal near its junction with the Yangtsekiang. It is said to be noted for its trade in salt collected from the neighbouring lakes, and also for the licentiousness of its inhabitants. Near it is a palace of the Emperor's, named Kaou-min-sha

field in person, and to endeavour to oppose, with such troops as he could collect, the approaching Manchus. Brought in this practical way face to face with the invader of whom he had heard so much, but of whose military power he knew practically nothing, Shu Kofa soon came to the conclusion that with the troops he possessed little could be done to arrest their progress. His men unfortunately shared this conviction without the moral strength to subdue it, and before they had come under fire they were already half-defeated.* Under these circumstances Shu Kofa resolved on retreat, and withdrew his corps behind the old course of the Hoangho,† where he hoped to be able to make a better stand. In the idea of impressing the Tartars with a sense of the numbers at his disposal, he drafted a great many peasants into his force, and placed them with flags and other military ensigns along an extended line. The device, which may appear puerile, did not succeed; for the Tartars were either so eager to engage, or had discovered the fraud, that they at once crossed the river and began the attack. The mere sight of the Manchus crossing in their boats was enough for this mob of untrained and probably unarmed peasants, who, breaking into confusion, carried in their flight Kofa's trained troops as well. Shu Kofa‡

* Mailla.

† Which is also the embouchure of the Hoeiho, or Whaiho.

‡ Mr. Ross says that at one point Shu Kofa might have obtained an advantage over the Manchus by flooding the country; "he refused to do so on the ground that more civilians would

succeeded in reaching the fortified town of Yangchow with a few hundred men; all the rest of his army had either dispersed or fallen by the sword of the pursuing Manchus. Even at Yangchow Shu Kofa found neither safety from their pursuit, nor leisure to prepare for a protracted defence. With an army utterly dispirited, and without the smallest hope of succour from a Court too corrupt and selfish to trouble itself about the misfortunes of even a faithful servant, Shu Kofa saw that the prolongation of the struggle so far as he was concerned was hopeless. He, therefore, came to the resolution to adopt the extreme course of killing himself sooner than afford his enemy the satisfaction of a further personal triumph. His example was followed by most of his officers, and Yangchow thus fell into the hands of the Manchus.*

The loss to the Ming cause, involved in the death of Shu Kofa, was very considerable. Alone among Fou Wang's ministers he was actuated by pure motives, and his place could not be supplied. His public spirit and valour were equally conspicuous, and he probably only wanted experience to show himself a capable commander. His fellow countrymen judged his loss rather by what they believed him capable of performing, than by anything he had actually done;

perish than Manchus, and said 'First the people, next the dynasty'—an observation throwing much light on the character of the Chinese constitution.

* They delivered an assault on one of the suburbs of Yangchow the first day of their arrival, and their success was evidently a matter of certainty.

and in their eyes the void left by his death seemed immense and not to be filled up. Wou Sankwei alone enjoyed anything like the same reputation, and he, whether heartily or with secret regret mattered little, was employed fighting the battles of the Manchus.*

The capture of Yangchow was quickly followed by that of Nankin. Fou Wang abandoned his capital as soon as he learnt that the Tartars were close at hand, and trusted to secure his own personal safety by speedy flight. In this hope he was destined to be disappointed, for a Chinese officer anxious to gain favour with the new rulers undertook the pursuit, and promised to bring back the Ming prince dead or alive. Fou Wang was discovered in the act of entering a boat on the Kiang, when to avoid the disgrace of capture he threw himself into the stream and was drowned. His victors, the Manchus, established themselves without further disturbance at Nankin, and completed their triumph in central China by the occupation of Hangchow. The Chinese passed under their new rulers with less manifestation of dislike than seemed probable even so short a time before the capture of Nankin as the proclamation of Fou Wang, and all the officials who consented to recognise Chuntche and to shave their heads† were reinstated in their offices. At Hangchow a Ming prince, to whom the eyes of the people turned as Fou Wang's

* At this very moment he was occupied in reducing Szchuen and in bringing it under his authority.

† This was now imperative on all. Even Wou Sankwei himself had not been exempted from adopting the Tartar badge.

most suitable successor, induced the Manchus to grant the city favourable terms on its making a prompt surrender. The victory was easily obtained, but the victors sullied their success by a deed of inexcusable treachery. They spared the town and its inhabitants, indeed, but their first act was to execute the Ming prince with whom they had entered into this convention. Many of his officers, we are told, sooner than accept a favour of a people capable of such a crime, put an end to their own existence.

By this successful campaign, in which their losses were of the most trivial character, the Manchus had not merely obtained possession of the second city in the realm, but they had overthrown a rival potentate who had at one time seemed likely to gather round him the national forces. In the hour of distress the Chinese possessed the desire to give their own rulers one more chance of retrieving their reputation, before they resigned themselves to the lot of accepting the foreign race who came with the sword in one hand and the scales of justice in the other. But the events of Fou Wang's brief term of power were not of a character to encourage their hopes or to strengthen their fortitude. They served only to discredit still further the Ming family, and to convince the intelligent that the best hope of the country lay in the direction of as speedy an agreement as possible with the Manchus. When Nankin opened its gates, and the dissolute Fou Wang fled to meet his death in the waters of the Kiang, all hope of the resuscitation of

the Ming dynasty as the governing power passed away. It had been given another trial, and had been finally found wanting and condemned.

Nor yet before the Manchu conquest was consummated did the Chinese finally abandon all thought of further resistance, and, although with the overthrow of Fou Wang the triumph of the Manchus became assured, the efforts of Chinese patriotism flickered on for many years. A member of the Ming family, Tang Wang—who could, however, trace his descent no nearer to the throne than in the person of Hongwou, its first Emperor—formed the next rallying-point of Chinese patriotism in the province of Fuhkien, where he enjoyed the hereditary dignity and estates of Prince of Nanyang. On Fou Wang's death many of the Chinese soldiers and leaders repaired to Tang Wang, who was proclaimed Emperor by them, and who took such measures as he could for continuing the struggle of independence. But even in his camp, and among the small section of the people to which he was able to appeal, there were dissensions and petty jealousies to hamper his movements, and to further detract from the vigour of the national defence in the province of Fuhkien. Nor would the episode of Tang Wang attract more than passing notice, were it not that it was signalised by the naval exploits of Ching Chelong, celebrated himself as a daring captain, but still better known to fame as the father of Koshinga.

When the Manchus crossed the Kiang and occupied Nankin the Chinese fleet, instead of attempting

to oppose them, had put off to sea, and taken shelter in the harbours of Fuhkien. It had originally been led by a relative of Ching Chelong, and when it sought a place of refuge in a region where his influence* was supreme it naturally passed under his orders. It was by this fleet and the remnants of other Chinese armies that Tang Wang was proclaimed Emperor in 1645. Hampered in his measures by the want of money and by the presence of several rivals, this prince, rejoicing in his new title of sovereign, could do little towards arresting the progress of the Manchus. While he had been employed in the abortive effort to unite his followers, the Tartars had overrun Kiangsi and Kiangsu. Chekiang had also, after the capture of its capital,† passed almost entirely into the hands of another army, and the Tartars had the satisfaction of seeing the resources of the two southern provinces, Yunnan and Kweichow, crippled and nullified by a bitter civil war. When the Manchus were so easily victorious in their more hazardous expeditions there was no valid reason why they should experience greater difficulty in dispersing the ill-led and badly-organised army at the disposal of Tang Wang. The circumstances in which the Chinese leader found himself placed compelled him to assume the

* Ching Chelong had been imprisoned for seditious language at the Ming Court, but was released as a special act of grace. He then retired to Fuhkien where he attached himself to the fortunes of a pirate who had formed a formidable confederacy along the coast. On the death of this leader Ching succeeded to his influence and power. Hence he became the principal supporter of Tang Wang.

† Hangchow.

offensive, but the attempt ended in disaster. At the first shock of battle his soldiers were put to the rout. Nor was this an isolated success. Two Tartar armies advanced southwards through Chekiang in parallel lines, and as they marched they overcame all open resistance and set up their authority in the towns—the wave of conquest being clearly marked by the shaven heads* of the inhabitants.

Ching Chelong constituted, as has been said, the chief prop of Tang Wang's fortunes. Without him it was doubtful if that prince could have kept round his person the force which in appearance was sufficiently formidable; and it soon became evident that Ching in thus supporting a scion of the Ming desired rather to advance his own personal ends than to benefit out of some pure motive the lately reigning dynasty. The circumstances of the hour were favourable to the indulgence of a lofty ambition, as who could declare what was impossible or unattainable in the troubled waters of the political situation? Ching, therefore, brought all the pressure of his influence to bear on the prince in order to induce or constrain him to recognise as his heir the young man Koshinga, who already gave promise of future ability and greatness. But it is the habit of princes to cling more

* At Soochow, the large and populous city in Chekiang, the Manchu garrison of 1,000 cavalry was suddenly assailed by a force landed on the coast by Ching Chelong. In the midst of a hostile and numerous population their chances of escape appeared remote. Their commander, a man of resolution, at once ordered that every man in the town should lose his hair or his head; and the Chinese force outside was so cowed by this vigorous act that it hastily withdrew.

closely to the privileges of their birth in the hour of misfortune than even in the days of prosperity, and Tang Wang was inflexible on the point that the right of succession could not pass beyond the limits of the family to whom it had been entrusted by the mandate of Heaven. Ching took the rebuff to heart and his zeal in the cause grew cold; and he made advances to another competitor for a throne of which the giving away had passed into other hands. The rupture between Ching and Tang Wang was precipitated by the murder of one of Ching's friends,* and Ching, vowing vengeance† for the wrong, retired to his ships like Achilles to his tent. Thence he proceeded to join his forces with those of the Prince of Loo, another of the Ming rivals. Hardly had he done so than the Manchus assailed the dominions of that potentate. Ching's fleet combined with the land forces in attempting to defend the passage of the Tsien Tang river, which waters the Green Tea districts, and on which is situated Hangchow. Their joint efforts were so far successful that the Manchus were compelled to ascend the stream as high up as Yenchow where they were able to pass by a ford. From that moment, however, it was all over with the

* Who came as envoy from the prince with whom Ching was intriguing.—Mailla.

† He is reported to have said, "Oh my friend! I solemnly promise you that I will avenge your death on the barbarians who have murdered you. If I put off washing my hands in their blood, place your confidence in my finding very soon an opportunity of depriving your murderer of the life which he deserves so little to enjoy."—Mailla.

Prince of Loo.* His capital Chowhing surrendered to the Manchus, and then many of his principal officers deserted to their side. Ching himself was not long in imitating their example, and allowed himself to be so much influenced by the lavish promises of the Tartars that he gave in his formal surrender and ranged himself under their standard. Even in this transaction he thought he saw a mode of advancing his own fortunes, and of attaining the ends he had long held in view, for, as he observed, "it is in waters that have been disturbed by a storm that we expect to find the largest fish." Ching was destined to further and bitter disappointment. The Tartars accepted his offers of fidelity and assistance, and in return protested the greatest respect for his person, but when he paid them a visit they placed him in honourable confinement and then sent him off without scruple to Pekin. There he was kept a close prisoner, and all the threats and promises of his relations and followers did not avail to secure his release. After waiting some months in inaction his son Ching Chin-kong declared eternal war upon the Manchus, and began those raids along the coast which made his name famous at a later day as Koshinga.

Even before this the cause of Tang Wang had expired. When Ching deserted, most of his troops fell away from him, and Tang Wang had no resource save to seek safety by a precipitate flight to the west, where a

* He fled to the island of Chusan, where he disappears from history.

few supporters of Chinese independence still held out. But the Manchus were not at all disposed to allow their opponent to escape. A body of light cavalry was sent in pursuit, and succeeded in overtaking the unhappy Ming prince in a town in Kiangsi. He avoided capture by throwing himself into a well, where he perished by a miserable and lingering death. His wife fell into the hands of the Tartars, who sent her to Foochow, where she was executed,—the natural ferocity of the Manchus again asserting itself and getting the better of the civilisation which they had borrowed from the Chinese. Thus easily* and rapidly was the Manchu authority set up and established in the maritime provinces of China to as far south as the great territory of Kwantung.

As the Manchus advanced the Chinese retired, but,

* The town of Kanchow, on the Kan river in Kiangsi, alone offered to the invaders a resistance approaching the heroic. The garrison defended themselves with the most desperate valour, and two months after they sat down before it the Tartar generals held an anxious council whether it would not be prudent to retreat. Bolder counsels prevailed and the evil consequences of a check were fully recognised. "Up to this our arms," cried the braver spirits in the Manchu army, "have been uniformly victorious, but, if we fail before this place, the courage of the Chinese will revive, and the reputation which we have gained by so many glorious expeditions will be diminished. We shall have to take care, also, that something does not happen beyond the failure of the matter we have immediately in hand. Let us, therefore, rather ask for fresh troops to replace those we have lost, and let us collect cannon of a larger calibre than those we have hitherto employed in this siege. We shall then very soon see success crown our perseverance in having refused to abandon an enterprise which it is necessary for the glory of our nation to sustain, if we do not wish to lose in a moment the fruit of our successes and the honour of our arms." Kanchow was eventually carried by storm, and the garrison put to the sword.—Mailla, vol. x. p. 557.

in order to show their determination to continue the struggle so long as there was an inch of territory to be defended, they set up in Canton as a new Emperor, on the death of Tang Wang, his younger brother Yu Ngao. In the adjoining province of Kwangsi the viceroy had proclaimed an emperor of his own selection in the person of Kwei Wang, a grandson of the Emperor Wanleh. Thus, even in the south, and at their last extremity, the old divisions revealed themselves; and the Chinese remained to the end as a house divided against itself. The Tartars did not delay their invasion of Kwantung, although many rumours had been spread as to the formidable character of the defences of Canton, and as to the numbers of the army collected for its protection. Their garrisons in the eastern provinces were concentrated and placed under the orders of a Chinese commander with Tartar advisers attached to his person. But even before this army had begun its march the fate of the southern sovereignties had been virtually decided by their own internal disputes and disagreements. The collective forces of the princes Yu and Kwei might have been formidable, but they neutralised each other, and destroyed their respective chances by flying at each other's throats when the formidable invader stood on the very threshold of their states. Before the Tartars had begun any active portion of the campaign, the two armies of these rivals had encountered in a battle marked by all the intense bitterness of civil strife. That representing the cause of Yu was almost annihilated, while

the victors had little reason to congratulate themselves from the heavy loss they had suffered. With the way thus cleared for them, the Manchus laid close siege to Canton, which, after a mere show of resistance, surrendered to their arms. The Prince Yu ended his life and ambition under the axe of the executioner.

The capture of Canton gave the Manchus a post of vantage whence they could direct their operations against Kwei Wang with the greater facility and success. Nor were they slow to turn to all possible use a position which enabled them to overawe and gradually absorb all the southern provinces of China. After his victory over his rival the forces of this Ming prince had advanced towards Canton, and taken up a strong position at Chowking, a town situated west of that city on the Sikiang river. But their heart failing them they withdrew into the interior of Kwangsi, where, in a difficult country with few roads, they might hope to prolong the struggle with better chances of success. The result justified their anticipations, for the Manchus were at last compelled to recognise that they had advanced as far as their available strength permitted them to go. It was not until they had suffered two repulses in front of Kueiling* that they felt constrained to admit this much, and, although fresh troops were summoned in all haste from the north, Kwei Wang continued to maintain his authority

* In connection with this reverse it may be mentioned that the victorious general, Kiuchessa, was a Christian.

in Kwangsi for a much longer period than seemed possible after the capture of Canton. The disappearance of one of the Ming princes had had the effect of consolidating the power of the other.

Nor when the Tartar reinforcements reached the scene of action, early in the year 1648, were their efforts attended with a more happy result. The courage of the Chinese was greatly restored by their two successes at Kueiling, and Kiuchessa's measures were marked by the necessary admixture of boldness and prudence. This brave leader had the satisfaction of beholding the Manchus again recoil before the fortress which he had already twice defended against them with success. The effect produced by these reverses was electrical. Those who had given in their adhesion to the Tartars allowed themselves to revert to their natural sympathies, and the defection* of two commanders, Li Ching Tong and

* If we may judge from the following speech the deprivations of the Chinese soldiers in the Manchu service had much to do with their defection. Li Ching Tong's harangue to his men on the eve of casting off his allegiance was as follows:—"Is there, then, a design among the Tartars to allow the brave men who are daily exposing themselves in their cause to die from misery and hunger? For several months the troops have received no pay. From whom ought we to take it? Is it from the Court of Pekin? or should we expect it from you, its representative (the Tsongtou or Governor-General)? The Court and you are equally culpable. After the treatment we have already experienced from you, shall we be so foolish as to continue in your service? The honour which I have to command these brave soldiers imposes upon me the duty of espousing their interests and of avenging the injustice done to them. But from whom shall we receive pay in future? From the Tartar usurpers of our Empire? We cast off from this day their odious yoke. Long live our true master the Prince of Kwei! Long live our legitimate Emperor!"—Mailla, vol. x. pp. 571-2.

Kinchin Hoan, who had greatly contributed to the Manchu conquest of Southern China, completed the subversion in this quarter of the realm of the newly erected authority of the young Emperor Chuntche. Not only was Canton lost in this wave of popular excitement and enthusiasm, but the provinces of Kiangsi and Fuhkien broke off their connection with Peking and expelled the Manchu. The authority of Kwei Wang was proclaimed throughout the whole of the south, and after seeming destruction promised to take deeper root than ever. This resuscitation of the Ming power was probably wholly deceptive in inducing people to believe that Kwei Wang's position was secure, and that the Manchus might yet be successfully resisted and repelled. But, of course, it compelled the Manchus to undertake over again the subjugation of these provinces; and this task was entrusted to fresh troops drawn from the north and commanded in the field by the best Tartar generals.

The good fortune of the Prince of Kwei, after attaining this height of success, proved of short duration. The province of Fuhkien was the first to feel the returning force of the Manchus. In that province a Buddhist priest had raised a mighty gathering of the people, and had for a time subverted the Tartar authority. The presence off the coast of Koshinga's fleet lent some character to this otherwise badly organised and insignificant agitation, but even the war-junks of Ching Chelong's wrathful son could not enable the people of Fuhkien to withstand the brunt of Manchu attack. The monk defended himself

during two months in Kienning with resolution ; but the Manchus at last carried it by storm, and put every man inside the town to the sword. By this single success the Manchus recovered the province of Fuhkien, and Koshinga's fleet put to sea without venturing to take any part in the contest.

Many of the Manchu troops had retired on the proclamation of the Prince of Kwei to Kanchow, where they made all preparations for holding out until relief came. The Chinese commander Kinchin made several abortive attempts to take it, and Li Ching Tong was not more successful. When the Tartar reinforcements arrived from Nankin and Fuhkien they amounted to an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men ; and neither Kinchin nor Li Ching Tong felt able to oppose it in the field. They resorted to Fabian tactics, hoping to tire out their enemy, but the strategy of the Manchus proved the superior. By a skilfully conducted manœuvre Chuntche's general enclosed Kinchin in the town of Kanchang, where he was placed at a serious disadvantage. His rashness had invited disaster, and only by a desperate effort did he succeed in cutting his way out again. Even then escape was denied him, for his assailants, gathering from all quarters, attacked him while crossing a river. Kinchin himself was drowned, and most of his men perished either by the sword or in the water. Kanchang surrendered, and its garrison was massacred.

Nor was Li Ching Tong's end more fortunate. After a fresh repulse before Kanchow he was obliged by the clamour of his troops to make a retreat, when

his army gradually dwindled away. It is said that he sought relief for his distress and disappointment in the wine-cup ; but, by a strange coincidence, he met his death in a similar manner to his colleague—being drowned in the swollen waters of a stream which he was crossing. With the loss of these two generals and the crushing overthrow of a third in a battle at Siangtan in Hoonan, the chances of the Prince of Kwei, which had at one time appeared so promising, were conclusively shown to be hollow, and the complete success of the Manchu arms became assured. From this time henceforth there will be no real fluctuation in the fortunes of the strife, and the progress of the establishment of the Tartar administration will be steady and certain. Many more battles have yet to be fought, Canton has to be recaptured, three provinces have to be subdued, the last of the Mings has to be driven into exile ; but these events belong to the reign of Chuntche. At the point when the revival of Chinese courage received its check, and when Fuhkien, Kiangsi and Hoonan, momentarily won back, were irrevocably lost, we may fitly close our account of the Manchu conquest of China.

How a small Tartar tribe succeeded, after forty years of war, in imposing its yoke on the sceptical, freedom-loving, and intensely national millions of China, will always remain one of the enigmas of history. We have traced the course of these campaigns, but, even while venturing to indicate some of the causes of their success, we must still come to the conclusion that the result has exceeded what

would at any time during the struggle have been thought to be credible. The military genius of Wou Sankwei, the widely prevalent dissensions among the people, and the effeteness of the reigning House, on the one hand, and the superior discipline, sagacity, and political knowledge of the Tartars on the other, are some of the principal causes of the Manchu success that at once suggest themselves to the mind. But in no other case has a people, boldly resisting to the end and cheered by occasional flashes of victory, been subjected, after more than a whole generation of war with a despised and truly insignificant enemy, in the durable form in which the Manchus trod the Chinese under their heel and secured for themselves all the perquisites and honour accruing to the governing class in one of the richest and largest empires under the sun. The Chinese were made to feel all the bitterness of subjection by the imposition of a hated badge of servitude, and that they proved unable to succeed under this aggravation of circumstances greatly increases the wonder with which the Manchu conquest must ever be regarded.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MANCHU DYNASTY.

The Reign of Chuntche.

Affairs at Pekin.—The Regent's Policy.—Hopes of a speedy Settlement.—Rising in Shensi.—Defence of Singan.—Its termination.—Relations with the Mongols.—Revolt at Taitong.—Caused by an Outrage.—The Governor Kiangtsai.—Assumes title of Prince of Han.—Collects Forces and appeals to Mongols.—The Activity of Ama Wang.—Kiangtsai's Successes.—A Military Device.—Ama Wang takes the Field in Person.—Fabian Tactics.—Refuses Battle, but encloses Kiangtsai in Taitong.—The Battle for the Lines.—Kiangtsai slain in the moment of Victory.—Another Insurrection in Szchuen.—Si Wang.—The Horrors of his Rule.—The Approach of the Manchus.—Massacre of the Women.—No match for the Tartars.—Slain in a Skirmish.—Collapse of his Party.—Kwei Wang's Position.—Three Chinese Commanders.—Kiuchessa again.—Surrender of the Passes.—Kiuchessa powerless.—His fate.—The Siege of Canton.—Its long Defence.—Defeat of Kwei Wang's Army.—Fall of Canton.—Its Sack.—Flight of Kwei Wang.—Affairs in Yunnan.—The Death of Ama Wang.—Threatened Troubles in the Palace.—Averted.—Chuntche assumes Functions of Government.—His first Acts.—The Council of the Empire.—Astronomy.—Adam Schaal.—Competitive Examinations.—Koshinga.—His Naval Exploits.—Establishes himself on Islands of the Kiang.—Attacks Nankin.—His Dilatoriness.—Obliged to abandon

Siege.—The Closing Scene of Kwei Wang's Career.—His return from Burmah, and Death.—The Last of the Mings.—Foreign Embassies.—The Dutch.—Nieuhoff's Account.—The Russians.—Their Conquest of Siberia.—No Results of these Missions.—Tibet.—Illness of Chuntche, and Death.—Its Cause.—The boy Kanghi.—Summary.

WHILE these campaigns were in progress, the youthful Emperor Chuntche, under the guidance of his prudent uncle the Regent Ama Wang, was doing his best by wise and moderate conduct to attract to his person and administration the sympathy of his new subjects. And his efforts were not unavailing, for the Chinese were themselves anxious to secure and enjoy all the benefits that come in the train of a settled government. At first it seemed as if he was to attain a greater measure of success than his hopes could have conceived to be possible, for after the victories of Wou Sankwei and the collapse of the Nankin power most of the provinces gave in their adhesion to the new rule. It was then that orders were issued from Peking that the Manchu officers should show great moderation in their dealings with the people, and that all who surrendered should be allowed to retain their goods and liberty—instructions at variance with their national customs, and with many of the practices of eastern war.

The measures taken for the overthrow of the Prince of Kwei had to a great extent denuded the northern provinces of troops, and those operations were still uncrowned with success when there broke out in Shensi a revolt that threatened to further embarrass the Manchus who now seemed to be masters only of

the ground on which they stood. The Manchu troops left in that province by Wou Sankwei when he passed southward to annex Szchuen consisted principally, if not, indeed, solely of the garrison of Singan. Three thousand Tartars did not in the eyes of the inhabitants represent a force sufficient to inspire them with such fear of the Manchu power as to induce them to remain true in the allegiance they had sworn in deference to the name and ability of Wou Sankwei. They, therefore, threw off their new yoke, and, gathering confidence from their meeting with no resistance, swarmed like bees round Singan, where they expected to crush the only practical vestige of Tartar authority in the province. Appearances seemed to favour their hopes, for the Manchus were few in number and the prospect of aid was remote. The insurgents counted on the co-operation of the inhabitants of the town in their efforts to expel the foreigner; but for some reason the citizens of Singan refused to repose much faith in the insurgents, and attached themselves instead to the cause of the Manchus. A corps of five thousand* men was formed from their ranks; the assaults of the enemy were repulsed, and, with the arrival of fifty thousand fresh troops from the capital, the insurgents were obliged to hastily disband. The

* The Tartar general not unnaturally distrusted the fidelity of the people of Singan, and meditated over the advisability of attaining complete security by a wholesale massacre of the Chinese. From this course he was only with difficulty dissuaded by his colleague, who was Chinese born, and who made himself personally responsible for the good conduct of his countrymen. He then resorted to the experiment of forming an armed contingent from the ranks of the civilians.—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 6-7.

Manchus pursued them with bitterness to their hiding-places, and most of them perished by the sword.

The rising in Shensi, thus happily repressed, proved but the prelude to a graver insurrection in Shansi, where the Manchu authority had been early set up, and where it seemed to be securely established. In this instance the revolt was due to the perpetration of an outrage, and not to any outburst of national antipathy as had been the case in Shensi.

In 1649, Chuntche being then fourteen years of age, Ama Wang sent an embassy to the principal Khan of the Mongols for the purpose of procuring a wife for the young Emperor. Motives of policy were at the root of this decision, for the alliance of the Mongols was of the first importance to the Manchus. A prince of the ruling family was charged with the mission, and while the preliminary negotiations were in progress he took up his quarters at Taitong, which was still held by Chinese troops under a governor of their own race named Kiangtsai. The followers of the Manchu prince conducted themselves in the town with singular arrogance, and acted towards the inhabitants in utter disregard both of the laws of humanity and of the pacific proclamations which their master had repeatedly issued. Their insults culminated in an outrage of a heinous and inexcusable character. A young girl, the daughter of one of the most influential citizens of Taitong, was being led through the streets in honour of her wedding-day, when several of the ambassador's comrades with

their attendants interrupted the procession and carried off the bride. So daring and unheard-of an outrage in the light of day shocked the sedate and well-conducted Chinese, and a cry was at once raised that those guilty of the crime should be punished with all the rigour of the law.

Kiangtsai himself took the lead in pressing this demand upon the Manchu prince; but, unfortunately for Chuntche, his ambassador was himself a libertine and made light of the offence of his boon-companions. Then it was that Kiangtsai resolved to exact a terrible revenge. The Chinese were summoned from all quarters to massacre the few Tartars in the place, and in a few hours not a Manchu survived save the ambassador himself, who only succeeded in escaping by a rapid flight and by the swiftness of his horse.

Although this extreme act might have been condoned at Peking in consequence of the provocation received, Kiangtsai did not after this massacre feel safe in adopting any other course than one of pronounced hostility to the Manchus, and the proximity of the scene to the capital showed him how necessary it was to take immediate steps to render his position as strong as circumstances would permit. Having slain, in defiance of the sacred laws of hospitality, those who were living under his protection, Kiangtsai saw no safe course for him to pursue except to declare irrevocable war against the Tartars. He expressed his defiance of the ruling power in the most emphatic terms, and many rallied to his faction in the hope that this boldness, to which they had grown unaccus-

tomed, might meet with its deserved success. But Kiangtsai saw clearly that his own resources would not suffice to enable him to cope with the Manchus, and he naturally turned to his neighbours to ascertain which amongst them could best afford him the support he needed. Of these the Mongols were by far the most powerful, and to their principal Khan he sent a messenger praying for assistance to oppose the arms of Chuntché, and to restore to China the native rule she had lost.

The Mongols had given in their adhesion to the authority of the Manchus long before the latter had placed an emperor on the throne of Peking, and we have just seen how anxious Chuntché's advisers were to rivet that alliance by the marriage of their boy ruler with a princess of the desert. The tragic occurrence at Taitong had interrupted the progress of the embassy, and left the road clear for Kiangtsai to make his own propositions in the camp of the Mongols. The overtures of the Chinese rebel were received with favour, and the Mongol chieftain gave a promise of help against his late ally whose success may have aroused his jealousy, while he was still ignorant of the friendly wishes of Ama Wang. In face of so grave a peril as the alliance of Kiangtsai and the Mongol tribes, the activity of the Regent was conspicuous. While he was collecting a large army with which to chastise the insolence of the rebel, he despatched an ambassador with a large suite and a magnificent display of presents to the Mongol camp to repeat the friendly proposal of the former envoy. The Mongol gave but slight heed

to his plighted word when he scanned the jewels and rich silks of the Emperor, and at once acceded to the request of the Regent. The good understanding between these allies was restored, and the Mongols remained strictly neutral during the progress and suppression of the rising at Taitong.

Meanwhile Kiangtsai had been called upon to bear the first shock of the Manchu attack, and the unexpectedness of his success in the field seemed to warrant a belief that his power was greater than it appeared. Before the first Manchu levies marched against him he had assumed the title of Prince of Han, a name more dear than any other to the Chinese, and had given out that he aspired to be the restorer of the Empire. His conduct in the field soon showed that he possessed many of the qualities necessary to establish his right to the proud name and functions to which he advanced his claims.

The Manchus were fully impregnated with the doctrine of striking hard and quick; and a strong detachment was ordered to march without delay against Taitong. Kiangtsai left the fortress to meet his assailant, but it was to a well-conceived stratagem rather than to the numerical superiority of his troops that he trusted for the victory. Kiangtsai caused a number of waggons to be specially prepared containing canisters filled with powder, and concealed from view, and these he sent forward under the charge of a guard as if they contained the baggage of the army. The Manchus fell eagerly on what they conceived would prove a rich prize, and the Chinese

abandoned their waggons with precipitation when they had fired the train. The explosion which ensued cost many a Tartar his life, and threw the whole army into a state of disorder and alarm. Then it was that Kiangtsai delivered his attack with his whole force, and before the Manchus had time to recover from their panic he had succeeded in driving them from the field with a computed loss of 15,000 men. The Manchus soon collected in fresh strength, and reinforced by more troops from Peking they advanced to again dispute the palm of superiority with Kiangtsai. The details of this second encounter present no feature of special interest, but the result was to confirm the previous decision. The baffled Manchus had to beat a hurried retreat, while the authority and reputation of Kiangtsai advanced to a higher point than before.

So grave did the possible consequences of these defeats appear, and so rapidly was the power of the rebellious Governor of Taitong increasing, that the Regent, Ama Wang, resolved to take the field in person and to proceed against him with the very best troops he could collect. Matters had reached such a critical pass that it was felt that, unless the Manchus wished to be greeted by a general insurrection throughout Northern China, it behoved them to put down the Taitong rising with the least possible delay. Ama Wang came to the decision to strike promptly, yet he had the prudence to act with due caution in face of an opponent whose confidence had been raised to a high point by two successes in the field. The armies

on both sides exceeded 100,000 men, but Ama Wang foiled all Kiangtsai's endeavours to precipitate a general action.

The want of supplies, or the fear of losing the place by a *coup de main*, induced Kiangtsai after two months of useless campaigning to retire to Taitong, where he flattered himself that an enemy who feared to attack him in the open would never venture to assail him. In this anticipation he was soon proved to be mistaken, for Ama Wang at once proceeded to invest him in his fortress, and to prevent either ingress or egress. Then Kiangtsai realised the error he had committed, for there remained to him no alternative between either fighting at a disadvantage in endeavouring to cut his way out, or to remain cooped up until the want of food should compel him to surrender. The results of previous victory were thus sacrificed, and a blunder in tactics transferred all the advantages to the side of the Manchus.

Kiangtsai came to the decision, with commendable promptitude, after he perceived the predicament in which he was placed, to cut his way through the beleaguering forces with the greater portion of his army, and the rapidity with which the Manchus were drawing up their lines of circumvallation left him no leisure for much deliberation. He addressed an inspiring harangue* to his followers, and then led them out to the

* "I will not lose a moment in exposing to you the danger which threatens us; it must be evident to yourselves. Your valour alone can avail to secure safety for us all. Success is not impossible, but it will require a great effort of valour on your

attack. Such was the impetuosity of their onslaught that after four hours' fighting the Manchus were driven from their first entrenchments, which remained in the possession of the Prince of Han's soldiers. The Chinese were as much elated as the Manchus were depressed by this initial success, and for the moment it looked as if final victory would incline to the side of the former. A single incident served to change the fortune of the day. Kiangtsai had placed himself at the head of his men to lead them to the attack of the other positions remaining in the hands of the Manchus, when he was struck in the head by an arrow. The death of Kiangtsai carried confusion throughout the ranks of the Chinese, who, at once abandoning all they had won after such desperate fighting, retired in irretrievable confusion into Taitong. The Manchus, delighted to see the backs of a foe who had opposed them so valiantly, pressed them hard, and in a few hours the fortress of Taitong was in their power, and the faction which had attained such formidable dimensions under Kiangtsai was completely broken up and effaced. Seldom has there been in history a more striking instance of the marked superiority of an individual over the rest of his countrymen than that afforded by the episode of

part. Who have we to fight, after all? Men already weakened and discouraged by two defeats, and who so much feared a third battle that all our efforts to bring them to an engagement failed. The part which alone remains for us is not doubtful; if we must perish, let it be with arms in our hands. Is it not better to sell our lives like brave men, than to fall ingloriously under the steel of the Tartars?"—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 15.

Kiangtsai; and the Manchus, brought so nearly to the verge of ruin by his capacity, easily triumphed after his death, and found, in the north at all events, no other opponent worthy of their steel.

This rising in the north had had its counterpart in the west, although the talents of Kiangtsai found no imitator. In Szchuen an adventurer had proclaimed his authority from the city of Chentu, and, assuming the title of Si Wang,* bade defiance to Ming and Manchu alike. Many months he maintained his power there, but his severity and brutality prevented thousands from joining and thousands more from heartily sympathising with his cause. The responsibilities of government brought him neither wisdom nor moderation. Fearful of the strictures of the learned, he enticed into his city by promises of employment more than 30,000 men of letters, and when he had them in his power he gave orders for their massacre. Nor did his inhumanity stop there. The courtiers and attendants of his predecessor, a prince of the House of Ming, had been kept round his person to contribute to the dignity of his position; but when one of these happened to omit the full title of his rank he caused them all, to the number of 3,000, to be summarily executed. Other outrages, by which he showed that he neither respected the laws of religion nor placed much value on the hearty sympathy of his soldiers, followed, and ere Si Wang had enjoyed the tokens of supreme power in Szchuen for a year it was

* Si Wang means "the Western Prince."

made evident that his rule was only a tyranny from which all would gladly be free.

The tidings that the Manchus were about to invade his province from Shensi only served to rouse him to fresh acts of barbarity, which culminated in the massacre of Chentu, when 600,000 innocent persons are said to have perished by the decree of this inhuman monster. From individuals he passed to things inanimate, and he compared his rage to the wrath of Heaven by the destruction of cities, the levelling of forests, and the overthrow of any public monument that had given Szchuen a foremost rank among the provinces of the Empire. The Manchus gained an entrance into Szchuen by the capture of Hanchong, and it soon became noised abroad that they were about to make a further advance in the direction of Chentu. Si Wang may have dreaded in his heart the consequences of a collision with the Manchus, but the news of their advance nerved him to commit another act of atrocity which has served to perpetuate the infamy of his name.

The approach of the Manchus warned Si Wang that he could not hope to long maintain himself in Szchuen after they had resolved to annex that province. He came, therefore, to the desperate resolution to strengthen his position, as he hoped, by an act of inhumanity unparalleled in the records of history. The plan he formed was to rid his army of all the women attached to it, and by the lavish promises of future rewards, and of shortly procuring substitutes for these victims in the other provinces, he induced

his followers to adopt his advice* and to imitate the example of brutality which he did not hesitate to set them. The slaughter, once commenced, was carried on with a species of insane fury, and before the butchery ceased more than 400,000 women had been murdered by those on whose protection and affection they possessed every right and claim. Occasions there have been when, in moments of extreme peril, there has been magnanimity as well as necessity in the slaughter of women to save them from a worse fate at the hands of a conqueror; but here the destruction was wanton and unsurpassed in its extent and in the motives which operated in the minds

* His address was as follows:—"The province of Szchuen is no more than a mass of ruins and a vast desert. I have wished to signalise my vengeance, and at the same time to detach you from the wealth which it offered, in order that your ardour for the conquest of the Empire, which I have still every hope of attaining, should not flag. . . . The execution of my projects is easy; but one obstacle which might prevent or delay the conquest I meditate disturbs my mind. An effeminate heart is not well-suited to great enterprises; the only passion heroes should cherish is that of glory. All of you have wives, and the greater number of you have several in your company. These women can only prove a source of embarrassment in camp, and especially during marches or other expeditions demanding celerity of movement. Have you any apprehension lest you should not find elsewhere wives as charming and as accomplished? In a very short time I promise you others who will give us every reason to congratulate ourselves for having made the sacrifice which I am about to propose to you. Let us, therefore, get rid of the embarrassment which these women cause us. I feel that the only way for me to persuade you in this matter is by setting you an example. To-morrow, without further delay, I will lead my wives to the public parade. See that you all are present, and cause to be published under most severe penalties the order to all your soldiers to assemble there at the same time, each accompanied by his wives. The treatment I accord to mine shall be the general law."

—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 25-6.

of the actors. We are told that, the evil deed performed, Si Wang was inspired with a kind of frenzy, and swore that he had no longer any fear on the score of the Tartars, from whose presence he would speedily deliver China.

In these sanguine expectations Si Wang was destined to be soon undeceived; for the Tartars, having strongly reinforced the garrison at Hanchong, secured the passes of the Kiulong range. A hostile collision appeared imminent between the two armies, when a sudden and unlooked-for termination was given to the struggle by the death of Si Wang in an affair at the outposts. Si Wang, incredulous of the reported approach of the Manchus, had ridden out to satisfy himself of the truth of the reports, when one of the most famous Tartar archers marked his appearance and slew him with an arrow. Thus ignominiously perished Si Wang, who fancied that because he had violently broken the ties of nature he held the Empire within his grasp. Notwithstanding his momentary success in Szchuen he appears to have been an incapable leader, and such qualities as he possessed were those of a brigand without any of the redeeming features of a strong public spirit, or of a warm patriotism. Upon his death his faction dissolved without giving the Manchus further trouble, and Chuntche's authority was set up in this one province the more.

The only task of any importance that now remained to be performed for the completion of the conquest of the mainland was that of overthrowing the authority

of Kwei Wang, who still maintained the marks of power in Kwantung and Kweichow, and who exercised his influence over the millions of southern China from the great port and provincial capital of Canton westward to the frontier of Burmah. The Manchus, with the view of making their triumph as assured as it had proved rapid, resorted to the plan of nominating three* Chinese magnates vassal princes for the south before they advanced against the last strongholds of Chinese power. When they had taken this preliminary precaution they gave orders for the immediate advance of the armies which had restored tranquillity in Fuhkien and Kiangsi. Kiuchessa, to whose fortitude the Prince of Kwei had owed the origin of his power, saw the coming storm, and took all the steps he could to meet it. He assumed in person the command of the troops on the northern borders of Kwangsi, and drew up his army in strong positions to defend the passes of the Nanling mountains and the high road from Hengchow, on the Heng river, by which a large Tartar army was advancing towards Kueiling.† The fleet had been summoned for the defence of Canton, and all the preparations betokened an intention to offer a vigorous defence. Had the Prince of Kwei acted with the smallest resolution and allowed Kiuchessa to exercise unquestioned authority over the whole of his army this anticipation might after

* Kongyuta, King Chong Ming, and Chang Kohe.

† The principal city of Kwangsi.

all have been realised; but the approach of the Manchus only inspired him with an ungovernable alarm.

The first effect of the Manchu policy of placing Chinese commanders at the head of the operations was seen in the surrender, on their approach, of the positions at Nanhiong and Chowchow* without any attempt at resistance. The road being thus left open to the invader, the Manchus pushed on rapidly to Canton, where some preparations had been made to hold out. But rapid as were these movements, an event of still greater importance had already happened in the west, where Kiuchessa was striving to maintain his master's authority at Kueiling in Kwangsi.

The second Manchu army, under the command of Kongyuta, had fared equally well in its operations from Hoonan. The partizans of the Prince of Kwei, disheartened by the pusillanimity of their master, thought rather of their private affairs than of the weal of their lord. When they had allowed themselves to be defeated in two battles they conceived that they had done everything demanded by their duty, and hastened to come to an understanding with the race which they saw was destined to be their conqueror. The shame of making a voluntary surrender to a foreign ruler was felt to be the less when it was effected through the means of a viceroy of Chinese birth. The conquest begun by means of the Tartar army was consummated by the tact and presence of

* Two towns on the northern borders of Kwantung. The former is situated on the descent from the Meling mountains to the plain.

Kongyuta. Kiuchessa alone preserved in adversity the firmness and fidelity consistent with his character. While his troops and officers abandoned him on all sides he remained at Kueiling awaiting the arrival of the foe, and to all the representations of his friends enjoining him to flee he turned a deaf ear, for he refused "to purchase a few more years of life by an act of which he would soon feel ashamed." Kiuchessa and the military commander Chang awaited together the appearance of the Manchus. Resistance was out of the question, for there were no troops left to guard the walls; and when Kongyuta arrived he had only to march into the town and to make these two faithful officers prisoners. Kongyuta saw that the effect of his victories would be greatly enhanced if he could by any argument or promises gain over to his side such invaluable supporters as these two officers. The reception he accorded them was one worthy of their rank and reputation, and the promises he made them were not confined to the assurance of personal safety, but embraced an absolute pledge of high employment in the Manchu service. But neither promises nor threats availed to shake the resolution of these two men; and at last Kongyuta, piqued at his ill-success and irritated by their taunts as to the bad example he, a descendant of Confucius,* was setting his fellow-countrymen, gave orders for their execution. The Manchu dynasty, although it failed to secure valuable allies, was thus rid of two of its ablest and most bitter enemies.

* Mailla.

The efforts of the Manchus were now all concentrated on the capture of Canton, which, defended by a large garrison under the command of a valiant officer, was well-prepared to stand a siege. The presence of the fleet, by affording a means of escape in the last extremity, contributed beyond doubt to increase and sustain the courage of its defenders. The fortifications of the town had been strengthened by fresh ramparts and dykes, and several batteries of western cannon had been placed in position. During eight months the town was held against all the efforts of the Manchus, and the hardships to which they were reduced led them several times to meditate a retreat. On the other hand the garrison had many difficulties to contend against, and no hope of succour existed except from Kwei Wang, who was already himself menaced by Kongyuta on the north. By a supreme effort Kwei Wang succeeded in raising a body of troops charged with the special task of relieving Canton, but, as Kwei Wang would not take the field in person, and as he could find no second Kiuchessa to occupy his place, the movements of this corps were not only slow, but were also marked by little judgment. The Manchus had no difficulty in dispersing this body, whereupon they turned with renewed vigour to the siege of Canton. The garrison was necessarily much discouraged by this repulse of the relieving force, and, after bravely defending themselves against the assaults of the enemy, they fell at their posts almost to the last man. Canton was handed over to the soldiers to pillage, and scenes of

indescribable horror ensued during the ten days that the sack continued. The capture of Canton virtually decided the chances of Kwei Wang, but some time elapsed before he fell into the power of the Manchus. For the moment he only withdrew to a safer distance from them, and established his head-quarters at Nangan, in the south of Kwangsi. Several of his officers deserted him, and the town of Woochow, which he had named his capital, shared the fate of Canton.

Kwei Wang for a short space of time imagined that he might rally to his side the disappointed population of Yunnan, which had fallen into the hands of four military adventurers; but, although he conferred titles of honour on one of these, he soon saw that the hope was delusive. As much disgusted with the treachery of his supporters as disheartened by fear of the Tartars, Kwei Wang fled over the borders of Kwangsi into Yunnan, whence he passed among the tribes of the Burmese frontier. Seven years later we shall find him re-issue from his place of concealment to meet his fate at the hands of Wou Sankwei.

The rebel leaders in Yunnan sought to make use of Kwei Wang to promote their schemes of personal ambition, and one of them, finding that the Ming cause was defunct and that it would not be possible to instil fresh vitality into it, resolved to proclaim the authority of Chuntche and to adopt the Manchu laws. This recognition of the Tartar yoke in Yunnan, which promised to bring without further bloodshed the last of the Chinese provinces under the Manchu domination, rested upon no very solid foundation, for the leader

with whom the scheme originated had palpably views of his own, and expected a larger measure of liberty than could belong to a Manchu lieutenant. In the troubles which followed the advance of the Manchus was checked, and several reverses inflicted upon them; and the nominal authority of Kwei Wang was again set up and maintained in Yunnan. But these events were of local rather than general importance, and we may leave them for a time to see what events were happening in other parts of China.

The repression of the Taitong revolt had been the last military exploit of the Regent, Ama Wang, although to him much of the praise must be given for having supervised the preparations for the conquest of the south. He lived long enough to hear of the capture of Canton, the stubborn defence of which had greatly contributed to swell his later anxieties; but when the news came that the city was taken, and that Kwei Wang's power was broken, he felt that his work was done. To Ama Wang belongs all the credit of having consolidated the Manchu power in China. Chuntché owed to his vigour and moderation the position, as Emperor, which both his father and grandfather, although men of approved ability and experience, had failed to attain. While he devoted himself to the service of his nephew, he appears to have been actuated as much by the desire for personal distinction as by the motive of aggrandising the power of his family and race. Towards the Chinese he assumed an attitude of moderation and even of studied conciliation, which did not fail to produce a beneficial effect.

Indeed, the people had in him not only a warm but a discreet friend, and to his influence must be attributed the speedy pacification of the capital and the northern provinces, which had long remained tranquil with the one exception of the Taitong revolt. We cannot doubt that this satisfactory result was mainly due to the untiring vigilance and prudent measures of the Regent, in whose hands the boy-emperor Chuntche, whether of his own accord or under compulsion may not be known, had placed all the functions and responsibility of government. Some trace of a warmer feeling between these near relations may, however, be detected in the name which Chuntche gave his uncle of Ama Wang, the Father Prince.

The Regent's death inspired several of the elder Manchu princes with the desire to succeed to his position; but fortunately the general opinion of the ministers was adverse to their views. The Emperor, who had profited by the advice of his wise uncle, was considered to be old enough to rule for himself, and all the ministers returned their seals of office and refused to receive them back save from the Emperor himself. This extreme measure had the desired effect. The ambitious uncles retired discomfited, if not abashed, from the scene, and Chuntche assumed the rights as well as the name of Emperor.

Then it was that he formed the supreme administrative council of the Empire, which still possesses the privilege of advising the Emperor and of approaching his person, and which, in conjunction with the six Tribunals and the Board of Censors, now controls the

affairs of this vast empire. To this august body, composed of only four persons, he raised the more important of those dignitaries who had thrown up their seals of office sooner than acquiesce in the usurpation of his uncles; and in order to attract the sympathy of the people, and, possibly, also to reward the services of faithful Chinese officials, he passed a decree to the effect that this council should be composed of an equal number of Manchu and Chinese officials.* Before this act Chinese subjects had been admitted to no recognised share in the government, and this was the first formal admission of their right to occupy their natural position in the administration of the country.†

When Canton fell into the power of the Manchus many Chinese escaped by the aid of the fleet over which Koshinga, or Ching Ching Tong, held command. As the Manchus had no vessels this body of men was held together mainly by the sense of security derived from their immunity from pursuit, and they

* This year, also, he accepted from the hands of the priest Adam Schaal the astronomical system in force in Europe, and made him president of the Mathematical Board.—Mailla. Schaal was subsequently made director of the Board of Ordnance. He was long in high favour at Court, but fell into disgrace. The sufferings he underwent in prison hastened his death.—*See Du Halde.*

† About the same time Chuntché issued an edict on the subject of securing purity in the public examinations. From its terms it would appear that bribery was rife, and that many candidates passed by means of a golden key. Before the Emperor succeeded in impressing them with the importance of making just awards several of the examiners had to be executed, and those candidates whom they had admitted were only confirmed in their appointments on passing a fresh examination. Those who failed in this second attempt were banished with their families to Tartary.—*Mailla.*

soon found in the daring and success of their leader a still stronger inducement to remain devoted to his interests. The marauding deeds of Koshinga became the admiration and the solace of the Chinese, just as they certainly proved a source of annoyance to the Tartars, if the statement cannot be sustained that they inspired them with terror. While the main forces of the Manchus remained assembled in the south, Koshinga seized the favourable moment to attempt a diversion in their rear, and, proceeding along the coast of Fuhkien, captured the port of Amoy. In the vicinity of that place he had the satisfaction of defeating a corps of Tartars or, more probably, of local levies; but land operations on any large scale were not within reach of his capacity or resources, and he soon put to sea again. He still proceeded northwards, making several descents upon the coast, and, on the Manchu forces collecting, he effected his escape in his ships with much spoil and many fresh recruits.

In the year 1656 he obtained possession of the island of Tsong-ming, situated at the entrance to the river Kiang, whence he hoped to be able to carry out his most ambitious design of establishing himself in the dual province of Kiangnan. For the time being Koshinga had, at the least, obtained a place of retreat in the event of disaster, and an admirable station for his magazines and stores. His next step was to capture the town of Tongchow, on the northern bank of the Kiang, and to fortify it to the best of his art. Thus he secured the complete command of the entrances to that great river, and of all the water approaches to

the city of Nankin, which he had marked as his next object of attack. The Manchus did not give Koshinga credit for as much audacity as he possessed, and flattered themselves that, although he had obtained a few successes on the sea, he would never dare to attack a place of such importance as Nankin. This view was destined to be rudely dispelled, for notwithstanding the danger and difficulty of the expedition, Koshinga sailed up the Kiang with his fleet, and appeared off the city of Nankin. Not only had the Tartar governor made no preparations for defence, but the garrison under his orders, far from being numerically strong, scarcely sufficed to keep in awe a large population doubtfully affected towards the Government.

Up to this point Koshinga's movements had been marked by resolution and vigour, but here in the very crisis of his career he allowed himself to hesitate so far that he put off striking a decisive blow against the city until the garrison had been largely reinforced by fresh troops. His motive had apparently been to spare his men in the expectation of a rising on the part of the townspeople saving him the loss of carrying the place by storm; but, although the Manchu officer at one time so far suspected their good faith that he meditated giving an order for the slaughter of every man in the city, the inhabitants gave no sign of an intention to go over to Koshinga, and took their share in the labour of defending the city against this semi-piratical leader. The siege had lasted some weeks without any

decisive action taking place, when the intelligence that the garrison was undergoing great privations induced Koshinga to believe that the time had come to deliver his assault with certain effect. Unfortunately for himself he allowed his men to spend the night previous to the proposed attack in a state of high revelry, and the vigilant commandant of Nankin did not fail to perceive and to seize the auspicious moment for frustrating his intentions. The Manchus sallied forth and attacked the intoxicated Chinese with fury; and such resistance as they attempted was speedily overcome. More than 3,000 of Koshinga's men were slain, and the rest with their discomfited leader were glad to find security in their ships, leaving their camp and the spoil of the towns they had plundered in the hands of the victor. Thus closed the siege of Nankin, and, with this repulse, Koshinga's dreams of making any further stand against the Tartar conquerors were dispelled. His naval superiority remained above challenge, but henceforth he is to be regarded rather as a rover of the sea than as a patriotic leader attempting to uphold the lost cause of the Mings.

We have now to turn our attention to the close of the career of the Ming prince Kwei Wang, who, after the failure of his officers to maintain themselves against the Manchus, had fled across the Yunnan frontier into the territories of the King of Mien or Burmah, by whom he was received with the honour due to an unfortunate potentate. He had resided seven years in the land of the stranger when a rising in the

province of Kweichow, headed by several officers who proclaimed his interests, revived the hope of recovering the position he had lost. He left his place of refuge in Burmah with the wealth he had saved from the wreck of his fortunes in China, and also laden with gifts of friendship from his host; but, while he was making his way through Yunnan to join his new partizans, Wou Sankwei, who, during the years of Chuntché's reign, had been playing the part of Warden of the Western Marches with credit to himself and advantage to the State, heard of his movements and hastened to intercept him. Kwei Wang was not in a position to offer much resistance to his assailant. His small party fought valiantly, but they were soon all slain; and Kwei Wang and his son remained prisoners in the hands of their enemy. Wou Sankwei, whose moderation had on a previous occasion attracted the unfavourable notice of the Regent Ama Wang, did not for a moment hesitate in this supreme case, and gave the order for the immediate execution of Kwei Wang and his son. With their death* disappeared the last recognised representatives of the House of Ming, and, as the native historian observes, this event deprived the Chinese of all justification for a continuance in rebellion against the dynasty which had

* Mr. Ross gives a different account of Kwei Wang's closing years. According to him he was not only badly treated in Burmah, but on one occasion barely escaped with his life. He also says that Wou Sankwei marched an army into the country, and compelled the Burmese to give up their royal guest. The strangling of Kwei Wang is represented as a voluntary act.

by the high will of Heaven succeeded it on the throne.*

The reign of Chuntche was marked by one event of great importance, and also of an unusual character. This was the arrival at the capital of the Empire of several embassies from European states. Chuntche's reign, which witnessed the beginning of many things in the modern history of China, also beheld the first diplomatic intercourse between the Government of the Middle Kingdom and the sovereigns of the West. The Dutch and the Russians can claim the equal honour of having each had an embassy resident at Peking during the year 1656, although in neither case can the result be held to have been very satisfactory. The Dutch were after some delay, and on making the required concessions to the dignity of the Emperor, granted an audience; but, notwithstanding that they freely bribed the officials, they obtained no solid advantage, unless the privilege of bringing their "tribute" at stated periods to the foot of the throne can be considered one.† The end

* Thus illustrating the Chinese proverb, "After long enduring union division must come, and after a long period of division unity revives."

† Nieuhoff, the maitre d'hôtel to the two merchants who acted as ambassadors, has left an interesting description of this journey to Peking (see vol. vii. of Pinkerton's "Travels"). He gives a full account of their residence at the capital, and refers to the great misery of the people in consequence of their wars with the Tartars. The Emperor's letter of dismissal to these envoys may be quoted. "Our territories being as far asunder as the east is from the west it is with great difficulty that we can approach each other, and from the beginning to the present the Hollanders never came to visit us. Your country is ten thousand thousand li distant from mine, but you show the nobleness of your mind

of this embassy proved little less than disastrous, for at Canton on their return journey the ambassadors were ill-treated in their persons and robbed of their property. Notwithstanding the Emperor's sense of, as he expressed it, the nobleness of their mind, they never succeeded in obtaining reparation for the injuries and loss inflicted upon them.

Nor was the Russian Embassy more successful, although the dignified demeanour of the envoy better preserved the honour and reputation of his master. The first demand made by the Chinese was that the Russians should, in common with the other tribute-bearing states, do homage to the Emperor's throne, and perform the ceremony of kowtow. With this the Russian officer consistently refused to comply, and after some time passed in useless argument the embassy was dismissed and returned to Siberia,* which had then been recently conquered and annexed by the Czars of Russia. The first diplomatic relations

in remembering me; for this reason my heart doth very much incline to you. You have asked leave to come to trade in my country, but as your country is so far distant, and the winds on these coasts so boisterous as to endanger your ships, the loss of which would very much trouble me, if you do think fit to send hither, I, therefore, desire it may be but once every eight years, and no more than one hundred men in a company, twenty of whom may come up to the place where I keep my court. And then you may bring your merchandise ashore into your lodge without bartering it at Canton."

* The Cossack Irmak had begun the conquest of that vast region in the year 1580, and it had been carried out by his successors. Before the year 1650 the authority of Russia had been carried to the North Pacific, and the two largest empires of the world at that time became conterminous. This conquest explains the objects of the Russian mission to Peking.

between the Chinese and the Oros, or Russians, were thus brought to an abrupt termination.

Diplomatic relations were also established about this time with the ruler of Tibet. The principal Lama of Lhasa was created Dalai, or Ocean Lama, and the connection between Peking and the holy land Tibet, which under the Mings had been of only a vague and indefinite character, assumed a closer and more intimate form. The Europeans, to whom reference has been made, found an embassy from this remote kingdom resident at Peking, but the Dalai Lama* appears to have paid, on an earlier occasion, a personal visit to Chuntche's Court. From this time the tie between the two states became very close, and up to this it has proved enduring.

Wou Sankwei had not long pacified the south, and Koshinga had only just recommenced his active operations after wresting a portion of the island of Formosa from the Dutch, when it became clear that the days of the Emperor Chuntche, young though he was, were drawing to a close. In 1661, seventeen years after he had been proclaimed Emperor by the council of notables at Peking, he was seized with a fatal illness, which we may consider to have been either small-pox, or grief at the loss of a favourite wife, according as we may feel disposed. A competent authority† assigns his death to the former cause; but

* Mailla (vol. xi. pp. 80-1) says that he came to Peking in the ninth year of Chuntche's reign (1653). It was then that he received his title and a gold seal of office.

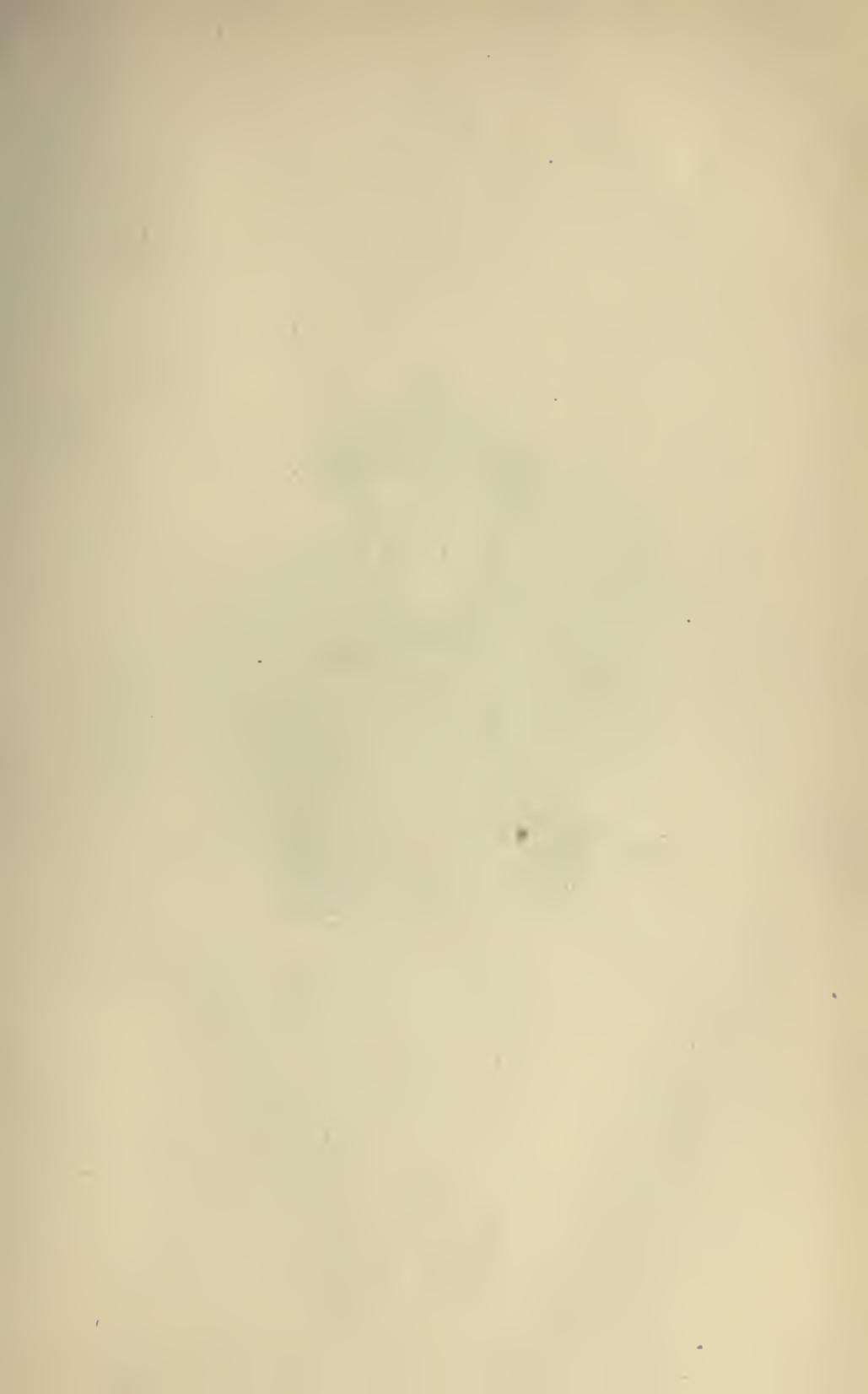
† Philippe Couplet.

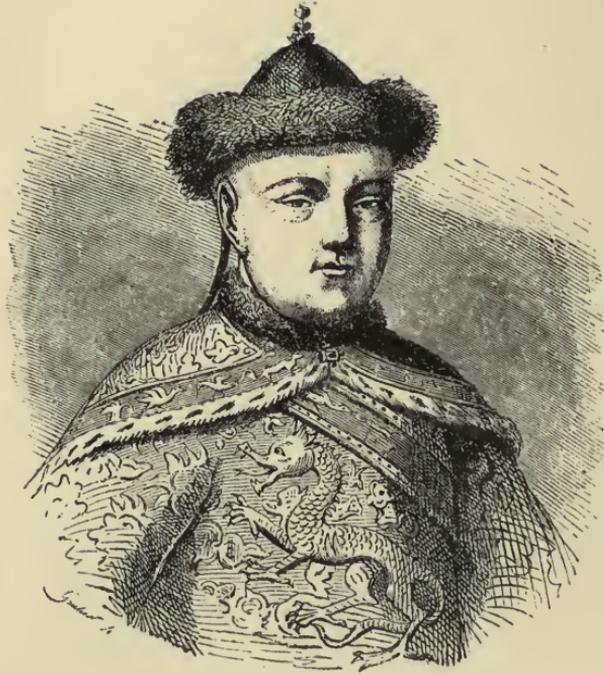
there is no doubt that the death of his infant son and of the child's mother, whose relations with the Emperor recall those of David and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, preyed heavily upon his mind, and aggravated the disease. On the eve of death he named as his successor a boy reputed to be the second of his children, and afterwards known to fame as the Emperor Kanghi. The choice proved a happy one, although the accession of a child again launched the bark of state upon troubled waters; but the virtues and genius of Kanghi in the end more than repaid the agony of suffering through which China had yet to pass before reaching the tranquil condition of a Manchu-governed country.

Of Chuntché, whose youth and early death prevented the performance of many great or striking actions, it may only be said that he gave promise of the possession of the remarkable qualities for which his family had become famous. Much of the credit of consolidating the Manchu triumph belonged to Ama Wang, but Ama Wang died long before any settlement was concluded, and left the young Emperor to grapple, on his own resources, with a condition of things critical in the extreme. Chuntché's acts as irresponsible ruler were always marked by great forbearance, as well as by resolution. His reign has been eclipsed by the brilliant achievements of his son, Kanghi, but in its way it was both important and remarkable. At the least it served to show that the supremacy of the Manchus was firmly established and not to be lightly opposed or easily displaced.

Already it was evident that the wiser part for the Chinese would be to acquiesce in a yoke they could not shake off; and most of them were hastening to adapt themselves to circumstances throughout the nineteen* provinces of the Empire.

* Including Leaoutung.





THE EMPEROR KANGHI.

[To face p. 319.]

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EARLY YEARS OF KANGHI'S REIGN.

The Accession of a Boy.—The Eunuchs.—Their Disappearance from Chinese History.—The Manchu Law.—Koshinga's later Career.—Formosa.—The Dutch.—Their Position.—King of Taiwan.—His Death.—The Naval Hero of China.—Agitation against Christians.—The Regent Sony.—Schaal's Death.—The Baturu Kong.—His fate.—Kanghi assumes Reins of Power. Wou Sankwei.—His Rewards.—His Independence.—Kanghi resolves to decide the Question of their Relations.—Summons him to Pekin.—Evasion of the Demand.—The Emperor renews his Request.—Haughty Reply of Wou Sankwei.—“Twice forty thousand men at my back.”—An Insurrection throughout the South.—Plot at Pekin.—Revealed by a Slave.—The Conspirators seized and executed.—The Festival of the New Year.—The Manchus on the Defensive.—Threatened Defection of the Mongols.—Satchar.—Kanghi's Promptitude nips the Danger in the Bud.—Affairs in Formosa.—The Tide begins to turn.—Reconquest of Fuhkien.—Of Kwantung.—Tartar Garrisons.—Wou Sankwei alone successful.—But gradually retires into Yunnan.—His Tactics counterbalance the Dissensions of his Supporters.—His Death.—Summary of his long Career.—His Grandson succeeds him.—Earthquake at Pekin.—Rapid Manchu Successes.—Siege of Yunnan.—Its Capture.—Suicide of Wou Shufan.—The Fate of Rebels.—Vast Booty.—The Establishment of a Postal Service.—Kanghi's Position.—What the Boy-prince had done.—Events in Formosa.—Ching's death.—Dissensions that then followed.—Manchu

Invasion.—A historical “high-tide.”—The Surrender of Koshinga’s Grandson and the Dissolution of his Power.—Kanghi supreme on Land and Sea.—Within the Borders of China.

THE accession of a boy to a throne which demanded the support of strong hands and clear heads was not an event calculated to ensure the tranquil development of Manchu power. Kanghi was only eight years old when the weight of empire was thrust upon him, and the task of government was committed to the charge of four of the principal officials. After the proclamation of the new Emperor, and the promulgation of the general amnesty usually granted on the accession of a prince, the co-regents first turned their attention to purifying the palace from the presence of the eunuchs who had established themselves there during the later years of Chuntche’s reign, and who doubtless saw in Kanghi’s minority the opportunity of advancing their ends, and of firmly establishing their influence over the councils of the state. The first act of Kanghi’s representatives was to impeach the principal of the eunuchs on a charge of peculation, and to punish him with death. All his colleagues were turned out of the palace and dismissed from their offices, to find some more honourable but certainly to them less agreeable mode of existence among the ranks of the people. Then was passed the law, graven on tablets of metal to defy the injuries of time, forbidding the employment in the public service of any of this unfortunate class. The iron tablets*

* They weigh more than 1,000 lbs.—Mailla.

still exist, and the Manchus have remained true to the pledge taken by the young Kanghi. The eunuchs now disappear from the history of China as a political faction, and their enervating influence has fortunately been banished from both the court and the council board.

The first year of Kanghi's reign marked the summit and beheld the decline of the piratical power of Koshinga. In 1659, after the failure of his expedition against Nankin, Koshinga had been compelled to look beyond his possessions at the mouth of the Kiang for a permanent place of arms, and the naval preparations on which the Manchus were at last engaged made it more necessary for him to secure one without delay. There seemed to him no place better adapted to his necessities or more suitable for the task he had in hand than the island of Formosa,* long the home of a piratical confederacy which had

* The island of Formosa, situated at a distance of nearly one hundred miles from the coast, is noted for its remarkable productiveness, and also for the fact that a great portion of it has maintained and still maintains its independence of Chinese authority. It has been called "the granary of China." Its length is about 300 miles, and its breadth at the broadest point less than one fourth of that distance. A lofty range of mountains, from north to south, divides it into two regions differing from each other in political condition and material productiveness. The western half is attached to China, and vies in wealth and fertility with any other quarter of the Empire. The eastern is under the sway of native princes or chiefs; and the resources of this half are not only undeveloped, but are also undoubtedly inferior to those of the western districts. Formosa is called by the Chinese Taiwan, "the beautiful island." For some recent information about this island the reader may be referred to a paper on the Aborigines of North Formosa, written by Mr. Edward Taintor, and published at Shanghai in 1874.

for the time been partially displaced by the power of the Dutch.* It was not so much the conquest of this island with its fierce and courageous tribes that Koshinga wanted, as the possession of the few harbours which had been seized by the emissaries of Batavia. Although the attainment of his object involved a collision with a race well-equipped in ships and arms, and more formidable on sea than on land, Koshinga braced his mind to the struggle; for the law of safety demanded, both for himself and for his followers, that he should without delay obtain a secure place of refuge from the anger of the Manchus. Koshinga, partly out of sheer necessity and partly no doubt in the hope of founding a new kingdom beyond the sea, resolved upon the conquest of Formosa, and concentrated all his strength for the undertaking.

The Dutch attempted to come to a friendly arrangement with Koshinga, whose designs on their possessions had been revealed by a preliminary revolt on the part of the many Chinese immigrants who

* A brief sketch of how the island fell into the hands of the Dutch will here be interesting. In 1624 the Dutch sent a fleet with 800 men to attack Macao and expel the Portuguese. Confident of success, they were yet repulsed with loss. As some compensation for this disappointment, they established themselves on the Pescadore Islands, and a few years afterwards they landed on the mainland of Formosa, came to an arrangement with the Japanese then in occupation of the town of Taiwan, and erected in its neighbourhood Fort Zeeland. The Japanese retired, leaving them in undisputed occupation of Taiwan. When the Tartar invasion began many Chinese crossed the channel and established themselves in Formosa. From this numerous colony Koshinga naturally expected much help in his design of ousting the Dutch, and, as the result proved, he was not destined to be disappointed.

had come across from Fuhkien. That insurrection had been repressed, although not without some difficulty, as was shown by the assistance of the aboriginal clans having to be enlisted. But Koshinga represented a more formidable antagonist, and while the Dutch were flattering themselves that he would not prove a very disagreeable neighbour he was really drawing the toils round them and restricting their power to the fort and district of Taiwan. When openly assailed the Dutch made a valiant defence, but they appear to have taken few precautions against the determined attack of their opponent. Fort Zealand was carried by storm, the Dutch lost their possessions, and Koshinga was proclaimed King of Formosa. The relics of the national party gathered round this champion, who for a time enjoyed, in his own person and in that of two generations of his children, the dignity of a semi-regal and independent position.* He did not, however, long retain the position to which he had won his way by remarkable energy and force of character. Rage at the excesses and insubordination of his eldest son, who had been left in command at Amoy, which still remained in his pos-

* See, for an interesting account of Koshinga's career in Formosa, Sir J. Davis's "Chinese." In the same author's sketches of China it is written, "the English entered into a commercial treaty with this King of Taywan as the old records call him. They were even more hardly treated than at Canton, being obliged to deliver up their guns and ammunition before they were permitted to trade; and the vexations experienced here at length led to the abandonment of all intercourse."—Vol. i. p. 14.

session, aggravated a slight indisposition ; and this formidable and much-feared naval leader died when it seemed that his matured career was only just beginning. Koshinga was no more than thirty-eight years old at the time of his death, and, although the Tartar yoke was not imposed upon Formosa until nearly twenty years afterwards, it very soon became clear that with him the spirit of his party had been destroyed. His death came opportunely to relieve the apprehensions of the Peking Government, who had just given orders for the devastation of the country for a distance of more than twenty miles from the coast. Not only was he a remarkable partizan leader, but, without exception, Koshinga may be pronounced to have been the foremost naval hero throughout the whole of the annals of his country.

Kanghi had not been long upon the throne when a great agitation was got up by a few of the more bigoted courtiers, and fanned by popular ignorance and fanaticism, against the Christian priests who had done no harm to anybody, and who had conferred some substantial benefits on the country. The anger of this extreme party was augmented by the favour with which the Emperor Chuntche had regarded these strangers, and by the fact that they had been raised to offices of marked honour and importance. It was not so much religious zeal as personal jealousy that instigated the Chinese official classes in raising this outcry against the foreigners, for they perceived that a charge of propagating " a false and monstrous religion " afforded the simplest and, in the eyes of the

people, the most intelligible form of indictment. The Abbé Schaal was deposed from his presidentship, and the other Christian strangers were conveyed as prisoners to Peking, where they were all found guilty and sentenced to a common death. So heinous was their crime held to be, that many councils met to decide what form of execution would be adequate to their offence. The delay that thus arose, which was intended to enhance their punishment, ensured as a matter of fact their safety. It gave Sony, one of the Regents, time to exercise all his influence on the side of justice and mercy; and, thanks to his measures and to the support of the Empress Mother, the sentences were quashed and the prisoners released. Such, however, were the bodily sufferings they had undergone, that the principal of these innocent victims, the Abbé Schaal,* died shortly after his release.

Whether the act must be attributed to this cause—for the question of the foreign missionaries roused much attention at the time and divided the political world into rival camps—or whether the capital was disturbed by the cabals and intrigues of ministers, it was very shortly after this episode that Kanghi, on the death of the Regent Sony, determined to abolish the regency and to rule for himself. The act was one betokening no ordinary vigour on the part of a youth

* Some time afterwards the Astronomical Board was placed under the presidency of the Père Verbiest, to whom we owe much information concerning this period. Kanghi personally investigated the rival merits of the Chinese and European systems, and pronounced in favour of the latter.—*See* Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 62-3.

of less than fourteen years, and was fully in accordance with the greatness to which Kanghi established his claims. Kanghi seems to have been impelled to take this step by his disapproval of the tyranny and overbearing conduct of the Baturu Kong, another member of the Board of Regency. This minister had taken the most prominent part in the persecution of the Christians; and when death removed Sony, the only one of the regents whose reputation and moral courage rendered him his match, he eagerly anticipated a period of unrestrained power and privilege. The vigilance and resolution of the young Emperor thwarted his plans. By an imperial decree the Board of Regency was dissolved, and Baturu Kong became the mark for the accusation of all over whom he had tyrannised. He was indicted on twelve charges, each sufficient to entail a punishment of death. The indictment was made good; and the first act of Kanghi's reign as responsible sovereign was to decree the death of the unjust minister Kong, or Sucama.* The execution of his family was in accordance with the law, and marked the heinousness of the offence.

The overthrow of the Ming prince Kwei Wang and the pacification of Yunnan had set the seal to the fame of Wou Sankwei, the general who, thirty years before, had invited the Manchus into the country to put down the robber Li, and whose military skill had contributed so greatly to their triumph. The Peking authorities had endeavoured to keep him in the

* Couplet.

shade; but the splendour of his achievements defeated their plans, and obliged them to reward his services. The title of Prince was conferred upon him, and he was left to exercise uncontrolled authority in Yunnan and its dependent provinces. The Chinese rapidly settled down under his rule, and by a number of wise measures he promoted their welfare and increased his own revenue. His rule was rendered still less irksome by the fact that the majority of his soldiers were native Chinese and not Manchus. Although he does not appear to have nursed any schemes of personal aggrandisement, the measures he took and the reforms instituted under his guidance were of a character to make his authority one independent of Manchu control. The Manchu rulers may have silenced their apprehensions on the score of this influential Chinese leader with the argument that the death of Wou Sankwei would remove the ground upon which they subsisted; but Wou Sankwei lived on until these hopes became fainter, and to the eye of Kanghi it seemed that he was establishing the solid foundations of a formidable power. Wou Sankwei had been for many years the object of jealousy; and it needed but slight encouragement from the ruler to raise up numerous evil tongues to declare that the independence of Wou Sankwei dwarfed the dignity of the Manchu throne, and constituted an element of danger to its stability.

In the year 1671 Kanghi, either from the conviction of the necessity of establishing his undisputed authority throughout the country, or in deference to the

representations of his officials, resolved to so far take action in the matter as to invite Wou Sankwei to pay him a visit at Peking. The request was reasonable, for many years had elapsed since he had visited the capital, and his expression of fealty to Kanghi had been made only informally and by deputy. The custom of the country and the time was that the great governors should leave behind them at the capital one of their sons as hostage for their fidelity and good conduct. A son of Wou Sankwei resided in this character at Peking, where he had been admitted, with the title of a royal duke, into the family circle of the dynasty after his marriage with a half-sister of Kanghi. He was of course aware of the intrigues against his father, and believing that his person would not be safe from the machinations of his enemies sent off a special messenger to warn him of the danger, and to advise him not to come. The act was creditable to his heart, but it showed little knowledge of affairs. The excessive affection of his son proved the ruin of Wou Sankwei, for he adopted his counsel, and declined to proceed to Peking to establish the innocence of his conduct.

Wou Sankwei excused himself on the ground of his old age, and of his desire to end his days in peace, and sent his son the necessary powers to perform the required act of allegiance. But the Emperor was not a man to be put off with so transparent an excuse, and Wou Sankwei's conduct soon exposed the hollowness of his own protestations. Kanghi, still resolute on carrying his point, but loth to lightly embark upon

a hazardous enterprise, and anxious to make the most of his case, then sent two of his most trusted officials to represent to Wou Sankwei the absolute necessity there was for exact compliance with his demand, and the grave consequences that would ensue from persistence in refusal. We may also suppose that they were instructed to see how far his statement was true that he was borne down with the weight of years and that his thoughts were only of a peaceful end.

Wou Sankwei met them with a magnificent reception, and treated them with all the courtesy and regard due to distinguished guests. Nothing in his attitude betrayed any hostile feeling until they came to discuss the main object of their mission. There is no reason to believe that they failed to discharge their task with discretion; but the instant Wou Sankwei perceived their drift, and that the Emperor would not accept his allegiance by deputy, he interrupted them, and, casting aside further reserve, declared that thenceforth he repudiated the Tartar yoke. "Do they think at the court," he exclaimed, "that I am so blind as not to see the motive in this order of summons? I shall, indeed, present myself there, if you continue to press me, but it will be at the head of twice forty thousand men. You may go on before, but I hope to follow you very shortly with such a force as will speedily remind those in power of the debt they owe me." Thus openly did Wou Sankwei throw down the glove of defiance to the race which he had so long supported. The military arrangements which he had never relaxed, and the

considerable sum of money which he had collected in his coffers, both served him now in good stead. When he refused to wear the Manchu tail any longer and proscribed its calendar, the people of the West recognised that the time had come for another trial of strength with their Tartar lords. Wou Sankwei met with nothing but cordial welcome and promises of support in establishing his authority in Kweichow and the greater portion of Szechuen and Hoonan, while the mere announcement that the great general was in arms sufficed to create a feeling of disturbance throughout the realm.

While the father was thus openly playing for a big bid in the south-west, the son was engaged in a secret plot to overwhelm the Manchus by the massacre of the principal members of the reigning family and of the officers of state. The conspiracy was arranged with considerable skill, and, finding no better instrument ready to his hand, Wou's son proceeded to enlist in his service a large body of Chinese slaves naturally anxious to free themselves from their bonds. The scheme succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations. The Chinese bound themselves together by a solemn oath to be true to one another, and all the preparations were made for the massacre of the Manchus on the occasion of the New Year's Festival.*

* The Festival of the New Year is the grand religious and social ceremony of the Chinese. It takes place on the 1st day of the first moon (in our month of February). All business of every kind is stopped, and the tribunals are closed for ten days previously. A state of high festival, similar to the Carnival, prevails, and the season is also marked by visits of ceremony between the members

Never had the Tartars stood in greater peril than they did in the year 1673, although to all outward appearance everything was calm and satisfactory.*

The eve of the day appointed for the execution of the plan arrived, when one of the slaves desirous of saving the life of his master, a Manchu officer, warned him of the coming danger. Matsi, such was his name, carried without delay the information to Kanghi, who took immediate measures to arrest the conspirators. Wou Sankwei's son and the greater number of his accomplices were seized and thrown into prison, whence on formal proof of their guilt they were conveyed to the scaffold. The plot of the son being thus happily disposed of, it remained for the youthful Emperor to essay the more difficult task of grappling with the father.

Although Wou Sankwei had placed himself outside the pale of consideration by his haughty defiance, yet Kanghi resolved to proceed warily with so formidable an antagonist. Instead of meeting his challenge by proscribing him, Kanghi was content to pass an edict ordering the disbandment of the native armies which Wou Sankwei and other Chinese commanders still retained under them in the south, for it must not be forgotten that there were other Chinese vice-

of the family as well as in the official world. Fourteen days later comes the more popular but less important Festival or Feast of Lanterns.—*See* Pauthier, vol. ii. pp. 650-1; Grosier, "Description de la Chine," vol. v. p. 385.

* These events must have been in progress before Wou Sankwei had made the defiant announcement just referred to, or else Kanghi would hardly have been so easily duped.

roys in the Manchu service besides him. This edict was directed against them all alike, and it had the effect of compelling them to show their hands. The example of Wou Sankwei proved infectious and irresistible. All declared against Kanghi, and from Fuhkien and Kwantung to the borders of Tibet and Burmah there was one common blaze of insurrection against the Tartars. Fortunately for the young Emperor the danger was more on the surface than in the hearts of the people; but the name of Wou Sankwei alone was as a tower of strength for the disaffected.

In face of this storm, which threatened to overwhelm him, Kanghi showed himself worthy of his race and fully capable of holding his ground against all comers. For a time the insurgents carried everything before them, but gradually the Manchu garrisons, reinforced by timely aid from Peking, opposed a steady and, as it often proved, a successful resistance to the advancing onset of Chinese patriotism. When the first great danger of being whelmed in a general revolt of the Chinese had passed away, and when the situation could be more justly as well as more critically scanned, it was seen that the Manchus could fairly hold their own, and that as soon as they should collect their resources the chances of final victory would rest again on their side. In the height of the crisis it was as much, however, as they could reasonably expect if they were able to maintain their position against the numerous and enthusiastic armies which Wou Sankwei placed in the field.

For a time, however, dangers continued to thicken

on all sides round the young ruler. The piratical confederacy of Formosa* despatched its vessels to plunder the coast, and naval disasters came to further embarrass the Manchus. Even among the Mongols, who possessed a greater sympathy and fellow-feeling with the Manchus than it was possible for any inhabitant of the Chinese plains to have, the conviction was apparently spreading that the misfortunes of the Tartar conquerors furnished them with an opportunity to promote their own separate interests. Satchar, chief of one of the principal banners, was the first to give expression to this general feeling, and, inviting levies from all his neighbours, proclaimed that on a fixed day he would take the field with 100,000 men for the invasion of China. Thus, menaced in his rear, Kanghi stood in imminent danger of a double disaster. Nothing save the remarkable promptitude with which he summoned troops from Leaoutung, and the courage which led him to denude Peking of a large part of its garrison, extricated him from his perilous situation. The corps thus collected advanced by forced marches upon

* A word may be said about affairs in Formosa between the years 1662 and 1673. After the death of Koshinga his brother was proclaimed king, but his son Ching asserted his rights and ousted him. In 1664 the Manchus, by the help of the Dutch, expelled him from Amoy. He continued to reign in Formosa, and in 1674, having successfully resisted all the attacks of Peking and its European confederates, Ching joined in the common alliance with Wou Sankwei. But although he crossed over to Fuhkien with an armed force he effected little. Jealousy of a rival forming a stronger passion than patriotism, he returned to Formosa, where the close of his career will be recorded.

the encampment of Satchar. The swift-moving Manchu cavalry fell upon the Mongols before they had concentrated their forces, and returned with Satchar and his family as prisoners to Peking. The capture of Satchar paralysed the Mongols for a time, and after that event none among them dared stir hand or foot against their vigorous opponent.

Good fortune continued to attend the plans of Kanghi, whose difficulties would have sufficed to crush a man of less lofty character. He profited by his own ability and courage, but he derived quite as much advantage from the dissensions prevailing among his enemies. Ching, the son of Koshinga and the possessor of Formosa, had quarrelled with the Chinese prince who had unfurled the standard of revolt in Fuhkien, and, more keen to indulge his rancour than to waive his rights, had turned his arms against the very man whom he had come to aid. The result of the collision that ensued between them was to shatter the forces of the Fuhkien leader, and to compel Ching to retire to his island home. Thus in one province was Kanghi's battle fought and won for him without an effort on his part. The Emperor had but to send a small detachment to regain the province, and to win back the allegiance, for such as it was worth, of its disappointed prince. The resubjugation of Fuhkien entailed that of Kwantung. Those officials, who had been most eager to proclaim their adhesion to the cause of Wou Sankwei, were the very first to greet the return of the Manchus. The aspirations which they had cherished and which they had thought

feasible, with the Manchus exhausted by their efforts, and governed by a mere boy, could not they found stand contact with the reality of the case. Their adventure required valour and a desperate resolve to win. They possessed neither, and their only course was, when the Manchu troops arrived, to express their contrition and to promise better conduct for the future. Kanghi had neither the desire nor the intention to irritate the mass of the people. He forgave all save the most guilty, and affected a belief in their pledges. But for the first time Manchu garrisons were placed in all the walled towns, and a part, known as the Tartar city, was specially marked off for their use.

Meantime Wou Sankwei maintained his independence in his own immediate neighbourhood. He appears to have come to the wise determination to content himself with the sovereignty of these provinces which he hoped to weld into a kingdom for his son; and it was none of Kanghi's policy to venture upon a precipitate attack on this formidable general, whose military skill he rightly dreaded. All his efforts were devoted to the work of detaching his friends and of crushing his allies. In 1677, however, he had so far succeeded in this preliminary task that he gave instructions for his armies to converge upon Wou Sankwei's territory from the north and also from the east. The Manchus met their match in the field, but the dissensions prevalent among the Chinese elsewhere had been manifested even in the ranks of the followers of Wou Sankwei, and this disunion more than counterbalanced their successes.

Gradually his forces were driven out of Hoonan, and over his part of Szchuen he could claim only a precarious tenure. When Wou Sankwei took his first step backwards, the sun of his fortunes set. His own adherents abandoned him, the rebels in other parts hastened to come to terms with the supreme power, and all the scattered bodies of Manchu troops converged upon him as a common centre. For fifty years this Chinese warrior had never known the meaning of defeat, but he was now on the eve of irretrievable ruin, from which there was none to extricate him.

From Szchuen Wou Sankwei passed into Yunnan, whence he directed the conduct of the campaign on the Hoonan and Kweichow frontiers. So long as he lived the skill shown in his military dispositions compensated to a great extent for other deficiencies, and the tardiness of his generals' success induced Kanghi to proclaim his intention of taking the field in person. Several of his most experienced ministers disapproved of this resolution, as the absence of the Emperor from Peking was held to be calculated to create disturbances in the north; but at this conjuncture the news of Wou Sankwei's death opportunely arrived. There are several versions of the manner in which this event happened, but the most probable one seems to be that he died of old age in the year 1679.* Even with his

* This year there occurred at Peking a terrible earthquake, in which Mailla says as many as 300,000 persons perished. Couplet places the number as high as 400,000. At Tongchow, twelve miles from Peking, 30,000 more were overwhelmed in the ruins. This

great talents it had become clear that the success of his cause was virtually hopeless, and when he died his party dwindled down to an insignificant faction under the leadership of his grandson Wou Shufan. Kanghi then gave up his idea of taking the field in person, satisfied with the conviction that no other Chinese chieftain existed to take the place of his formidable opponent.

The disappearance of Wou Sankwei struck a rude blow at the courage and confidence of the people, upon whom the loss of their greatest man fell like an irreparable shock. Their ideas of resistance to the bitter end then gave place to the more worldly sentiment of coming to as speedy a settlement as possible with the Manchu officials. Wou Sankwei's long career covered the most critical period in the modern history of China, and, during the half-century that elapsed from the time when he distinguished himself in the defence of Ningyuen until he died as an independent prince in Yunnan, he occupied the very foremost place in the minds of his countrymen. The part which he had taken first in keeping out the Manchus, and then in introducing them into the state, reflected equal credit on his ability and on his patriotism. For even in requesting the Manchus to come to his aid against the robber Li he had been actuated by the purest motives, as there was then only a choice of evil alternatives; and it seemed preferable that a

disaster was followed (January, 1680) by the burning of the Royal Palace, which caused an incalculable loss to both the Treasury and the people.

respectable, if alien, form of government should be established, to allowing the Empire to fall into the hands of a freebooter whose thoughts were solely of plunder and unbridled license. The Manchus, although well aware of the magnitude of their debt, secretly wished to exclude him from the just recompense of his unequalled services, but the Court was too wise to quarrel with one whose indignation might prove formidable. Yet the workings of their minds were not wholly concealed from Wou Sankwei, and when he received from Kanghi the order to proceed in person to Peking and to disband his army the moral indignation which had long possessed him broke forth. Something he may have presumed on the youth and inexperience of the Emperor, and he certainly forgot that his age precluded his taking the active part in the field necessary to the success of his enterprise. For a moment it almost seemed that he was destined to succeed, and that the verdict of fortune would be reversed. With regard to the Manchus, Wou Sankwei might flatter himself that he had played the part of king-maker, but when he attempted to set up his own individual authority he failed in his task. Notwithstanding that his life closed under the blight of a failure, the long, varied and picturesque career of Wou Sankwei remains one of the most remarkable and striking to be met with in the course of Chinese history.

Wou Shufan carried on the unequal struggle with the Manchu generals for a few years, but in 1681 he lost all the possessions he had received from his

grandfather except the town of Yunnan. Long and valiantly did these representatives of a lost cause defend that stronghold, and Wou Shufan emulated the fortitude of his family. But the inevitable end could not be averted. The Manchus having once gained admission within the walls, the siege speedily terminated. The garrison was put to the sword, and Wou Shufan only baffled his enemy by committing suicide. Yet the full measure of the Manchu vengeance was not satisfied until his head had been sent to Peking to be hung up over the gate as a warning to traitors, and as a proof of the Tartar triumph. Nor was even this act the last that marked the repression of the great rebellion: for the body of Wou Sankwei himself was taken from the tomb, and his ashes were scattered throughout the eighteen provinces of China to testify to all that no trace any longer remained of the man who had threatened the very existence of the Manchus, and at whose name all his foes used to tremble.*

Kanghi had now occupied the throne for more than twenty years, and the child upon whom the weight of a great empire had been cast was no longer an inexperienced and unknown boy. Unusual difficulties

* Before this event the other Chinese feudatories of Fuhkien and Kwantung, whose lives had for a time been spared, had been executed. All their military forces were disbanded, and the regular Manchu army, with its Mongol and Chinese detachments stationed throughout the country. Then it was that the admirable postal service of the Empire was established. Mr. Ross mentions that a despatch took nine days in reaching Peking from the extremity of Kansuh, a distance of 1,600 miles. The spoil of this war was so immense that 5,600,000 taels, or about £1,870,000, was divided amongst the soldiers.

had beset his path, but he had triumphed over them by his own energy and indomitable will; and although still a young man he had already won his way to a position of power and personal fame that gave him high rank among the rulers of his time. What he thus early accomplished the deeds of his later years fully established and maintained. Up to this point it had been to Kanghi a struggle for existence, but henceforth his place as Emperor of China was secure. The Manchu conquest, begun by Taitson and completed by Ama Wang and Wou Sankwei, was achieved a second time and consolidated by the wise measures and determination of Kanghi.

Before concluding this early portion of the long reign, on the mere threshold of which we as yet stand, it may be pertinent to describe how the descendants of Koshinga fared in their later endeavours to establish an independent kingdom in Formosa. The conquest of that island represented another incident in the task of establishing the Manchu authority on a firm footing.

When the chief Ching lost Amoy and with it his hold upon the mainland, he sank into a subordinate position; but his activity on the sea hardly showed any abatement in vigour. So late as the year 1680 Ching resumed his operations on the mainland and again acquired possession of Amoy. For a time his successes seemed remarkable, but they also served to increase the ardour of the Manchus, who spared no effort to secure his overthrow. After several delusive victories his troops were signally defeated, and Amoy and the

other towns on the coast were finally lost to him. Several of his best officers deserted him, and many of his men followed their example. Encouraged by this turn in the fortune of this war Kanghi refused to listen to Ching's propositions for peace, and ordered the invasion of Formosa. The Manchu fleet had before this period attained a certain degree of efficiency, and, being reinforced by a Dutch contingent and several vessels captured from the rebel force, it enjoyed a material advantage in numbers over that of the Formosan chief.

At this critical moment Ching died of over-indulgence, and numerous disorders broke out on his death as to who should be his successor. The Peking Court turned these dissensions to the best advantage. Their fleet seized Ponghu, the principal island of the Pescadore group, whence it was no difficult task for them to throw a force across to Formosa, and to establish themselves in one of its harbours.* Then the people surrendered without further resistance, for it was clear to them that the Manchus could be no longer resisted and that their triumph was decreed by Heaven.

In this case Kanghi felt he could afford to be merciful. The principal representative of Koshinga's family was spared and created a count. Those who

* Mr. Ross says they were delayed twelve days off the coast, and only succeeded in landing by means of a high tide. The people exclaimed, "The first Wang (Koshinga) got possession of Taiwan by a high tide. The fleet now comes in the same manner. It is the will of Heaven."

surrendered voluntarily were either rewarded or dismissed without further punishment; but all had to accept the badge of conquest, and wear the Manchu tail. Thus ended the brief existence of the free Chinese authority in Formosa which had continued twenty-three years after the first proclamation of Koshinga, on the expulsion of the Dutch from Taiwan. Kanghi thus attained both his desires, the overthrow of Wou Sankwei, and the suppression of the piratical power of Formosa. He was at last supreme both on land and on sea within the borders of the Empire.

CHAPTER XIV.

KANGHI'S RELATIONS WITH GALDAN.

Kanghi's position.—The Khalkas.—The Eleuths.—Galdan.—His early Life.—A younger Son.—His Ambition.—A Fratricide.—Resolves to enter the Church.—The Dalai Lama of Tibet.—Rejects Galdan.—Who returns to his People.—Establishes his Supremacy.—His Relations with China.—Mutual Embassies.—Determines to attack the Khalkas.—A Description of Galdan.—Kanghi's Proceedings.—The first mention of Feyanku.—Galdan conceals his Plans.—Dissensions among the Khalkas.—Kanghi's good Advice to them.—A Reconciliation.—Gerbillon and Pereira.—The Russians.—Fort Albazin.—Hostilities.—Chinese Successes.—Galdan's Grievances.—The Koutuktoo.—Galdan throws off the Mask.—Tse Wang Rabdan.—Galdan arrests the Chinese Envoys.—Kanghi's Proclamation.—War declared.—The Treaty of Nipchu.—Russia and China.—Great Military Preparations.—The Russian Alliance.—Galdan's victory on the Hourhoi.—Kanghi in the Field.—Chinese victory at Oulan Poutong.—A Peace.—Attempt to reconcile the various Combatants.—The Settlement only for the Time.

THE difficulty which had arisen with the Mongol chief Satchar warned Kanghi that he must be prepared to meet dangers from without as well as to encounter perils from within. If the Mongol tribes, who had helped his ancestors against the Chinese, and who had

derived some benefit and advantage from the Manchu conquest, could not be trusted to remain stanch in their allegiance, what sort of friendship could he expect from those other tribes whose homes lay in the interior of Asia, and whose predatory instincts were continually urging them to harry the rich border districts of China? Kanghi had taken such measures as were within his power to establish the virtual supremacy of his name among these nomadic hordes, who resembled, in everything save military efficiency, the warrior clans which had followed the fortunes of the great Mongol leaders in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Of these tribes the Khalkas, who prided themselves on their direct descent from Genghis, and whose pasturages were watered by those tributary streams of the Amour which had beheld the dawn of Mongol fame and power, made no demur to recognising the supremacy of the Manchu Emperor. They had long lost the ability to play any greater part on the wilds of Gobi than that of a small community of hardy and frugal shepherds, able and resolved to maintain their rights against the encroachments of their neighbours, but indifferent to any wider sway. Yet there still attached to their acts a higher significance among their kinsmen in consequence of the greatness of their origin; and the formal adhesion of the Khalkas to the Manchu cause meant that the great majority of the Mongols would thenceforth refrain from committing acts of unprovoked aggression on the Chinese borders.

Beyond the Mongols, in the region extending westwards to the provinces of Jungaria and Altyshahr,* there was another people or race, which, divided into four hordes, obeyed the commands of as many chiefs. The Eleuths, a Calmuck tribe, more remote from the scene of Manchu triumph than their Mongol neighbours, were indisposed to pay those marks of subordination which either Chinese vanity or Kanghi's policy demanded. When the Khalkas made their court at the Chinese capital the Eleuths still held aloof, and expressed their intention to maintain an attitude of indifference towards the great Power of the East.

This resolution of the Eleuths might have possessed little practical significance,† but for the appearance on the scene of one of those remarkable men who have risen at long intervals among these children of the desert, and who, out of unpromising materials and with scant resources, have founded a power of no slight proportions for the time that it endured. This individual, who now stands forward as a rival to Kanghi and as a competitor for empire with him—such was the exalted character of his ambition—was Galdan, chief, by descent, of one of the Eleuth clans and the leader, by virtue of his ability, of all who bore the name. To the elevation of his race as a great people

* Ili and Kashgar, and the dependent districts of both.

† There were doubts, too, about their unanimity, as an Eleuth prince had paid a visit to Chuntche's court. Pastoral rights had also been granted to other sections of the tribe by the Chinese Emperor.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 79.

Galdan devoted all his energy and ability. The prize for which he strove was a brilliant and attractive one, while the stake which for his part he laid down appeared in comparison insignificant. Victory assumed, under these circumstances, her most attractive colours, and defeat lost many of its terrors.

Galdan was the younger son of the most powerful chief of the Eleuths. His proud and eager spirit could not forgive the accident of birth, and chafing at a position of inferiority, he quitted the camp of his people to advance his fortunes in a different sphere. The ambitious, as well as the disappointed, seek the ranks of religion's ministers to advance their ends and to gratify the promptings of an imperious will under the cloak of spiritual fervour, for humanity has allowed without murmur to those who advocate the cause of heaven the unscrupulous resolution and the unyielding persistency that are condemned in the search of worldly ends. Such were the views of Galdan, who for a moment aspired to attain as a minister of religion that unquestioned sway which, as the chief of a nomadic people, the difference of a few months seemed destined to prevent his enjoying.

Over the whole of Buddhist Asia the fame of the Dalai Lama of Tibet spreads its gentle influence. The poor and scattered clans on the northern steppe believe in the benefits to be derived from that saintly personage's intercession quite as much as, and probably much more than, astute statesmen and rulers at Peking. The power of the Dalai Lama was exercised with less despotic sway over those, who regarded that incarnation

of an immortal spirit* as their highest religious dignitary, than that of the Pope of Rome; but it was none the less real as a matter of general belief and common acceptance. It was to Lhasa, or rather to the lamasery of Botala, that the young Eleuth chief turned his steps. His absence was not lengthy. Before his departure Galdan had quarrelled with some of his brothers,† and in the discussion that ensued had slain his full-brother Tsenka. This deed of violence precipitated his flight, but it also contributed to his prompt return. News of the crime reached the ears of the Dalai Lama, and the favour of admission to the ranks of the clergy of Tibet was refused to one coming with the stains of blood upon his hands. Galdan quitted Tibet and returned to the quarters of his race. Among a people accustomed to violence, his crime was easily forgotten, or lightly condoned by a brief absence. His return was hailed by those who knew that he came straight from the palace of the Dalai Lama, and he found that the reputation of having lived in the effulgence of that holy presence served him in almost as good stead as if his character were spotless. Then again he turned to the schemes of ambition which, ever uppermost in his brain, were to be attained either by fair means or by foul, and to which the superstition and the credulity of men were

* The spirit is supposed to pass from one Dalai to another. They are only the incarnation of this essence.

† Galdan was the second son by the principal wife. There were numerous other sons by wives of inferior rank.

likely to be as good stepping-stones as his own ability and nerve.*

Galdan's designs were carried out to the letter. He deposed the Khan who had been elected in his place after the murder of Tsenka, and as the next step decreed the death of all the members of his family whose opposition to his plans might be expected. This holocaust in the camp of the Eleuths terrified the people into a state of subjection, which it became Galdan's main object to make as light and durable as he could. Galdan had done enough for the moment towards strengthening his own position. He had now to consolidate his power by systematic encroachments on the lands of his neighbours; and as the preliminary to these latent designs he sent a mission, nominally of congratulation, but really of inquiry and investigation, to the Court of Kanghi. It arrived at the very moment when the rebellion of Wou Sankwei was at its height, and it returned before the death of that prince and the subsequent pacification of the south had taken place. The tale it brought back to Galdan was one, therefore, not of the power and resources of the Manchus, but of their weakness and embarrass-

* The Dalai Lama appears to have resolved to make as much use as he could of the temporal power gained by his former guest and protégé. Appak Khoja, the leader of the Aktaghluç faction in Kashgar, had been driven from his dominions and fled to Tibet. The Dalai Lama sent him with letters of recommendation to Galdan, and with a formal request to that prince to spare no exertion to replace him on the throne. Galdan, in 1678, took up the cause of Appak Khoja, drove his enemies out of Kashgar, and replaced him on the throne. Appak Khoja reigned for some years as Galdan's nominee at Yarkand.—See Howorth's "Mongols," vol. i. p. 623.

ments. These Central Asian envoys may well have been excused if they spread the rumour that the brave young Tartar ruler stood on the verge of ruin.

When Galdan received the report of his messengers he abandoned whatever intention he may have had of preserving the peace with the Chinese Empire. The opportunity of advancing his interests at its expense, for which he had long been on the look-out, seemed to have arrived, and he lost no time in beginning the encroachments over which he had long meditated. The Khalkas, who had given a willing and sincere recognition to the Manchu authority, presented the mark upon which he could most easily vent his simulated indignation and his deeply-felt ambition. They were within the reach of his power, and too remote to receive from China the aid which could alone enable them to resist his attack. The invasion of the Khalka districts formed the task undertaken by Galdan in his first campaign; but at the same time he sent troops in the direction of the Chinese frontier. The approach of his force induced many to flee within the Emperor's territory* and to seek the aid of his officials in recovering their possessions from an aggressor with no valid ground of complaint against them. Kanghi gave them permission to settle on the frontier, and provided them with a few necessaries. But at first he could not do more than watch the progress of events with vigilant attention, and this

* That is to say, they retired behind the Kirong, or the "artificial barrier" set up by the Mings against the Mongols after their expulsion from China.—Howorth, vol. i. p. 496.

he was always careful to do. His generals on the frontier were ordered to send spies into the territory of the Tartars, and from these* it was learnt that Galdan had established a formidable military power, and that he meditated extending his sway over all the regions adjacent to China.

While employed in the serious business of advancing his authority into the lands of the Khalkas, Galdan amused himself by frequently sending missions to Peking with the double object of increasing his information and of blinding the Emperor as to his plans. So little was known about the state of the regions beyond the Chinese frontier, that for a long time Galdan was able to keep the execution of his plans without the knowledge of the Chinese officials. So well did he combine the arts of vigilant activity in the field and of dissimulation in his diplomatic negotiations, that in the year 1679, when his encroachments on the Khalka country were beginning to assume tangible form, his ambassador at Peking was accorded a flattering reception, and returned to his master with the seal and patent of a khan.

Three years later Kanghi commissioned two of the principal officers attached to his person to proceed to the camp of Galdan to ascertain how far the disquieting rumours concerning his movements and military preparations were true. At the same time he sent

* Another envoy, sent in 1679 at the request of Galdan, described him as "being thirty-six years of age and with a countenance which alone inspired terror, severe in character, and with a great weakness for wine."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 86.

other envoys* to the Khalkas, and among these may be noted Feyanku, then a young captain in the body-guard, but afterwards one of the most celebrated of Chinese generals. These diplomatic agents were the bearers of the usual number of presents for the princes to whom they were about to proceed; but their instructions were of the simplest kind. One and all of the potentates whom they visited were to acknowledge the supremacy of the Chinese Emperor and to renew the formal expression of their allegiance at stated intervals. Of these missions, the result only of that to Galdan had any practical significance.

The laws of hospitality are sacred and exacting. Galdan, enraged at heart at the pretensions of a monarch whose power he affected to despise, lavished on Kanghi's envoys all the resources of his people and circumstances. The arrival of an embassy in his poor country from the rich and powerful Emperor of China was an event, he said, that would be handed down to posterity as the most glorious of his reign; yet he was no doubt thinking that his relation to Kanghi might become very similar to those of the early Manchu leaders with the last of the Ming emperors. The Chinese envoys did not succeed in obtaining any of those formal concessions which they were expected to bring back from him, and the indifference of Galdan's attitude was enhanced by the unaffected cordiality of the pledges of friendship given by the

* A list of these with their names and titles occupies two pages of Mailla.

Khalkas. To this they were impelled both by their apprehensions of Galdan, and also by the divisions and rivalries which disturbed the harmony of their assemblies.

The dissensions of the Khalkas afforded Galdan his opportunity, and when Kanghi succeeded in 1687 in effecting a reconciliation between these princelets, who swore before an image of Buddha to keep the peace among themselves, Galdan resorted to all the artifices within his power to disturb the harmony of this arrangement and to revive the feuds and discord that many hoped had been happily healed. Kanghi addressed them by letter* in terms which sought to bring before them all the risk and attendant evils of the course they were pursuing; but his principal aim was to check the pretensions and encroachments of Galdan. Early in the following year, therefore, he sent a new embassy into the Khalka country; and he attached so much importance to its success, that

* He wrote as follows:—"I learn with regret that you meditate renewing your old quarrels. I have already proved to you that I seek to promote your interests not less than those of China. You will doubtless remember that, in the sixteenth year of my reign, I bound you, both Mongols and Eleuths, to draw together the bonds of a sincere friendship. Your unanimous reply was that, united under the same law and respecting the orders of the Dalai Lama, who advised you to live at peace one with another, you were disposed to stifle every source of discord. That event is still so recent that it cannot be effaced from your memory. . . . The war that you meditate undertaking cannot fail to have disastrous consequences for one or other of you, and to be attended by the loss of an infinity of lives. The blood of one's subjects should be precious; the sovereign, who recklessly wastes it, does not deserve to be called the father of his people."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 110.

he entrusted the mission to some of his nearest and most intimate advisers. Prince Sosan, a captain of the body-guard and minister of state, was placed at the head of the embassy, and with him was associated Tong Kwekang, another official of high rank, and Kanghi's maternal uncle. With these Chinese dignitaries also went the two European priests, Gerbillon* and Pereira, as interpreters, for to the complications among the Khalkas there had been added a dispute with the Russian colonists who had crossed a continent to find a fertile place of settlement on the banks of the Amour.

The Russians had constructed along the southern border of their new possession a line of fortified block-houses, but, as their presence in this remote quarter did not apparently disturb the Chinese, they soon began to fortify their stations on a more pretentious and formidable scale. A fort was erected at Albazin, a place on the upper course of the Amour, and the Russian authorities in this quarter anticipated being able to derive substantial benefit from the disturbed state of the country held by the Khalkas as well as from the rival pretensions of Galdan and the Emperor Kanghi. In this expectation they were doomed to disappointment, for the Chinese troops sent into the neighbourhood by Kanghi,

* Gerbillon's account of this mission, and of seven subsequent journeys into Tartary, will be found recorded in the fourth volume of Du Halde's great work. This is the most graphic and interesting contemporary description we have of this part of Asia.

with the aid of the surrounding tribes, fell upon the garrison of Albazin, captured the place, and carried off a band of Russian prisoners to Peking, where their descendants still remain. The Russians returned and re-established themselves at Albazin with that obstinacy which is one of their characteristics, and which they derive from their Tartar origin. Hostilities recommenced and languished throughout the year, and then it was that Kanghi, more anxious to crush Galdan than to embroil himself in an indefinite quarrel with the Russians, accepted the overtures* that came to him from the Muscovites for a pacific arrangement. This embassy had almost reached the scene of its proposed diplomatic labours, when an event compelled its sudden return. War had at last broken out between the Eleuths and the Khalkas, and Galdan was in the act of invading the very territory whither Kanghi's representatives had gone to assert his right against the Russians. Although the diplomatists were recalled, the negotiations were only suspended, and not broken off. In the following year it may be stated that they were brought to an auspicious termination by the treaty of Nipchu.

Galdan had on his side speculated on the possible advantages he might derive from the appearance of these Russians, and possessed with the idea that it must tend to his advantage, he resolved to defer no longer his open rupture with the Khalkas. Even in these

* Theodore Alexovitz Branki, son of the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, visited Peking in 1688.—Mailla.

uncivilised regions, where the law of might supersedes every other consideration, the moral sentiment of the human race requires that some cloak shall be given to acts of wanton aggression. Galdan specified his grounds of complaint against the chief of the Khalka princes. He had participated in the murder of some of Galdan's kinsmen, and to all demands of redress had turned a deaf ear. There does not seem to have been much truth in the allegation, but it served its turn. Galdan had long resolved to overrun the country of his neighbours, and one excuse was as good as another. Yet in attacking the Khalkas the thought uppermost in his mind was how best he could injure Kanghi.

Chepsuntanpa, one of the principal Khalka princes, upon whom the Emperor had conferred the religious title of Koutuktoo,* sent the first certain intelligence of Galdan's movements to China. With a force of 30,000 men he had overrun several of the districts belonging to these chieftains, and the Koutuktoo wrote that unless the Emperor promptly sent assistance it would be impossible for them to escape the yoke of the Eleuths. This bad news was fully confirmed by

* The Koutuktoo is a title of high sacerdotal rank in the Buddhist religion. Timkowsky ("Travels," vol. i. p. 23) tells us that they hold the first rank after the Dalai Lama. There are ten of them in all, and one resides among the Mongols at Ourga. Chepsuntanpa held this last-named office. The Koutuktoo of Ourga is also known as the Taranath Lama. The Chinese have reserved to themselves and still assert the right of nominating the successor to this high dignity. Lastly, it may be added that the Koutuktoo is supposed to be an undying spirit, his essence passing from one person to another.

Kanghi's own envoys, who dwelt upon the panic that had seized the minds of the Khalkas in consequence of the rapid successes of Galdan. Kanghi at once gave orders for the reinforcement of the garrison in the north-west, and summoned eight of the Mongol banners to take the field with their contingents. Shortly afterwards not feeling certain that these preparations would suffice in so critical an emergency, the Emperor moved a portion of the Leaoutung garrison, and some of the Manchu banners, nearer to the scene of the threatened fray.

Galdan was now more indifferent to appearances than he had ever been before, and he openly declared that he aimed at the destruction of the Khalka independence, and that nothing short of the death or capture of their two foremost princes would satisfy his intentions.* He did not even refrain from putting forward a grievance against the Chinese Government for its having allowed several of the Khalka princes, and their followers, to take refuge within the limits of the Empire. Kanghi's reply to these pretensions was to allot the Khalkas settlements in the Kirong region, and to receive them into the ranks of his subjects, on the same footing as the other Mongol tribes. That Galdan was not wholly in the wrong, or at least that he had succeeded in giving his case a semblance of

* "Know," he said to the envoys of the Dalai Lama, "that I have resolved to make war during the next five or six years with all my forces. I wish to destroy the Khalkas, and I shall not rest content until I have seen at my feet Chepsuntanpa humiliated and loaded with chains."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 120.

right, is evident on the admission of Kanghi himself;* but the unbridled extent of his ambition was clearly evident at all times.

In 1689 the question in dispute between these potentates had resolved itself into whether Kanghi would surrender the refugee Khalkas,† or whether Galdan would agree to waive his demands on this point. Neither party was likely to make any substantial concession, and, unless a compromise could be effected, war was inevitable. Galdan's pretensions received the unexpected support of the Dalai Lama, who sent one of his attendants to Peking to urge on Kanghi the advisability of complying with the demand of the Eleuth prince for the surrender of his personal enemies, the Koutuktoo and his companion. Kanghi refused to listen to the advice of his spiritual friend and correspondent, for it would ill become him, he wrote, as a great prince not to show consideration for the unfortunate. At this stage Galdan met with an unlooked-for check in a disastrous defeat which he suffered at the hands of his neighbour and nephew, Tse Wang Rabdan,‡ with whose future career the development of this Central Asian question will have much to do.

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 124.

† In this year Kanghi placed the Khalkas under two chiefs, whose appointment required his ratification.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 123.

‡ Son of Galdan's brother Tsenka, whose murder has been mentioned. To that crime Galdan had added as injuries to this prince the carrying off of his affianced bride, and the murder of his own brother. Tse Wang Rabdan by this victory avenged, so far as he could, those wrongs, and regained possession of his bride.

Galdan must have quickly recovered from the effects of this reverse, although report had painted its gravity to the Emperor in vivid colours; for the very next year, 1690, he took the first step of hostility that he had yet ventured upon against China. The act of hostility to which he resorted was to arrest the Chinese envoys staying at his camp, thus hoping to secure an equivalent for the eventual recovery of the objects of his personal animosity. In face of this outrage and insult all Kanghi's * desire for peace, and dislike for an arduous war, disappeared; and placing three armies in the field he directed one to march with all despatch to the Kerulon. But Galdan was expert in this form of warfare, and, knowing the country well, long evaded the pursuit of the Chinese forces. His own difficulties,

* Kanghi sent Galdan the following letter:—"My first duty is to protect the weak against oppression, and to cause peace to reign as much among foreigners as among my own people. I carry them equally in my heart. War is a scourge which we cannot take too many pains to avert, since the misfortune and ruin of peoples are its necessary consequences; and this is what has impelled me to so often exhort you to adopt peaceful sentiments and to abandon all thought of continuing your hostilities. You replied that, anxious to assist my intentions, which have as their object only the good of humanity, and also to comply with my orders, you would breathe nought save peace. Yet the news reaches me from all sides that you have again commenced to disturb the Khalkas. . . . Is this a proof of your pacific disposition? Is it not rather a formal declaration of war? . . . The best part that you can take is to without delay withdraw your troops, to set my envoys at liberty, and to send them back accompanied by one of your first officers, whom you will authorise to give me an explanation of your conduct. You may have seen from mine what pain I have in deciding to adopt a vigorous course; but if you compel me to draw the sword from the scabbard I shall not sheathe it again until I have exacted vengeance for the contempt with which you have treated my advice."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 141-2.

however, remained so numerous and grave, that it was impossible for him to collect all his strength to resist the Chinese. His neighbour, Tse Wang Rabdan, continued to be a thorn in his side; and his best chance appeared to be an alliance with the Russians, although they had nominally settled all their misunderstandings with the Chinese by the Treaty of Nipchu.* The Russians, whatever their inclination may have been, did not possess the available power to help the Eleuths, but, with the object of keeping themselves as well informed as they could about the affairs of their neighbours, they sent an officer on a visit to Galdan's camp. The mere rumour of a possible alliance between Galdan and the Russians roused Kanghi to acts of unprecedented energy and activity. The whole of the northern army, composed of the picked troops of the Eight Manchu Banners, the Forty-nine Mongol Banners, and the Chinese auxiliaries, was ordered to proceed across the Mongolian steppe, and an expedition

* The treaty of Nipchu (or Nerchinsk) was negotiated at the fort of that name near the Amour, on the 3rd of September 1689. Great importance was attached to these negotiations by the Emperor, who sent a brilliant embassy to meet the Russian envoys. There were nearly 9,000 persons in all serving in some capacity or other in connection with this mission. The greater portion proceeded by sea and up the river Amour; but Gerbillon, Pereira, and the ambassadors travelled by land. The negotiations lasted a month, and when they concluded the Chinese were so far successful that Fort Albazin was destroyed, and from that time to the present there have been no open hostilities between the two empires in this quarter, although their relations have several times been strained. The editor of Mailla gives interesting details of the attendant circumstances.—See Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 125-32, and Gerbillon in Du Halde.

of formidable proportions was thus fitted out for the destruction of Galdan.

Meantime Galdan, although his main hope centred in the Russian alliance, and notwithstanding that his necessities had obliged him to kill most of his horses to satisfy the requirements of his followers, had not remained inactive. Collecting all his forces, he made a rapid advance into the territory under Chinese authority, attacked the advanced Chinese army under President Horni on the river Hourhoei, and after a stubborn engagement compelled it to quit the field, of which he remained the undisputed master. This reverse proved that the military power which Galdan had collected during these years was far from insignificant. Considerable as it already was for defence, but a few more years of inaction on the part of Kanghi were required to make it formidable for offence. The defeat of Horni on the banks of the Hourhoei proved this much, if it did not also show that Galdan was resolved to give the reins to his ambition in the direction of China.

Galdan's victory did not render him so elate that he failed to recognise that the chances in the war with China were overwhelmingly against him; and the extensive preparations made by Kanghi warned him that it would be wise to avert the coming storm by timely concessions. He, therefore, sent another envoy to Peking, where the Emperor accorded him a honourable reception, despite the fact that his own officers remained in confinement. Although Kanghi still protested his desire for a peaceful solution of the question, the

only terms on which he would treat were the laying down of his arms by Galdan. At the same time that the Eleuth envoy left Peking, Kanghi set out from his capital to place himself in nearer communication with his army.

Kanghi's brother, Yu Tsing Wang, was appointed to the chief command, and his instructions were to bring Galdan to an engagement as promptly as he could, and to wipe out the stain of the defeat on the Hourhoei by either the overthrow or the capture of the Eleuth prince. Although the Emperor was compelled by the state of his health to return to Peking, active operations were continued with unabated vigour, and Kanghi had very soon the satisfaction of receiving the news of a decisive victory won by his generals. The battle was fought at Oulan Poutong, where Yu Tsing Wang fell upon the Eleuth camp, which had been formed at the foot of a mountain, with a wood on one side and a small stream on the other.* The Chinese attacked Galdan in this advantageous position, and, although the Eleuths fought with much of the valour to be expected from men engaged in defending a popular cause, the former were completely victorious. The victors suffered considerable loss in this encounter, and among the slain was Prince Kiukiu, an uncle of the Emperor Kanghi.

* The general's own report in Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 147-9. Gerbillon's account (Du Halde, vol. iv. p. 175) makes the result appear more indecisive. He says the Eleuths agreed after the first day's action to retreat, and that they suffered very severely from want on the line of march.

This disaster made Galdan again anxious to come to terms with Kanghi, and negotiations were begun between him and Yu Tsing Wang. At first Galdan endeavoured to circumvent the intentions of the Chinese by negotiating on a basis from which his personal enemies the Khalka princes were excluded ; but he was dealing with a race fully his equal in the art of diplomatic fence, and, as the material argument of superior force was against him, he had really in the end no prudent choice save to give in his unqualified surrender. Galdan sent the Emperor a formal expression of fealty and obedience, and Kanghi in return wrote him a letter of forgiveness. This was in the year 1690.

A few months later, Kanghi sent Galdan the sum of one thousand taels for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings of his people ; but, although these arrangements were apparently satisfactory, very little confidence seems to have been felt in their enduring. Kanghi himself regarded the treaty as a hollow truce ; but as matters stood he could congratulate himself on the conclusion of his first contest with Galdan. He had certainly curbed the pride of the Eleuths, and given security to the Khalkas.

CHAPTER XV.

KANGHI'S SECOND WAR WITH GALDAN.

The second Rupture.—The Khalka Assemblage.—Gerbillon's Narrative.—Murder of a Chinese Envoy.—Galdan's Policy.—And Preparations.—Kanghi still desirous of Peace.—His Letter.—Galdan adopts Mahomedanism.—The rival Lamas.—“*Ambition became his only God.*”—The Kortsin Mongols.—Kanghi's Plan.—Military Preparations.—Inducements to enlist.—Feyanku in Chief Command.—The Feast of Lanterns.—An imposing Ceremony.—Two Armies in the Field.—Kanghi marches in Person.—The Emperor's Prayer to Heaven.—The Difficulties of the Desert.—Great Losses of Chinese Army.—Feyanku reaches the Tula.—Encamps at Chowmodo.—Galdan's Overtures to Russia.—Promptness his only Chance of Safety.—Leaves Kobdo.—Attacks Feyanku.—Three hours' Fighting.—Galdan defeated.—His Loss.—Flight.—The Consequences of Victory of Chowmodo.—Galdan's subsequent Plans.—His Death.—The great Desert Chiefs.—Kanghi's Views.—Expectations and Desires.—The Galdan Episode.—Not the Settlement of the Central Asian Trouble.—Sacrifice to Heaven.

KANGHI'S anticipations were soon verified. Galdan had not abandoned the ambitious dreams of his prime, and the mistrust of his intentions shown by the Chinese authorities supplied him with some excuse, if not justification, for renewing his aggressions in the

direction of the Khalka districts. On the advice of his ministers, the Emperor had not only left a numerous garrison quartered in their country, but he held two bodies of troops in readiness to march at the shortest notice. Nor was this all. A summons was issued to the Khalka tribes to assemble on the plain of Dolonor* for inspection by the Emperor, and the commotion produced by this ceremony† caused a great stir throughout the steppe. The principal chiefs were granted further titles of honour, and rich presents were bestowed upon all according to their rank. When Kanghi returned to his capital he could congratulate himself on the cordiality which marked his relations with his Mongol subjects and vassals. Galdan alone held aloof from these transactions, and showed by his attitude that he regarded with little sympathy these measures for the extension westward of Chinese authority. Galdan's disapproval became more emphatic in consequence of the diplomatic negotiations which had been for some time in progress between the Emperor and Tse Wang Rabdan his nephew and sworn personal enemy.

The question of their mutual relations might long have remained in this uncertain state without provoking a fresh appeal to arms but for an unfortunate occurrence which rendered war inevitable, and which precipitated the crisis that had long been imminent.

* The Seven Springs, situated near the ruins of Changtu.

† Gerbillon accompanied Kanghi and took a prominent part in supervising the necessary arrangements. He has left a graphic account of the scene, for which see Du Halde, tom. iv. p. 174, &c.

This event was the murder of one of Kanghi's envoys. The messenger had been commissioned to proceed to the camp of Tse Wang Rabdan, and, while strengthening the friendly understanding with that potentate, he was also charged to impress upon him the importance of preserving peace in his region, for Tse Wang Rabdan had several times evinced a disposition to bring his feud with Galdan to a settlement by the summary means most in accordance with the customs of his race, and which he had already found to answer so well. The Chinese envoy effected his journey in safety across the desert of Gobi, and the small escort of sixty men, which the Viceroy of Shensi gave him as a body-guard, sufficed to afford him protection against the nomad tribes who regarded that region as being under their peculiar patronage. He had almost reached the friendly shelter of the town of Hami, when he was beset by a large band either of Galdan's immediate followers or of tribesmen subject to his authority. Plunder appears to have been their main object, as it is improbable that Galdan gave them instructions to commit this outrage, for the very simple reason that he had himself just despatched an envoy to Peking. The result, however, was plain enough. The Chinese emissary and the greater number of his escort were slain, their baggage and the presents destined for Tse Wang Rabdan were carried off, and the fame of the achievement tended to enhance the reputation of Galdan in the eyes of the tribes as an individual not afraid to assert his power in the teeth of the Emperor of China himself.

Kanghi was either so desirous of peace, or so fully persuaded that Galdan would accept no alternative short of war, that, despite this outrage, he did not depart from his attitude of studied moderation. Galdan had broken the laws held sacred by all nations, and he could not but feel overwhelmed by the contrast of his conduct with that of the Emperor, who seemed anxious only for the preservation of peace. Kanghi still held open the door for the Eleuth prince to make reparation for his crimes, and to show that he desired to behave better in the future; but in the same letter*

* Kanghi's letter is a very fine composition. The following are the principal passages translated from Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 166-7:—"I learnt that, notwithstanding your oaths, you and Tse Wang Rabdan cannot live at peace with one another; the instant I was informed of your disagreements I took steps to remove them. I sent one of the officers of my tribunal to be the bearer of words of peace; and your people, like mere savages, have committed the inhuman act of massacring him! I call upon you to judge whether an act so atrocious does not demand vengeance, and whether it can be approved of by a prince who ought to set his subjects an example of morality. The letter, which my envoy Mati was bearing to Tse Wang Rabdan, has, without doubt, fallen into your hands; with what shame ought you not to have been overwhelmed when you read it? You have violated with effrontery the rights of mankind. The ambassadors of princes, even though they may be at open war, are among all nations regarded as sacred persons. After the battle of Oulan Poutong, how did I act towards your envoys? Have you the slightest ground for complaint at the manner in which I treated them? . . . You ask me to send back the Khalkas to their ancient home? What! You demand that I should again place them at the mercy of an implacable enemy? What opinion would you have of my humanity? Recall the oath with which you sealed our last treaty of peace. Would you, then, refuse to recognise myself as your Sovereign and the Dalai Lama as your spiritual head? You no longer respect either his wise counsel or my commands. What ought I to think of conduct which proclaims you false to both your oath and your allegiance?"

offering the opportunity of redeeming a fault, he resorted to the threat that unless Galdan promptly made amends for so many outrages, he would come with arms in his hands to exact due punishment.

Nor was Galdan slow for his part in taking such measures as he could, both for the attainment of his objects against the Khalkas and also for the defence of his possessions when the long-threatened storm from China should burst upon him. He sent emissaries among the Mongol tribes to sow distrust of the Emperor's intentions in their regard, and to dwell on the advisability of uniting in a single confederacy all the clans of the Chinese frontier. Nor did he stop with these diplomatic overtures and this declaration of hostility. The man who had once thought of taking high rank as a lama of Buddhism, now resolved to repudiate a religious belief which had tended rather to embarrass than to strengthen his position, for at every stage of his dispute with China he had been met with the menaces of his spiritual head, the Dalai Lama of Tibet. In 1693 he took the decisive step of proclaiming himself a convert to Mahomedanism, by means of which he hoped to gain the assistance of not only the Tartar tribes, but also of the Mussulman colonies in China. At the same time he showed no disposition to break with the Dalai Lama personally, whose moral support he strove to enlist in his behalf by promises to maintain his supremacy against the encroachments which rumour

I now desire to finally warn you that unless your repentance follows close upon your fault, I shall come with arms in my hands to exact from you the fullest reparation for so many outrages."

attributed to Kanghi's *protégé*, the Koutuktoo, Chep-suntanpa. Galdan's policy was thus based on certain high pretensions, and he resorted to any artifice to supply the deficiencies of his position, and to procure some substitute for want of numbers, and inferiority in material resources. The Chinese proclaimed that "ambition became his only God,"* and that "to it he sacrificed even the religion of his fathers."

Between neighbours thus situated it could not be long before frequent conflicts would ensue on borders which were but vaguely ascertained, and at points to which both sides advanced equal claims. Kanghi's general, Feyanku, who had risen so high in the service that he now held the post of chief commander on the Shensi frontier, sent reports of several of these combats, and he was not less desirous than his master of demanding the reparation necessary for the satisfaction of the military honour of his country. Kanghi continued to collect troops, and held several meetings with the chief of the Kortsin Mongols, the most powerful tribe of Mongolia, to arrange for a joint expedition against Galdan. These interviews took place in the year 1695, when Kanghi had so far lost patience with his neighbour that he had resolved to effect his complete overthrow. Nothing short of the utter and irretrievable ruin of Galdan would satisfy the imperial wrath.†

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 174.

† Kanghi's principal address to the Kortsin chief was as follows. It may be styled his indictment of Galdan. "Galdan, you are well aware, has long trampled on all the laws of honour and of honesty; wicked, deceitful, and turbulent of character, we could never hope

While Kanghi thus sought to lead his enemy into a trap, the extensive preparations he made for war showed that his determination was fixed to compass the destruction of Galdan—even at the cost of an extensive and hazardous expedition into the recesses of Central Asia. It was not until the year 1696 that he had perfected his arrangements and brought together a force specially raised and equipped* for a protracted war beyond the frontier. The principal command of this great army was entrusted to Feyanku, who left his post on the frontier to receive from his sovereign the personal instructions he desired to give for the conduct of the war. The

for tranquillity so long as he survives. I have sworn his ruin; I owe it both to my glory and also to my people, whom he has annoyed and oppressed. This is the object of the great war-preparations which at present occupy me. I know that the news will no sooner have reached him than he will seek to escape us by flight, and that he will only await the withdrawal of my troops to recommence his hostilities. And here is the plan which, after the experience I have had of his conduct, I have resolved upon in order to circumvent this wicked man. I have learnt that Galdan has solicited your alliance; you must assume the appearance of complying with his request; write and tell him that you are at his disposal with your ten banners, and that on his approaching the frontiers of the empire you will pass over to his side. I have no doubt that he will fall into the trap, when suddenly attacking him with all our troops we shall indubitably take him prisoner.” —Mailla, vol. xi. p. 177. Kanghi, to cement this understanding, took off his cloak and placed it on the neck of the chief of the Kortsin Mongols.

* Special pay and provision for the widows and orphans of the slain were guaranteed to the volunteers for this war. Artillery was constructed for the campaign, and camels were collected, not merely to transport it, but also to carry it during battle. A “flying artillery,” in the shape of a camel corps, was thus organised. Many thousand suits of cotton mail were manufactured, and with this really efficient armour all the cavalry and many of the infantry were protected.

importance of the occasion was marked by an imposing ceremony at Peking on the eve of the great national holiday, known as the Feast of Lanterns,* when China old and young gives itself over to rejoicings and festivities that recall the Saturnalia of the ancients.

All the mandarins to be employed in the war, the special corps of artillery, cavalry, and infantry upon whose efficiency so much care and forethought had been expended, and the body of commissaries who had been trained for the supply services with much prudence and knowledge of war, were assembled in a double line along a parade extending between the principal gates of the city. The Emperor, surrounded by his court functionaries and the principal officials of his government, took up his position on a raised platform from which the whole scene could be surveyed. His heart might well have swelled with pride at this spectacle of the chivalry of a brave race, and at the power displayed before him of a great Empire. When Kanghi had carefully surveyed the serried lines of his troops, and the attentive and respectful groups of his ministers and generals, and as soon as the noise of the trumpets, proclaiming to

* The Feast of Lanterns is celebrated on the 15th day of the first moon of the first month (*i.e.* towards the end of February), and fourteen days after the anniversary of New Year's day. Just as the latter ceremony partakes of a more religious and formal character than the former, so does the Feast of Lanterns represent the great festive holiday of the Chinese year. A full description of this national festival is given by Grosier in his "Description de la Chine," tom. v. pp. 386-9, and few books of travel in China do not contain some reference to it.

the capital the presence of the Emperor, had ceased, Feyanku approached his sovereign. Then Kanghi handed him the cup of wine, which Feyanku received on his knees, and which, having descended from the steps of the throne, he quaffed in the full view of the thousands of spectators. Having thus drunk success to his master's cause and confusion to all his enemies, Feyanku retired. Precisely the same ceremony was performed by each of his lieutenant-generals, and then by the subordinate officers of the army, who approached, ten at a time, the steps of the throne. Success having been thus drunk to the army charged with the overthrow of Galdan, the final preparations for the opening of the war were completed. Feyanku left the capital with his reinforcements to assume the active command in the field, and Kanghi, eager to compass the overthrow of his enemy, set to work to raise a second army, of which he proposed to take the command in person.

While Feyanku was hurrying towards the west to begin operations from the side of Kansuh, Kanghi was busily employed in drawing together from the garrison of Peking and also from the Manchu Banners another army, with which he proclaimed his intention of himself proceeding against the Eleuths. That opinions were divided among his ministers on the subject of these campaigns in a remote and little-known region may be judged from the open disapprobation with which the latter announcement was received. The censors, ministers of state, and other great functionaries proceeded in a body to

impress upon Kanghi the inadvisability of his taking the field. They were thanked for their solicitude, but the Emperor's intentions* remained unchanged. The departure of the second army, which was to follow the route through Kukukoto,† was fixed for

* On the eve of his departure, Kanghi addressed the following prayer to the Almighty in the Temple of Heaven:—"The thirty-fifth year of the reign of Kanghi, and the 27th day of the second moon. Receive my homage, protect the humblest of your subjects, Sovereign Heaven, supreme Emperor! With confidence, but respect, I invoke your aid in the war that I find myself compelled to undertake. You have already showered favours upon me. An innumerable people recognise my power, and in my person the results of your extraordinary protection have been most markedly demonstrated. I admit in silence and respect your benefits; I do not know how to adequately express the gratitude which penetrates to my heart. My most ardent desire has ever been to see the peoples of my Empire, and even foreign nations, enjoy all the advantages of peace. Galdan destroys my dearest hopes; he sows disorder everywhere. He tramples under foot your laws, and despises the commands of his Sovereign who holds your place here on earth. He is both the most false and the most wicked of men. You have granted me one victory over him; I have defeated and reduced him to the last extremity. His misfortunes have brought little alteration to his course of conduct. For open violence he has only substituted intrigue and cabal. He scoffs at the most sacred oaths. The object of hatred to the human race, he has, O Heaven, beyond doubt, merited your anger! The only design which impels me to take up arms is to avenge earth and to punish his crimes. I hold from you the right to make war upon the wicked. In order to fulfil this duty, I am about to march at the head of my troops, which I intend dividing into several bodies in order to surround Galdan on all sides. My departure is fixed for a certain day. Prostrated before you, I implore your support, and I offer up this sacrifice animated with the hope of drawing down upon myself some of your most marked favours. But one vow have I resolutely formed, and that is to bestow the blessing of peace throughout the vast territory over which you have placed me."—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 186-8.

† Kukukoto, a place of great strategical importance, situated beyond the Great Wall and at a short distance from Taitong in Shansi. The name signifies the Blue Town.

the day month after the ceremony attending the appointment of Feyanku.

The difficulties incident to campaigning in a sterile country compelled the further division of the expedition, and the task of effecting the overthrow of Galdan was finally entrusted to four armies,* of which Feyanku commanded the western and Kanghi in person the eastern. Of the march across the desert from Kukukoto towards Kobdo, where Galdan had established his head-quarters, we fortunately possess details from the narrative of the priest Gerbillon,† who was among the personal attendants of the Emperor on this occasion. Despite the difficulties encountered, and the vastness of the distances to be traversed in this portion of the campaign, the Chinese armies succeeded in making good their way to the upper course of the Kerulon, where they were in the immediate vicinity of Galdan's territory. Several thousands of lives had been lost, and more than one detachment had been compelled to call a halt or even to beat a retreat; but notwithstanding these disadvantages an overwhelming force of Chinese had made good their way across the desert. Galdan's main defence had been shown to be of little avail, and, unless he could establish some more solid claim

* The first of these was under Feyanku. It numbered about 35,600 men; the second, under Kanghi, 37,700; the third, under Sapsu, 35,400. The strength of the fourth division is not given; but, including the vast body of attendants, the total number could not have fallen much short of 1,000,000 men, according to Mr. Howorth.

† See his narrative in tom. iv. of Du Halde.

to success on the field of battle, it was clear that his ruin was a matter that could not be long averted. Feyanku, after a march through the desert of more than three months' duration, had pitched his camp near the source of the Tula.* Only 10,000 soldiers remained available for active service, and this body was reinforced by 2,000 more troops, who represented all that remained of another corps. These 12,000 men were placed by their able and gallant commander in a fortified position within the Mongol camping-district of Chowmodo.

Galdan has been represented in the character of a formidable antagonist, and the question naturally suggests itself, what had he been doing while this storm was developing portentous proportions upon his eastern borders? We have seen that he had retired to a certain distance from the limits of his possessions. The Chinese found on the banks of the affluents of the Amour the traces of the camps which he had destroyed in order to concentrate his resources for the defence of the permanent camp or town of Kobdo.† Either before or about this time Galdan had endeavoured to incite the powerful chief of the

* The Tula is a tributary of the Ortchon, which flows into the Selinga. Its importance is derived from the fact that the town of Ourga is situated on its banks.

† Kobdo (situated in N. lat. 48 nearly, and E. long. 91° 30') will be found near a river of the same name, flowing into the Kara Su. The most recent accounts of this place are given by the Russian travellers Morozof and Potanin, who visited it in 1872 and 1876 respectively. The Khoshotes are described as "a numerous and wealthy tribe" by Mr. Ney Elias, whose adventurous journey through Mongolia still remains unsurpassed.

Kortsin Mongols to join him in a general Mongol league against Kanghi. The scheme was rejected by either the good sense or the fidelity of that prince, who, it will be remembered, had been put up to simulate a sympathy with the plans of the Eleuth. But in consequence of the open state of war, Kanghi had abandoned that intrigue, and now Galdan's schemes only served to increase his indignation and to whet his ardour. But it was towards Russia that Galdan mainly looked for the support which would enable him to make head against the superior power of China. He even went so far as to draw up a scheme for the invasion and conquest of that country, but the essential part of the arrangement was that Russia should send a contingent of 60,000 men. In this century we know something of the slight control possessed at St. Petersburg over the authorities in Central Asia. In the days of Kanghi there was not so much as the pretence of that control exercised; yet it is not to be supposed that the mere handful of Russian colonists in the Siberian solitudes ever seriously entertained the idea of entering upon hostilities on a large scale with the Chinese. To humour Galdan supplied an easy means of occupying the attention of their neighbours, and Galdan's own wants and apprehensions led him to augur from the observations made by the few Russians with whom he came into contact that the amount of support he might expect from them was much greater than could by any possibility have been afforded to him. The hopes of Russian support were soon shown to be

delusive, and Galdan could find no better hope than in the difficulties of the desert barrier which protected his territories, and in such resistance as his band of followers, weakened by the indifference of Tse Wang Rabdan, could oppose. The progress of the Chinese armies across the desert, made though it was at the cost of a great expenditure of life, showed him that the former hope was no longer tenable, and that it only remained for him to make the most of the forces at his disposal, and to resist with all his strength the invader.

The situation was indeed desperate; but there still remained a possibility that the Chinese might be so far exhausted by the labour of having traversed the barren region of Gobi that it would be possible for Galdan to overwhelm one of their detachments before the whole of the army had been able to combine on the banks of the Kerulon. In a prompt attack lay Galdan's sole chance of safety, and, while Kanghi was employed in recruiting his troops in the country of the Northern Khalkas, the Eleuth chieftain advanced as fast as he could from Kobdo, and threw himself upon the Chinese entrenchments at Chowmodo.

At the very moment when Galdan formed this desperate resolve the Chinese commanders were so much embarrassed by the difficulty of obtaining supplies that it seemed impossible for them to maintain their positions. The advisability of retreat was under discussion when Galdan's movement rescued Feyanku from a dilemma in which it seemed next to impossible to save both his military honour and the

lives of his soldiers. Few of the incidents of this battle have been preserved. Little more is known of its details than that Galdan assumed the offensive, while Feyanku, having dismounted his cavalry, long contented himself with standing on the defensive. The battle had lasted for nearly three hours when Feyanku gave the signal for attack. The Eleuths made but a brief stand against the onset of their more disciplined opponents, and Galdan, seeing that the day was lost, fled with a mere handful of his followers, leaving his camp and baggage in the hands of the victor. Two thousand Eleuths were slain, and the character of the struggle may be inferred from the fact that the Chinese took only one hundred prisoners, of whom most were women and children. The principal wife of Galdan was among the killed, his army was scattered and reduced in numbers, while that chief himself, after aspiring to be the undisputed ruler on the steppe, became a fugitive glad to hide himself in its remote recesses.

The victory of Chowmodo came like an unexpected God-send to the Celestials, for, on the very eve of its attainment, it seemed as if all the expense and trouble to which Kanghi had been put were to result in nothing decisive. Feyanku's success* removed further cause of disquietude, and enabled Kanghi to return to Peking, leaving behind him the order to pursue

* It also relieved the Chinese troops from the immediate pressure to which they had been reduced, as a very large number of cattle and sheep were taken among the spoil of Galdan's camp.

Galdan with the utmost vigour, as the results of the war could only be considered partial so long as he remained at large.

The overthrow at Chowmodo marked the destruction of the power which Galdan had set up among the nomad and pastoral tribes of his region, and it also showed that the end of his career was approaching. There is no need to enter into the extremities to which Galdan was reduced during the last days of his life, nor would there be sufficient interest in the theme to dwell upon the schemes to which a desperate man thought of resorting for the retrieval of his fortunes. At one moment he sent an envoy to Peking to express, in abject terms, his desire to surrender, and at another he resumed his overtures to the Russian officials for a close alliance. But the one thing that was clear was that, although he had lost the power, he still clung to the wish, to injure the cause of China among the Mongols and her other vassals of his own race. The Chinese troops were on the eve of renewing the pursuit when the news came of Galdan's death. The nature of his last illness is not clearly known, and his death may be attributed either to the hardships and mental chagrin he had undergone, or to, as some say, the act of his own hand.

The death of Galdan not only removed from Kanghi's mind the anxiety which had so long weighed upon it, but it also closed a career of remarkable adventure. Galdan was a representative man of the class of desert chiefs who, from the earliest days of

Chinese history, have troubled the western borders of the great Empire. We have seen them in the persons of Meha, Yenta, and others as a cause of anxiety and trouble rather than of absolute danger to the integrity of the State. We have also in the cases of Genghis and Noorhachu found them sufficiently prompt and capable to overthrow the existing dynasty and to substitute that of their own family. Galdan belonged to the former class. Kanghi has himself testified to the remarkable skill and courage of this chieftain. In an edict summarising the conquests which had made him the greatest potentate in Central Asia, he concludes with the statement that Galdan was "a formidable enemy"; and the energetic and persistent manner with which he had laboured to effect his ruin proves that the Chinese Emperor was fully persuaded of the accuracy of his own statement. But the overthrow of Galdan also shows that, except under abnormal circumstances, which have only occurred twice or, at the most, thrice in history, the unflagging determination and vastly superior resources of the Chinese have always availed to turn the scale against the ambition and even against the love of war of these independent leaders. The vitality of Chinese individuality and imperial power has always asserted itself even after long periods of apparent decay and dissolution.

Galdan overthrown, Kanghi ordered the return of his armies. Feyanku was left with a small force to completely pacify the newly-conquered region; but the Emperor hoped that peace had been definitely assured.

That this hope was soon dispelled we shall have presently to see; and the manner in which the Galdan episode gave place to a long interval of trouble, and then to the necessity of formulating a distinct Central Asian policy, will constitute one of the most important facts in the history of the next seventy years. With the death of Galdan in 1697, however, Kanghi offered up incense to Heaven in the evidently sincere persuasion that peace had been definitely obtained for himself and his people. So far as his inclination went he had had enough of arduous and unprofitable campaigns beyond his natural frontier—and the sentiment was the more firmly rooted in his mind because he had undergone the privations of his soldiers, and knew by practical experience that even the strategical skill of his commanders might prove of little avail in face of the passive resistance of natural obstacles.

CHAPTER XVI.

KANGHI'S TROUBLES IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Tse Wang Rabdan.—Succeeds to Galdan's Position.—His Views.—Kanghi's Demands.—The Ashes of Galdan.—Diplomatic Controversies.—Tibet.—China's Influence there.—Rival to that of Jungaria.—Internal Affairs of that State.—Yellow Caps and Red Caps.—Expulsion of the latter.—The Tipa.—His Double-dealing.—Conceals the Death of the Dalai Lama.—And rules in his Name.—The Secret leaks out.—Kanghi's Letter.—Latsan Khan.—Fall of the Tipa.—Tse Wang Rabdan interferes.—Invasion of Tibet.—Sack of Lhasa.—Latsan Khan slain.—The Chinese Aid implored.—The Eleuths retire.—Incalculable Spoil.—Chinese Defeat.—Loss of Hami.—Return of Chinese.—Hami retaken and restored.—Desultory Warfare.—No permanent Result.—A closing Victory.—Conquest of Tibet.—Insurrection in Formosa.—Soon suppressed.—The Last of Kanghi's military Exploits.—Retrospect.

TSE WANG RABDAN, whose enmity had contributed to bring about the ruin of Galdan, and whose assistance Kanghi had repaid with various privileges in carrying on trade with China, was left by his uncle's death the undisputed chief both in actual power and in reputation among the Eleuth tribes. The tribal resources, which had failed to support Galdan's ambition, passed by the law of hereditary succession to the son of the murdered Tsenka, and Tse Wang Rabdan soon

found that he enjoyed all the temporal power arising from an undisputed sway over the Eleuths. The centre of his authority had indeed been shifted further westwards, and his ambition did not urge him to molest the Khalkas, or to encroach in the direction of China. But none the less Tse Wang Rabdan claimed to be a great and independent prince, and he had his own views as to his position in Central Asia.

The nature of his pretensions, covering as they did a different ground, promised not to bring him into immediate conflict with China, but only too much reason existed for fearing that the relations subsisting between him and the Emperor would not long maintain their cordiality. Causes of friction soon revealed themselves. Kanghi, acting on the principle that rebels should be extirpated root and branch, had ordered that no pains should be spared to capture the few surviving members of Galdan's family, and a great reward was offered to whoever brought in the body or the bones of Galdan. At the first blush it seems only possible to detect in this malignant pursuit the working of a savage and persistent vengeance, and the cruel maxim of the Chinese system, that "the families of rebels taken open-handed should be extirpated," tends to confirm the impression. A more careful consideration of the subject may, however, result in leading us to take the view that the Chinese wished for nothing more than clear evidence of their chief enemy's death, and for some assurance that no member of his family felt either prepared or willing to carry on his schemes.

The fortune of war had placed in the hands of Tse Wang Rabdan the persons of a son and daughter of Galdan, as well as the bones of that chief. These prizes had fallen to his share after a victory near the town of Hami, where he defeated a neighbour who thought to dispute his authority. The Chinese at once sent a demand for the surrender to them of these relics and representatives of their recent enemy. Tse Wang Rabdan, whose humanity was either aroused, or who felt aggrieved at the dictatorial tone assumed by the Chinese, long evaded the request preferred to him by Feyanku. Instead of showing a spirit of humility* towards Kanghi, he busied himself with the extension of his power in both Jungaria and Kashgaria, while the first force of his wrath was vented on the Mahomedan prince of Hami. Kanghi very soon learnt that even the ruin of Galdan would not avail to deter many from imitating him, and that the overthrow of one chieftain would not suffice to ensure permanent peace among races whose principal avocation and amusement had always been a savage and sanguinary strife. The pertinacity of the Chinese carried their point for them in this matter, as well as in other questions. Kanghi sent several embassies to Tse Wang Rabdan's capital, and showed marked insistence on the

* He wrote on this point to Kanghi as follows:—"The war being now concluded, past injuries ought to be buried in oblivion. Pity should be shown to the vanquished, and it would be barbarous to think of nothing but of how to overwhelm them. It is the first law inspired by humanity, and one which custom has consecrated from the earliest period among us who are Eleuths."—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 292.

subject of his demand. At length success crowned his efforts, and in 1701 the Eleuth prince surrendered the ashes or bones of his uncle, and the person of his cousin. With the acquisition of these marks of victory Kanghi remained fully satisfied, and his generous treatment of his defenceless captive showed that it was the requirements of a policy, and not the promptings of a poor revenge that he sought to gratify.

Although Tse Wang Rabdan went at last so far as to concede to Kanghi the demand on which he placed so much stress, his general action marked him out rather as the antagonist than as the supporter of Chinese authority in Central Asia. In a less ostentatious but equally efficacious way he was gathering into his hands the superior authority to which Galdan had aspired. His victories over his Kirghiz neighbours gave his position also a degree of stability to which that of his relative had never attained. The result of this feud* and of the accompanying strife was that the Kirghiz chief, to whose daughter Tse Wang Rabdan was married, felt himself compelled to coalesce with his son-in-law, and thus the military forces of the Eleuths and the Kirghiz were combined. This alone sufficed to make the military power of Tse Wang Rabdan extend without a break from Hami on the east to Khokand on the west. The opportunity soon presented itself of employing this considerable available force on a larger scene in advancing the influence of the Eleuth prince into a different region.

* For details of this rivalry see Howorth's "Mongols," vol. i. pp. 641-3, and Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 294-9.

It had been one of the main objects of Galdan's ambition to assert his right to have a voice in the regulation of the internal affairs of Tibet, and the desire to succeed in this object was strengthened by the knowledge of the reputation that would accrue to him as speaking with the approval of the great spiritual head of Buddhism. The Chinese Government had its own views upon the same subject, and regarded with disfavour any measures having a tendency to weaken its influence and authority at Lhasa. But as yet the direct exercise of Chinese authority in Tibet had not been very great, and the interests of the Jungarian prince were better and more emphatically represented there than those of China and her sovereign. It became one of Kanghi's main objects to alter this condition of affairs, and to bring Tibet and its order of priestly rulers completely under his control. These intrigues and counter-intrigues precipitated the course of events in Tibet, and recalled Kanghi's attention to his western borders. The boldness of Tse Wang Rabdan brought on a contest that was, perhaps, in any case inevitable, and left the Chinese again no choice save to appeal to the sword. Kanghi had taken his plans with such care, and shown such excellent judgment in his manipulation of the question, that the Chinese party in Tibet obtained a signal triumph. How that triumph was obtained, and what it practically entailed, must be described at some length, for it led up to several events of permanent importance, and it was marked by the double invasion of Tibetan territory, firstly by an Eleuth horde, and secondly by a Manchu army.

From an early period the supremacy in the Tibetan administration had been disputed between two different classes, the one which represented the military body making use of religious matters to forward its designs, the other being an order of priests supported by the unquestioning faith and confidence of the masses of the people. The former became known as the Red Caps, and the latter as the Yellow Caps. The rivalry between these classes had been keen and was still bitterly contested when Chuntche first ascended the throne, but victory had finally inclined to the side of the Yellow Caps before the period at which we have arrived. The great spiritual head of this latter body was the Dalai Lama, pronounced to be of wisdom as profound and inscrutable as the ocean. The direct intervention of the Emperors Chuntche and Kanghi had contributed to make the triumph of the Dalai Lama still more decisive and unquestionable, but the Red Caps cherished for a further period the desire to dispute the palm with their rivals, if they felt that they could no longer hope to secure all the prize of victory. By the aid of a Calmuck army raised in Central Asia, the Dalai Lama had had the final satisfaction of beholding his opponents driven out of the country, and compelled to take refuge in the Himalayan state of Bhutan, where the sect of the Red Caps continues, after this lapse of time, to retain influence and authority. This event occurred before the year 1650, and consequently at a period when the Manchu authority was far from being firmly established in China itself.

The settlement of the disputes between the two

rival religious parties in Tibet was followed by the appointment of a kind of civil and military functionary with authority to act under the Dalai Lama. This official was named the Tipa, and encouraged by the nature of the post he occupied he soon began to carry on intrigues for the elevation of his own rank and power at the expense of the priestly rulers, in whose service he was pledged by the most sacred oaths to act uprightly and well. The ambition of one Tipa led to his fall and imprisonment, but the evil was set down to the indiscretion of the individual, and a successor was named to the office. The new Tipa had been chosen for the post chiefly because he was the reputed son of one of the Dalai Lamas, and when his father died in 1682 he concealed his death, gave out that he had only retired into the recesses of his palace, and ruled the state in his name for the space of sixteen years. The Tipa knew well that it would be impossible to secure the approval of Kanghi for what he had done, and, seeing that, the instant the secret of his perfidy was revealed, he would incur the resentment of the Chinese ruler, he began to prepare for the evil day by entering into cordial relations with Galdan, and by inviting the military support of the princes of Jungaria. For several years he proved able to carry on these machinations and to blind the Emperor as to his real intentions by a profusion of words. Kanghi, ignorant of the true state of the case, wrote the Tipa letters of friendly expression, and conferred upon him a title of much honour.*

* Tibet Wang, or Prince of Tibet.

But even in the recesses of Asia the truth cannot be for ever concealed. Rumours at last reached Kanghi that there were suspicious circumstances in connection with the disappearance of the Dalai Lama, and these insinuations acquired increased force from the Tipa's undoubted sympathy with the cause of Galdan, for one of his personal lamas had even gone so far as to offer up prayers for the success of the Eleuth's arms. When Kanghi began to realise the fact that the Tipa had throughout been duping him, his indignation was pronounced, and he addressed him in one of the most characteristic letters* that have been preserved from the pen of this Emperor. The Tipa made numerous

* Some of the principal passages of this letter were as follows:—"What were you, Tipa, before you reached your present station by my favour? Nothing more than an inferior officer attached to the person of the Dalai Lama. On reports of your zeal, and with the idea of encouraging you to further efforts of faithful service, I elevated you to the rank of a prince. . . . Have I not done enough to claim your gratitude? But your natural ingratitude has led you to forget the favours with which I have covered you. You have attached yourself to the side of Galdan, with whom you have never ceased to hold criminal relations. You no longer fulfil the duties of your station. The Dalai Lama has been dead many years and you are acting under cover of his name as if he were still living. . . . The Dalai Lama is the supreme head of all the Lamas. My family has honoured and respected him for more than sixty years. How then is it that you have dared conceal his death from me? You have kept the fact secret in order to deceive the world into supporting the cause of Galdan. What punishment is there commensurate with so heinous a crime? . . . Open, then, your eyes to your misconduct, and endeavour to merit the pardon offered you on the following terms. . . . But if you persist in your disobedience and fail to satisfy me in a single particular of the demands I have prescribed to you, I swear to punish you with all the rigour of the law. I will place no limits to my resentment, and will direct against you all the troops of Yunnan. I will either come myself in person or send the princes of my Court to wash out in your blood the disgrace of your treason."—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 227-30.

promises, and at last proclaimed one of his creatures as the personage into whom the never-dying spirit of the Buddha incarnate had passed. The choice proved an unfortunate one, and further roused the indignation, not only of Kanghi, but also of the Tibetans themselves. The difficulty might have become more aggravated, had not the military commander Latsan Khan taken the law into his own hands, and speedily put an end to the career and contentions of the Tipa. The latter was slain, with most of his supporters, and the boy Lama he had selected died either by poison or by his own hand. Yet even the overthrow of the ambitious minister did not suffice to make the condition of things in the holy land of Buddhism one of assured tranquillity. For the new Dalai Lama did not obtain the support of Latsan Khan, and his friends conveyed him for safety to Sining on the western Chinese border.

It has been seen that the Eleuth leader, Tse Wang Rabdan, had succeeded to much of his uncle's power and influence throughout Central Asia, and he had also inherited those political views on the subject of Tibet, which led the Jungarian family to figure as the champions of the Tipa, in contradistinction to the Chinese Emperor's support of the spiritual authority of the Dalai Lama. The fall of the Tipa seemed, therefore, to him to require some vigorous step on his part to counteract the preponderating authority it might give to Chinese interests in Tibet. For this reason he turned a deaf ear to the proposals for an alliance made to him by Latsan Khan, and brought

matters to an open breach by the imprisonment of his son, who happened to be paying a visit to Ili. Tse Wang Rabdan then followed up this hostile act by despatching an army into Tibet to overthrow Latsan Khan, and to reassert the influence of Jungaria. At the same time he directed another force to march on Sining, whither the young Dalai Lama had been conveyed for safety by his friends. Thus both indirectly and directly Tse Wang Rabdan proclaimed his hostility to Kanghi, and brought down upon his own head, and upon his successors and subjects, the full weight of China's indignation.

The Eleuth army left the banks of the Ili in 1709 under the command of Zeren Donduk, and, having crossed the vast deserts of Eastern Turkestan, in the centre of which Lob Nor forms an agreeable but almost solitary oasis, appeared in due course before the walls of Lhasa. Little or no attempt at resistance was made there, and the Eleuths plundered and ravaged the whole of the surrounding region. Latsan Khan was slain, and the Eleuths slowly retraced their steps with a quantity of spoil, seized from the temples and monasteries, and stated to have been incalculable. Their expedition against Sining failed, but Tse Wang Rabdan could for the moment congratulate himself on having succeeded in the object which was of the more immediate importance, and which promised to prove the most advantageous. The tidings of this expedition and of the pillaging of Tibet warned Kanghi that in Tse Wang Rabdan he must meet an opponent scarcely less formid-

able than Galdan had been, and one whose overthrow would be the more difficult task in consequence of his being at a greater distance from China. Yet the sincerity of Kanghi's desire for peace remained undoubted, and only the aggressions of his Western neighbours compelled him to turn his attention to a subject of which he personally desired to hear little more.

The invasion of Tibet had been conducted with such celerity and secrecy that there had been no time to despatch reinforcements to Lhasa from Szchuen or Yunnan in order to prevent the acts of plunder of the ruthless conqueror. But no sooner had the news been received, than orders were at once issued for the collection of a large army in Szchuen to march into Tibet to avenge the injury inflicted on an unoffending and amiable people. Before this force, however, had begun its movements it was known that the Eleuths had evacuated the country, and that whatever measures of punishment might be taken would have to be carried out not in Tibet, but in Central Asia. It was, therefore, towards Hami that the Chinese troops received directions to advance.

Emboldened by the failure of Tse Wang Rabdan's expedition against Sining, the Chinese troops advanced beyond Hami for the purpose of threatening Turfan. But the Jungarian forces stood prepared to resist their approach to that city, and while Kanghi's expedition was proceeding in perfect confidence towards its destination the Eleuths suddenly fell upon it, and inflicted great loss on the Chinese army. The

consequences of this reverse revealed its gravity and extent. The town of Hami surrendered to the victor, and, while in his hands, was given over to destruction. For the moment Kanghi's schemes of revenge remained perforce in abeyance, if they did not absolutely fall to the ground. He turned from unprofitable enterprises beyond Gobi to give security to the people of Tibet against any possible recurrence of the invasion from which they had so greatly suffered. Tibet was garrisoned by a Manchu army, while fresh levies continued to be made for the reassertion of Chinese authority in the Hami region.

Very soon the wave of battle again set in against the leaders of Turkestan, and a Chinese army of more than a hundred thousand men crossed the desert, expelled the Mahomedans, and again set up the authority of the Bogdo Khan in the stronghold of Hami. Although the possession of this place enabled the Chinese to keep in check the fanaticism and ambitious instincts of the Mahomedan princelets and of the chief Tse Wang Rabdan in particular, the troubles of Kanghi in Central Asia still continued. So far as he was concerned to attain a durable and peaceful settlement of the questions relating to his western borders, it was made clear to him that no policy of mere defence would suffice. Kanghi had overthrown Galdan, and established his power without the possibility of rivalry among all the Mongol tribes. But although his authority was unchallenged round the Amour and in the region of Koko Nor, it was more than he could do or felt disposed to undertake to

conquer the country up to the Pamir. Yet nothing short of that would suffice to give assured tranquillity to the borders of Kansuh and Shensi, and to put an end to the ever-recurring peril from the inordinate ambition and warlike habits of the desert chiefs and their clansmen. Hami was finally won back in the year 1717 when Kanghi was growing old, and was beginning to feel that there were some questions which must be left for his successors to grapple with. Each of the last few years of his long reign was marked by a desultory campaign with the forces of Tse Wang Rabdan, who supplied the deficiencies of his resources by the rapidity and secrecy of his movements.*

In 1721, on the eve of his death, Kanghi received the congratulations of his court on the occasion of a victory over the Eleuth forces. The results of this signal success against the army of Tse Wang Rabdan proved, we are told, "equivalent to the conquest of Tibet."† This achievement brought to as satisfactory a termination as the circumstances admitted the wars which Kanghi had waged for so many years in the heart of Asia. It showed that Kanghi's ardour and energy had not abated since the day when he first took up the pursuit of Galdan and decreed his ruin.

* Kanghi said of him and his family that they were "like wolves, who at the sight of the huntsmen scatter to their dens, and at the withdrawal of danger assemble again round the prey they have abandoned with regret. Such was the policy of these desert robbers."—Howorth's "Mongols," vol. i. p. 645.

† Mailla, vol. xi. p. 346.

In Formosa, too, the same year was marked by an insurrection* against the Chinese authority, and by its prompt and summary suppression. The Pekin authorities attributed it to the malice of the Dutch, but in this calumny we may detect another proof of the revulsion against foreigners which marked the last days of Kanghi's reign. Both on the mainland and in the possessions beyond the sea the military power of China was firmly asserted and maintained. Kanghi's achievements in war entitle him to rank as a great conqueror, but they derive their principal importance from the fact that they were turned to the realisation of magnificent administrative purposes. The Empire pacified by Wou Sankwei's overthrow, the Mongols and Khalkas confirmed in their allegiance by the vigour and presence of the young Emperor, the Eleuths and the other hordes of Central Asia driven back to the distant territories where they could do little to disturb the Chinese borders, Tibet annexed, Formosa pacified, Corea's friendship assured, and the Japanese overawed by the spectacle of superior might,—these formed the record of military achievements and their consequences during Kanghi's eventful reign. The grand result ensured was the security of a mighty empire, and the prosperity of an industrious people, leaving to posterity a page of

* There were a few other revolts on a small scale. A tribe in Kwangsi, called the Chang Kolas, defeated the Manchus on three separate occasions, and then obtained terms.—*See Mailla*, vol. xi. pp. 306-9.

interesting and instructive history, and all the benefit that may be extracted from the consideration of a great and difficult task successfully and honourably performed.

CHAPTER XVII.

KANGHI'S ADMINISTRATION.

The internal Tranquillity of the Country.—Details wanting.—Clear Proof of the grand Fact.—The “Lettres Edifiantes.”—The Christians.—Regarded with Favour by the Prince.—The People antipathetic.—Jealousy of the Official Class.—Edict of 1692.—The Charter of Christianity in China.—The Emperor cured of an Attack of Fever.—His Gratitude.—Builds a Church.—Missionaries in the Palace.—Their Influence of an ephemeral kind.—Kanghi's personal Opinion.—The Question of Religion.—The Question of Trade.—Kanghi inimical to the Latter.—What other Foreigners had done.—Prohibition of further Trade with the Philippines.—Chinmao's Petition.—After their Religion was introduced in Manilla it became subjected.—“*The smallest streams become great rivers.*”—Kanghi's domestic Troubles.—Arrest of the Heir Apparent.—The Victim of an Intrigue.—The First Regulo.—Meaning of that Title.—Restoration of Prince Imperial.—National Rejoicings.—Kanghi's Sixtieth Anniversary.—Unprecedented Event.—Russian Embassy at Peking.—Other Embassies.—M. Ismaloff.—The Prostration Difficulty solved.—Letter of Peter the Great.—Kanghi favourably disposed.—A Russian Agent left at Peking.—The first Caravan.—Change in the Aspect of Affairs.—“Trade regarded with Contempt.”—Dismissal of De Lange. Commerce “to be restricted to the Frontiers.”—Ambassador from the Pope.—The Loo Choo Islands.—Mission from their King.—Kanghi's Character.—His sound Sense.—Chang Chun Yuen.—Rejects a Title of Honour.—His Tours.

Discontinues them out of Consideration for his People.—Twice walks unattended through the Streets of Peking.—As a Horseman and Hunter.—Patron of Literature.—His Knowledge of his Empire.—Maps.—The Hanlin College.—Kanghi's own Writings.—The Sacred Edict.—The Imperial Dictionary.—His high Moral Character.—His Detractors.—Characteristic Story.—His Death.—Active to the Last.—General Verdict as to his Greatness.—Mailla, Parenin, Bouvet.—His personal Appearance.—What he had accomplished.—A Chinese Proverb.—Early Trait of Kanghi's Character.—His Place among great Rulers.—The best known of Chinese Emperors in Europe.—Kanghi's Will.—Mailla's concluding Opinion.

AFTER the subversion of the power of Wou Sankwei and the other Chinese princes in the south, Kanghi had been left undisturbed to carry on the administration of all the provinces of the country. The arduous campaigns in the interior of Asia, in Tibet and Mongolia, and the very large sacrifices both of men and money that they entailed, did not affect the general tranquillity or prosperity of the realm. Kanghi ruled a contented people, who were actively engaged in the numerous industries provided for them by the varied resources of the country, and who were, moreover, quite content to accept his views as to the advisability and necessity of giving the Empire an assurance of peace by the vigorous prosecution of wars with external enemies. The fact is clear enough, although the want of details renders it difficult to describe the prosperous state of China during the forty years that Kanghi continued to reign after the overthrow of the great Chinese vassals in Szchuen and Kwantung. Perhaps the strongest evidence of this will be found in the fact that the Chinese people,

although there was always an influential party at Peking in favour of the abandonment of the pursuit of Galdan, and of the cessation of all active campaigning beyond the desert, remained well-disposed towards the established government, notwithstanding that the absence of the greater portion of the Manchu and Mongol armies beyond the frontier afforded a favourable opportunity to revolt.

Among the principal and most interesting features of Kanghi's long reign must undoubtedly be placed his relations with the Christians* who, in the persons of the Roman Catholic missionaries, had penetrated into the interior of China and established themselves at the capital and in the chief cities of the Empire. It has been already seen how, after passing through several vicissitudes of fortune, the Jesuit fathers obtained permission to reside in China and to preach their gospel to the people. Kanghi personally had benefited by their instruction in a peculiar and exceptional degree. The more important part of his education had been entrusted to their care, and his Christian tutors had placed at his disposal much of the lore of Europe. The intercourse he held with them during his earlier days led him to regard with a friendly eye a race from whom he had nothing to fear, and from whose superior knowledge and exceptional attainments he might expect to derive many advantages and to obtain much assistance in the task of

* For this portion of Kanghi's reign, reference should be especially made to the "Lettres Edifiantes" (Paris, 1781), tom. xvi.-xxiv.

government. The Christian missionaries, the representatives of the Church of Rome, were therefore employed in numerous capacities. As the price of the privilege to preach their religion they were required to make themselves as useful as they could, and to give their word to think no more of a return to their native country. This company of excellent and high-minded individuals gave the required promise, and devoted their lives to the work they had voluntarily accepted. Few instances are there of a worldly sacrifice more nobly performed and undertaken than this dedication of the Jesuit missionaries to a life-long exile in a strange land; and well would it have been for the prospects of foreign intercourse if the Dutch and the Spaniards, as other exponents of European superiority, had more closely imitated their example.

It is not in accordance with the human character for the representatives of an existing system to feel or to evince much sympathy for one coming in a foreign guise and asserting views of a conflicting nature to everything they have been in the habit of accepting as true and indisputable. The intensity of national antipathies becomes inflamed when the subject in dispute is the one upon which we should, and do, all feel most strongly, the question of religious belief. The philosophical calmness, and political sagacity of Kanghi led him to tolerate the presence of men whose ethics he could appreciate with an academic pleasure, and whose services he knew as an administrator were all valuable. But

what commended itself to the judgment of an intelligent prince found very little favour in the eyes of a people antipathetic to the foreigner and incited by an official class jealous of possible rivals, and disconcerted at the spectacle of many of their favourite posts being filled by Europeans. The reign of Kanghi was marked throughout by the conflict of these two elements. Thanks to the stanch support of Kanghi and to his enlightened tolerance, the Jesuits more than held their own. The anti-foreign party was compelled to conceal the full bitterness of its venom, and to await with such patience as they could muster until the Emperor should grow tired of his favourites, or until he should be replaced by another ruler. For more than fifty years the Jesuits remained prominent among Kanghi's trusted councilors. They were employed as envoys, and as astronomers, as doctors, and as geographers. Their maps served to bring under Kanghi's eye the full extent of the territories he ruled, the artillery they constructed contributed to give him the victory over his enemies, and their medicines saved on more than one occasion the life of their benefactor. Kanghi's sympathy had been gained by his respect for their persons and their character, but his undeviating support was secured by the practical work they did for him—work which he felt there were none others to do so well, if at all.

In the year 1692, after a long discussion, during which the anti-foreign party spared no effort to thwart the personal views of the Emperor, and to impose restrictions on the persons and practices of

the Christians, the Tribunal of Rites agreed upon an edict in favour of the strangers. Permission was given by this proclamation, which received the sanction and warm approval of Kanghi, to the missionaries to perform their religious rites, to burn incense and to preach their doctrine in the churches which they had already erected. It was also permitted to all to attend those services. The proclamation of the Tribunal of Rites in the year 1692 became the charter of Christianity in the Chinese Empire, and the faithful execution of its provisions was rendered the more certain by the recovery in the very same year of the Emperor Kanghi from a bad attack of fever by means of the medicine and attention of the French missionaries after his life was despaired of by his own doctors.* Eight years after this incident Kanghi, who had previously allowed the missionaries to reside within the precincts of the palace, gave them permission to build a church adjoining their place of residence. Not merely did he grant them the site for the proposed building, but he presented each of the missionaries with the sum of fifty golden crowns, or more probably taels, to enable each to subscribe that amount towards the cost of construction.†

* The cure was effected by the use of quinine. The new medicine was tried on the persons of several of his courtiers before the Sovereign was permitted to taste it. The result of these experiments proving satisfactory he was allowed to take it.

† The authority for this statement is the letter of Père Jartoux in tom. xvii. of "Lettres Edifiantes." The curious in such matters will find in the same letter a full description of this edifice, the finest Christian church in China.

Such princely generosity and consideration have rarely been equalled.

The position of the Christian missionaries was, therefore, not only secure, but one also of considerable influence and profit during the greater portion of Kanghi's reign. This unprecedented success, for elsewhere in Asia Christianity made but slow and fitful progress, encouraged the members of the Jesuit order to believe that in the dense masses of China they had found fit and willing subjects to receive the great truths of the simplest and most beautiful of inspired religions. Had there been danger in the path they would not have held back from the adventure, but the very friendliness of Kanghi offered a further inducement to them to attempt it. Every year was marked by the arrival at Canton of recruits for those who were spreading the truths of Christianity, and it became the order of the day at Paris and at Rome to seize the opportunity afforded by the presence on the throne of Peking of a sovereign sympathetic in his views, and of an exceptionally just cast of mind. The policy was intelligible and would have been sound, had there been any real leaning towards Christianity among the Chinese. As there was none, but rather a contemptuous indifference than any other sentiment towards "the men from over the sea," this undue haste and precipitance in snatching at what seemed a prize provoked dangers that might have been averted by a more cautious and circumspect manner of proceeding. Kanghi's friendship alone enabled them to hold their ground,

and with each succeeding illness after the year 1710 it became more and more clear that no great confidence could be placed even in its much longer continuing. The death of Kanghi it was feared on the one hand, and confidently expected on the other, would mark the term of Christian prosperity and security in the country, and particularly at the capital.

The predominant feeling of hostility towards the Christians arose not so much from antipathy to their religion as from jealousy of their thinly-veiled assumption of superiority. This sentiment had naturally most force among the officials, who believed that they were ousted from many high posts and offices by the men whom Kanghi's caprice had protected and rewarded. There was a certain amount of truth, too, in their allegations, for some of the highest offices in the state were filled by Christians, which necessarily curtailed the number of places available for the numerous body of the Chinese civil service. The intensity of this feeling was naturally very much increased by each fresh arrival, and although Kanghi remained stanch in his favour it was clear that the Christians* were exposed to many perils, and that

* In 1702 an attempt was made to hamper their movements and to check their liberty by a provincial official, the Viceroy of Chekiang. The edict of 1692 gave the Christians the right to use the churches already built, but said nothing about the construction of new ones. Christian emissaries established themselves at the convenient harbour of Ningpo, and naturally presented a request for permission to build a church. They based their demand on the Edict of 1692, but the Viceroy rejected their petition, saying that there was nothing in it allowing the building of new churches. The matter was referred to Peking, when a decision was given in favour of the Christians on the grounds

unless his successor proved equally sympathetic towards them all the good work of the previous century and a half would be destroyed.

It was becoming clear also towards the commencement of the eighteenth century that the question of the relations of the Chinese with foreign countries was one that could not be restricted to matters of religion. The Jesuits and their companion orders came to convert a people, who regarded them in return with a certain curiosity, and their efforts with a philosophical scepticism and amusement; but other nations came to trade and to establish themselves in the seaports of the Empire. Canton had already heard the thunder of the English guns, the Dutch had played their game of ambition in Formosa and Japan, and the Spaniards had established a powerful, defiant, and inhuman authority in the Philippines. The China seas were covered with the vessels of strange peoples, whose engines of war made them appear as terrible as the unscrupulous nature of their acts showed them to be false of faith and regardless of the manner in which they attained their

that "they have never been the cause of any trouble to the empire, nor ever committed any reprehensible act, and that their doctrine is not bad."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 305-7. Kanghi's own opinion of the Europeans may here be appropriately quoted:—"Europeans, whom I employ even in the interior of my palace, you have always served me with zeal and affection, without anyone having been able up to this to cast the slightest reproach upon you. There are many Chinese who distrust you, but as for myself, and I have carefully observed the whole of your conduct, in which I have never found anything irregular, I am so fully convinced of your uprightness and good faith that I publicly declare that you are deserving of every trust and confidence."—"Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xviii. p. 92.

ends. The question of holding commercial and political relations with such nations as these was, therefore, one of a very different nature to allowing a few useful individuals to reside in the chief city of the Empire. Even Kanghi treated the two matters as being on a totally distinct footing, and his good-will towards the Jesuits* did not dispose him to deprecate any the less the development of his commercial relations with European countries. The Manchus were the more inclined to adopt a policy of isolation, because, being themselves a foreign dynasty, they were apprehensive lest some of these formidable western peoples should seek to imitate what they had accomplished.

In 1716 the trade between Canton and the Philippines had attained considerable dimensions, and the export of rice in particular is stated to have been very large. An Imperial edict, issued early in the following year, prohibited the export of rice, and forbade Chinese vessels to sail for foreign ports. This proclamation, of course, gave fresh courage to all who were secretly inimical to foreign intercourse, and petitions to the throne became frequent for the dismissal of the foreigners, and for the breaking-off of all intercourse with the outer world. One petition, presented by a military officer named Chinmao, who held the principal command of the troops at Canton, was composed of a homily† against the vices and self-

* They were nothing loth to win the approval of Kanghi by protesting that between them and the Dutch there was nothing in common, not even religion.

† The concluding passage of this petition calls for quotation. "There is nothing, so it appears to me, to justify them in

seeking aims of Europeans. But it seemed to touch a chord of sympathy even in the heart of Kanghi, for the petition was so far favourably received that all the tribunals in conclave assembled called attention to the extent to which Christianity had spread, and demanded the passing of severe measures against its votaries. These were not sanctioned in the exact form in which they were presented; but in 1718, for the first time during Kanghi's reign, restrictions were placed on the practice of the Christian religion. Even before the death of their greatest benefactor it was clear, therefore, that the prosperous days of Christianity in China were numbered, and that the

building churches in all the provinces of China. They spend great sums of money; they collect on certain days great crowds of the common folk to go through their ceremonies. They make it a point to inquire into our laws and customs; they draw up maps of our mountains and our rivers; it is their main object of all to gain the hearts of the people. I do not see exactly what their design is, and I am not concerned to fathom it. I know, however, that their religion has been brought from Europe to Manilla, and that Manilla has been subjected by the Europeans. I know, also, that these Europeans are such barbarians that under the pretext of religion they thought to seize Japan in like manner to that in which they acquired Manilla; that they have built several churches at Canton and elsewhere, and have gained over to their interests an infinity of persons. Add to all this, that they are of the same nation as those who come in the formidable vessels of which I have already spoken. But I completely rely upon the wisdom of the august tribunals of the Empire, and I feel certain that they will not permit these vile plants to increase and to grow strong. The peril is great; the smallest streams become great rivers; and if the branches of trees are not trimmed while they are yet young, they cannot in the end be cut without injuring the stem. I conclude by very humbly supplicating your Majesty to examine into the proofs of this petition, afterwards to declare your intentions concerning it, and then to make them known throughout the provinces."—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 324-5.

small religious community which had so adventurously established itself at Peking would very soon be exposed to all the perils from the fanaticism and natural hostility of the people. The full force of the storm did not reveal itself until after Kanghi's death, when his crown had passed to a sovereign more intensely national and more deeply prejudiced.

Deservedly fortunate in most of his relations, Kanghi could not altogether escape from the anxieties caused by the rival pretensions of his sons, who all aspired, without much reference to either their capacity or their claims, to be his successor. The eldest son of the Empress had at an early stage of the reign been declared heir-apparent, and the letters* which Kanghi addressed to him during his absence in Tartary showed that he was the object of his affection and tender solicitude. In 1709 the same prince fell under the suspicion of Kanghi, who had been led to believe in his treason by the specious representations of some of the courtiers. The palace became the scene of a fierce rivalry, carried on on both sides with a certain unscrupulousness and threatening to disturb the tranquillity of Kanghi's last years. And although there appears to be no doubt of his complete innocence of the main charge, the Prince Imperial was arrested and cast into prison. His family underwent the same fate, and many who were believed to be his supporters paid the penalty of their attachment to his person with their lives.

* For a specimen of these the reader may be referred to p. 241 of vol. xi. of Mailla.

The arrest of a prince so nearly related to the blood, and the deposal of the recognised heir to the crown, were not to be accomplished without exciting very considerable notice and comment among the Chinese people. Kanghi recognised the necessity for explaining the causes of the summary proceedings taken against his heir, and gave his permission to the drawing-up of a form of indictment, enumerating the supposed misdeeds of the Prince Imperial from an early age. This step was taken in compliance with established form, but it appears to have had little effect in influencing the public mind, which was markedly in favour of the disgraced and imprisoned prince. A very short time elapsed before the true facts of the case came within the cognisance of the Emperor, and then it was found that Kanghi's credulity had been imposed upon. The heir-apparent had been aspersed for personal motives by his eldest brother, who was known by the title of the First Regulo,* and his fall was wholly to be attributed to the envious machinations of this relative. When the true history of this intrigue became known, it was discovered that the charges against the Prince Imperial possessed no better foundation than the evidence of a few lamas and dealers in magic attached to the party, or in the service of the First Regulo.

* The title of Regulo or Chuhow was conferred by the Emperor in person. The Regulo could exercise sovereign power as the Emperor's deputy. The ceremony was performed in the Temple of the Tutelary spirit at the capital on the sacred stone effigy of the tortoise.—See Mailla, vol. ii. p. 54, note, and M. de Visdelou's "Chouking," pp. 428-36.

Kanghi was naturally much distressed at these domestic troubles, and his dissatisfaction was increased when he found that a strong party among his courtiers was in favour of proclaiming as the heir to the crown the eighth of his sons, instead of restoring the deposed prince to his rightful position. They were induced to act thus in order to avert the consequences they imagined would be entailed by their having participated in effecting the disgrace of the Prince Imperial. Kanghi in no way sympathised with the illogical and unfair attitude of these ministers towards his once-favoured son, and took summary means to convince them of the unwisdom of the course they suggested. Some he banished to the remote provinces, and others he dismissed from their offices; and having released the Prince Imperial, and restored his honours he formally celebrated the conclusion of this painful incident. Public fêtes, national rejoicings, and the performance of a play based on a somewhat similar incident in the ancient history of China* testified to the warm feelings with which Kanghi beheld the return of his favourite son to the position for which he had designated him early in his reign. The First Regulo, on the other hand, was deposed from his rank, and many of his supporters were executed. Thus was domestic tranquillity ensured, but only at the cost of a considerable effort. The episode tended to disturb the peace of mind of Kanghi, who attributed all this discord to the prevalent practices of magic and

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 319.

spiritualism. The death of the Empress mother* in the year 1718 may be mentioned as another domestic event of some interest, and also of importance as indicating the near approach of the end of this eventful reign.

In 1721 the sixtieth anniversary of Kanghi's accession to the throne was celebrated with all the ceremony which so unprecedented and auspicious an event deserved. The Chinese people without distinction saw in this fact, which could not be paralleled since the earliest period of their recorded history, a mark of peculiar favour on the part of Heaven, and a divine confirmation of the wisdom of their prince. That the same prince should rule throughout a complete cycle was in its way remarkable, and in the case of Kanghi the feat seemed the more worthy of being handed down to fame in that he had succeeded to an insecure inheritance, and that he had made good his right of possession by the vigour and ability with which he had overcome innumerable difficulties, and won his way triumphantly through a sea of troubles. It was only natural and becoming, therefore, that the Chinese nation should, at the close of sixty years of an eventful reign, express, in such form as human gratitude has been able to devise, their respect for their great ruler, and their sense of the obligations under which they lay to him

* She was the widow of the Emperor Chuntche, but not Kanghi's mother. The Court put on mourning, and the Tribunals were closed for more than forty days.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 332.

as the man who had maintained the Empire and established peace within it on a firm foundation.

Among the principal events of these last years of his life must be placed the arrival at Peking of the Russian Embassy, sent by Peter the Great to draw closer the bonds of intimacy with his neighbour. This was not, indeed, the first time that a Czar had despatched his representative to the Chinese capital, but the failure of the first mission, in consequence of the prostration ceremony, and the comparative insignificance of the second,* have resulted in Peter's Embassy standing out in greater prominence than either of those that preceded it. It was in the year 1719† that Peter's Embassy entered China. It consisted of the Ambassador M. Ismaloff, his secretary M. de Lange,‡ the English traveller Mr. Bell, and a considerable suite. The Chinese Government, acting on the emphatic commands of the Emperor himself, consented to accord this embassy an honourable reception. A house was set apart for the use of the members, who lived as the guests of the Emperor.

* This was in 1692. The name of the envoy was Ides, but little or nothing is known of the details.

† In this year the Emperor sent to the Loo Choo Islands as his Commissioner one of the Hanlin doctors named Supao Kwang. He returned in the following year and published a long account of those islands in two volumes. The gist of his observations is preserved in tom. xxiii. of the "Lettres Edifiantes," pp. 183-245. The Manchus had neglected no precautions to confirm these islanders in their allegiance to China, and to draw closer the ties of friendship that had subsisted from an early period in their history.

‡ We owe to the journal of M. de Lange, translated by Mr. Bell, a graphic and complete picture of the fortunes of this mission and of the condition of Peking at this period.

On the other hand much of the innate suspicion and dislike of the officials were evinced in small matters, most probably beyond the personal knowledge of Kanghi; and among these may be mentioned the circumstance that they were sealed up in their house, in order to prevent their going out to examine the town. M. Ismaloff protested against the indignity and it was forthwith discontinued, but it is possible that there was more justice than is allowed in the Chinese plea that they did this in order to ensure the safety of their guests. An equal compliance—after many difficulties and objections had been raised and withdrawn—with the scruples of the Westerns was shown in the all-important matter of the prostration ceremony, but Kanghi's personal interference in a controversy which the rigidity of his ministers promised to make an insuperable barrier to the reception of the Embassy alone smoothed over the difficulty. The envoy of the Czar found no further reason to refuse to pay the kotow to the Chinese throne when one of Kanghi's first ministers by his order offered for him the same token of respect to Peter's letter.

Upon this Ismaloff was received in audience by Kanghi, and presented the letter* and presents sent

* Peter's letter was as follows:—"To the Emperor of the vast countries of Asia, to the sovereign Monarch of Bogdo, to the supreme Majesty of Khitay, friendship and greeting. With the design which I possess of holding and increasing the friendship and close relations long established between your Majesty and my predecessors and myself, I have thought it right to send to your court, in the capacity of ambassador-extraordinary, Leon Ismaloff, captain in my Guards. I beg you will receive him in a

by the Czar Peter. By the general testimony of all who witnessed the scene it was allowed that never had a Chinese sovereign conferred greater honour on the envoys of a foreign state than Kanghi did on this occasion to the representatives of Russia. After a short residence Ismaloff returned home, but before his departure he succeeded in inducing the Emperor to consent to his leaving the secretary De Lange at Pekin, as a sort of diplomatic agent for the Czar. This concession was the last gained from the large mind and broad views of the great Emperor in favour of any European people, for after this act the prejudices and jealousy of the official classes secured and maintained the upper hand at his council-board.

Ismaloff, consequently, brought back to his master a flattering tale of the success of his visit to the great Khan of China, and Peter, encouraged in his expectation of securing the profit of the rich trade with the wealthiest country of the East, fitted out a large caravan to tap the fertile regions of northern China, and to open up a land route to Pekin. The caravan duly reached its destination in the year 1721, but it found the position of affairs in the Chinese capital very different from what Ismaloff's glowing report had led the Czar and his Court to believe and expect. The

manner suitable to the character in which he comes, to have regard and to attach as much faith to what he may say on the subject of our mutual affairs as if I were speaking to you myself, and also to permit his residing at your Court of Pekin until I recall him. Allow me to sign myself your Majesty's good friend, Peter." This note was written in Russian, Latin, and Mongol.

secretary, De Lange, was little more than a prisoner, the ministers refused to have anything to do with commercial matters,* and Kanghi, the only person at all well-disposed towards the foreigner, lay upon a bed of sickness. Soon after the arrival of this the first and last caravan sent by Peter the Great, De Lange received a curt request to take his departure, and for the future it was announced that such trade intercourse as might be carried on between the two countries should be restricted to "the frontiers." The successive deaths of Kanghi and Peter left no opportunity of retrieving the ground thus lost, and the question of some definite arrangement either for trade or diplomatic purposes had to be left open for a future day.†

It is only needful now, in drawing to a close our description of this long and eventful reign, to say a few words on the subject of the personal character of the prince of whose career not the least notable incident was that it witnessed the consolidation of the remarkable Manchu conquest. We have seen Kanghi as he appears from the public acts and magnificent exploits of his reign. They show him wise, courageous, magnanimous, and sagacious as the sovereign of a vast

* Their uniform reply was that to them "trade was a matter of little consequence, and regarded by them with contempt."

† The period of the Russian embassy was also remarkable for the arrival at Peking of Mezzabarba, a legate sent by the Pope to heal the dissensions between the Jesuits and the Dominicans. He arrived at Macao in September 1720; see Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 337-43. At this time Kanghi had been completely won over to the side of the anti-European party.

empire and of a multitudinous people. His private life, and those minor traits which so often reveal the true man better than his set conduct on the platform of public life confirm the view impressed upon us by the record of his reign. The character of few rulers will bear the same searching investigation as his will. In the smallest affairs he seems to have been truly great, and his virtue was conspicuous in all he undertook.

Although so much occupied by the troubles beyond his borders, Kanghi's main object had ever been to secure for his subjects internal tranquillity and all the benefits of peace and of an impartial dispensation of justice. Whether residing in the Imperial Palace at Peking, or in his summer retreat at Chang Chun Yuen, "the park of eternal spring," Kanghi was always careful to avoid indulging in any useless or excessive extravagance. The same sound sense which he showed in refusing to assume a fresh title of honour,* when requested to do so by his courtiers on the occasion of the overthrow of Galdan, was evinced in many other ways too numerous to be related. Among the principal of these instances of royal thoughtfulness it may be mentioned that he gave up one of his favourite pursuits, that of making tours or progresses through his dominions, in tender consideration of the wants of

* This was in 1697. These titles of honours were called Nienhao, and were in addition to the title assumed on mounting the throne. The Manchu rulers have followed Kanghi's wise example and discontinued the practice.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 284.

his people. When it came to his ears that his subjects were heavily taxed and obliged to give up their ordinary avocations for a time in order that the necessary preparations* should be made for his visit, he at once gave orders that these exceptional steps were to be discontinued. He provided a still more effectual remedy by abstaining from a practice which had become almost a habit with him, and which had proved productive to him of both amusement and instruction. Another similar but less costly practice with Kanghi was to make a tour without attendants through the streets of Peking. This remarkable condescension on the part of a Chinese monarch was shown for the second time during this reign, in recognition of the people's loyalty and affection, in the year 1709.

Kanghi was celebrated from his youth as an intrepid horseman and hunter. It was his favourite relaxation to pass the hotter months of summer in hunting expeditions in Tartary, that is to say in the country beyond the Wall. None among his companions excelled him as a skilful rider and archer, and with him the ardour of the sportsman was one of the keenest sentiments. Even at Peking he could not forego his chosen pastime, and he filled the neighbouring park of

* These Imperial visits were, of course, marked by great ceremony. The Emperor was necessarily attended by a large number of his court, and by a considerable escort. On one occasion the body-guard was estimated to consist of between 2,000 and 3,000 men. Probably not fewer than 20,000 persons in all had to be provided for by the districts honoured with the Emperor's presence.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 313.

Haidsu with game and savage animals, in order that he might not have to forego his accustomed exercise. Here, in the sixty-ninth year of his age and the last of his reign, Kanghi went out to chase the tiger, to the astonishment, if not the admiration also, of his subjects. The case of this Chinese Emperor may be taken as furnishing another proof that the love and practice of manly exercises do not detract from the vigour of the arm in war, or from the clearness of the head in council.

Kanghi's interest in promoting literary pursuits, and in placing facilities in the way of the noble cause of education, was not less conspicuous than that he showed in the pursuit of the exhilarating sports of his race. One of the first objects to which he devoted himself was to procure a complete and trustworthy map both of the provinces and also of the dependent territories over which he reigned. With that end in view he sent the foreign missionaries on special missions of exploration into all the quarters of the Empire. By their agency he succeeded in acquiring a closer and more intimate acquaintance with the features and climatic conditions of the eighteen provinces of China than had been possessed by any of his predecessors. While one party followed the course of the Great Wall throughout its entire extent from east to west, another explored the recesses of Leaoutung and marked out the frontier of Corea, and a third proceeded to the borders of Tibet, and laid down on the chart the approaches to a country which was gradually but surely being drawn into closer and more intimate connection with Peking.

The Hanlin College came in for a large share of favour during this reign, and the name* of Kanghi occupies a prominent place in the annals of that great national institution. The Emperor was himself a man of letters of no mean proficiency and skill, and his collected works filled one hundred volumes.† Among the offspring of his imagination were pieces of poetry and fugitive essays, as well as more serious memoirs on public affairs, the history of his country, and the work of administration. But of all his literary labours none has achieved a higher or more durable fame than his sixteen maxims on the art of governing states. Each of these maxims contained no more and no less than seven characters, but they were subsequently amplified and annotated by his son and successor the Emperor Yung Ching.‡ Another work in which Kanghi's hand may be traced, but which was actually performed by a commission of Hanlin doctors, may be mentioned in the celebrated Imperial dictionary, which represents an imperishable monument to the greatness of Kanghi's character. Many other literary achievements were accomplished during this reign, and among these were translations into Manchu, for the use of the conquerors, of the principal Chinese classics.§ All Kanghi's writings

* See Dr. Martin's "Hanlin Papers" already mentioned.

† A copy of this precious work exists in the library at Paris.

‡ These in their published form were known as the "Ching-yu," or Sacred Edict. The work has been translated into English by Mr. R. Milne, to which the reader may refer with advantage.

§ See Pauthier, vol. i. p. 440.

were marked by a high code of morality, as well as by the lofty ideas of a large-minded statesman.

Kanghi could not escape the shafts of the envious, and several gossiping travellers* have endeavoured to spread reports to the disparagement of this prince. An excessive vanity and avarice have been imputed to him, but the whole tenor of his life disproves the former statement, and whatever foundation in fact the latter may have had he never carried it to any greater length than mere prudence and consideration for the wants of his people demanded. On the other hand we know that he resorted to gentle pressure to attain his ends rather than to tyrannical violence. When he wished to levy a heavy contribution from a too rich subject, he had recourse to what may be styled a mild joke† sooner than to the thumbscrew or the rack. Nor did he ever allow his anger to carry him into extremes, which he might afterwards have cause to repent. His long reign is singularly free from the executions of prominent princes and officials, which are found so frequently in Chinese history under even the best of rulers; and wherever possible he always tempered justice with mercy. A very short time after

* Laureati and Le Gentil.

† This will be found described at length in note on p. 366 of vol. xi. of Mailla. Briefly it may be thus narrated:—One day Kanghi made this official lead him riding on an ass round his gardens. As recompense he gave him a tael. Then he himself led the mandarin in similar fashion. At the end of the tour he asked how much greater he was than his minister? “The comparison is impossible,” said the ready courtier. “Then I must make the estimate myself,” replied Kanghi; “I am 20,000 times as great, therefore you will pay me 20,000 taels.”

his accession one of his ministers fell into disgrace, and lay under sentence of death. But when he bared his breast and exposed the marks of the wounds he had received in saving the life of Kanghi's grandfather, Taitso,* he was immediately pardoned and found his way back to the confidence of his sovereign.

The frequent illnesses from which Kanghi had suffered during his later years had done much to undermine and weaken a constitution that had always been considered exceptionally sound and robust. Notwithstanding these reasons for observing simple precautions, he still persisted in the winter of 1722 in following his amusement of the chase in the neighbourhood of Peking. He was thus employed when his last and fatal illness seized him. In a few hours all was over, and in the evening of the 20th of December 1722 there passed away all that was mortal of the best and greatest monarch of Asia. On all sides, and from witnesses of different opinions on most subjects, came unanimous testimony† to his

* Bouvet's "Vie de Canghi."

† Père Parennin in his letter of the 1st of May 1723 (tome xix. of "Lettres Edifiantes") wrote as follows:—"This prince was one of those extraordinary men who are only met with once in the course of several centuries. He placed no limits to his desire for knowledge, and of all the princes of Asia there never was one with so great a taste for the arts and sciences." And again, "This prince was not put out by the expression of an opinion different to his own—rare, indeed, is it among persons of his rank to tolerate contradiction." Mailla's opinion is not less favourable and not less clearly expressed. He calls him "one of the greatest men who have honoured the throne of China." The following quotation of his personal appearance is taken from Bouvet's "Vie de Canghi":—

"There is nothing in his appearance which is not worthy of the throne he occupies. His air is majestic, his figure excellently

worth. Of the magnitude of his services to China and to his own race there could, indeed, be no question. They were conspicuous and incontestable. He had ascended the throne at a time when it seemed that the Manchu conquest, far from giving China the assurance of a settled and peaceful rule, would prove in its main result the perpetuation of internal dissension and of sanguinary strife. The presence of the able and powerful feudatory Wou Sankwei strengthened that conviction, and none dared think when the crisis reached the stage of open war that the youthful prince would more than hold his own, and eventually triumph over the veteran general whose military skill and consistent good fortune had been the theme of admiration and wonder with his countrymen for more than a whole generation.

From his earliest youth Kanghi had given abundant promise of his future greatness; and one story which is preserved of him when about to succeed to the crown is indicative of his firm confidence in himself and his destiny. It is said that, when Chuntche was on his death-bed, he summoned his children into his presence. "Which of you," he said, "feels that he possesses the ability and strength to retain a crown that has been won only so short a time?" All pleaded

proportioned and above the middle height; all the features of the countenance are regular; his eyes bright and larger than is usual with his nation; the nose slightly curved and drooping at the point; and the few marks left by the small-pox detract nothing from the charm which is conspicuous throughout his person."

His mental qualities are then described in terms not less glowing than is his personal appearance.

their youth or their inexperience, except Kanghi, the youngest, in whose vigorous instincts there dwelt the assurance of success. The result more than justified his confidence in himself, and the Chinese people not less than the Manchu race had reason to congratulate themselves that Kanghi triumphed over his difficulties and succeeded in consolidating his authority. During the sixty-one years of his reign China made rapid strides towards the attainment of perfect material prosperity, and when he handed down his crown to his fourth son and successor, Yung Ching, he left an empire of vast dimensions thoroughly reduced to a sense of obedience to the Government of Peking, and prosperous by reason of the assurance of security for all classes, and for all kinds of property.

The place of Kanghi among Chinese sovereigns is clearly defined. He ranks on almost equal terms with the two greatest of them all, Taitsong and his own grandson Keen Lung; and it would be ungracious, if not impossible, to say in what respect he falls short of complete equality with either, so numerous and conspicuous were his talents and his virtues. His long friendship and high consideration for the Christian missionaries have no doubt contributed to bring his name and the events of his reign more prominently before Europe than has been the case with any other Chinese ruler, even in that of his grandson. But although this predilection for European practices may have had the effect of strengthening his claims to precede every other of his country's rulers, it can add but little to the impression produced on even

the most cursory reader by the remarkable achievements in peace and war accomplished by this gifted Emperor. The right of these three Chinese rulers to appear in the same rank with the greatest sovereigns of antiquity or of modern times, of Europe or of Asia, cannot be disputed. They showed the same qualities that gain the admiration of mankind in the heroes of Greece and Rome; nor can those few rulers and conquerors to whom by the allowance of all civilised peoples the title of Great is due—Alexander and Cæsar, Genghis and Timour, Akbar and Peter, Frederick and Napoleon—be placed in any way above them, whereas in the magnitude and utility of their deeds some of these fell very far short of any one of these Chinese emperors. Kanghi's genius dominates one of the most critical periods in Chinese history, of which the narrative should form neither an uninteresting nor an uninstrutive theme. Celebrated as the consolidator and completer of the Manchu conquest, Kanghi's virtue and moderation have gained him permanent fame as a wise, just, and beneficent national sovereign in the hearts of the Chinese people, who will ever cherish and revere his memory as that of a man who was among the best of their monarchs, at the same time that he represented one of the most favourable types of their character.*

* Kanghi's will—a lengthy document, of which, it should be stated, the authenticity has been challenged—is given by Mailla (vol. xi. pp. 350-4). Its phrases are characteristic, but as it is too long to quote in its entirety we abstain from giving a portion of it, which would be a mutilation. Unlike Hongwou's will, already quoted, its interest also is rather personal than historical. Mailla

—whose own historical narrative closes with this reign—concludes his remarks on Kanghi with the following:—“Just posterity will beyond doubt assign to this prince a distinguished place among the greatest monarchs. Solely occupied between affairs of state, military acts, and the study of liberal pursuits; beneficent, brave, generous, wise, active and vigilant in policy, of profound and extended genius, having nothing of the pomp or indolence of Asiatic courts, although his power and wealth were both immense; the one thing alone wanting to this prince, according to the desire of the missionaries who have become the exponents of his eminent qualities, was to crown them all with the adoption of the Christianity of which he knew the principles, and of which he valued the morality and the maxims, but which policy and the human passions prevented his openly embracing.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REIGN OF YUNG CHING.

Yung Ching ascends the Throne.—Kanghi's fourth Son.—Resemblance to his Father.—A staid Man of Middle Age.—Threatening Causes of Disturbance.—His Brothers.—Sessaka.—Christians.—Prince Sourniama.—The Elder Branch of the Manchus.—Emperor's Disapproval of the Foreign Religion.—Local Agitation.—Fuhkien.—An Edict against Christianity.—Chinese Views on the Subject.—Yung Ching's Address.—His Opinion about his Neighbours.—His Religious Policy.—Great Floods.—Consequent Dearth.—The State comes to the aid.—Fearful Earthquake.—Pekin almost destroyed.—The Emperor camps out.—Steps taken to alleviate the Suffering.—Increase of the Population.—Waste Lands.—“The Beauty of Government.”—Rewards to Widows.—And Bachelors.—Old Age.—Legate from the Pope.—Portuguese Ambassador.—Metello's Reception.—Antony Magelhaens.—Fresh Outburst against Christians.—Filial Obedience.—The Worst of the Argument.—Christian Missionaries left at Peace.—But their Influence gone.—Wars in the West.—Central Asian Affairs.—Yung Ching recalls his Troops.—A Policy of Indifference.—Tse Wang Rabdan's Career.—His Murder.—Russian Designs.—Yung Ching's sudden Death.—His Character.—Succeeded by his eldest Son.—Keen Lung.

IMMEDIATELY after Kanghi's death his fourth son, whom he had long designated as his heir, and in whom he fancied that he traced a strong resemblance to

himself, was proclaimed Emperor under the style of Yung Ching.* In the edict with which he announced to his subjects the death of his father, and his own accession to the throne, he said that on the advice of his ministers he had entered upon the discharge of his official duties without delay, and without giving up precious time to the indulgence of a grief natural, so far as his personal feelings were concerned, but probably prejudicial to the public interests. Yung Ching was a man of mature age,† and could, from the place he had enjoyed in the confidence of his predecessor, assume without any delay the responsibilities and duties of his lofty station. He declared that his main purpose would be to carry on in the same manner as Kanghi had the great administrative work of his father, and that he would tread as closely as he could in his footsteps. But while Yung Ching took these prompt steps to place himself upon the throne, and to wield the attributes of supreme power, several of his brothers whom his elevation had displaced assumed an attitude of covert hostility towards his government, and their demeanour warned him that he would have to exercise vigilance and to exhibit energy if he desired to retain his dignity. At the same time it appeared evident to all that Kanghi had selected his worthiest son as his successor, and that China would have no reason

* Yung Ching meaning "the indissoluble concord, stable peace." Kanghi in one of the closing passages of his will had said of him, "Yung Ching, the fourth of my sons, is a man of rare and precious character. This prince has much resemblance to myself."

† Forty-five years of age.—Mailla.

to fear under Yung Ching the loss of any of the benefits conferred on the nation by his predecessor. His fine presence, and frank, open manner secured for him the sympathy and applause of the public, and in a very short time he also gained their respect and admiration by his wisdom and justice.

The principal and in every way the most formidable of these was Kanghi's fourteenth son, who, at the time of his death, held the chief command in Central Asia against the Eleuths. This prince, and more especially his son, a youth of some sixteen summers, named Poki, had enjoyed a certain amount of popularity during Kanghi's lifetime, and some had even thought that he would have been chosen as that ruler's successor. But for reasons no doubt excellent Kanghi passed him over and selected Yung Ching instead. It is not clear that Yung Ching had any reason to believe that his younger brother meditated a revolt, but there is no doubt that he at once began to act towards him as if he were a concealed and dangerous enemy. Repeated messages were sent him, in the name of the deceased Emperor, to return without delay to the capital, and to resign the seals of his command to one of his lieutenants. At first some thought of disobeying the summons entered his mind; but after more consideration he resolved to obey. On his arrival at Peking he was placed in honourable confinement, which was changed to closer imprisonment at Chang Chun Yuen on the death a few months later of his mother, who, as Yung Ching's own mother too, had exerted her influence on the side

of mercy. At this palace the prince and his son Poki remained during the whole of Yung Ching's reign, and they owed to the clemency of the next Emperor, Keen Lung, their release from the enforced seclusion of thirteen years.

The reported ambitious schemes of Sessaka, another of Yung Ching's brothers, and the ninth of Kanghi's sons, also tended to disturb the tranquillity of the new ruler. His want of ability justified a more lenient course of proceeding with him, and his case was considered to have been adequately met when he had been fined to the extent of the greater portion of his personal property, and when he had been relegated to a small military command in the provinces.* Nor were those who fell under the suspicion of the new sovereign confined to his near relations. Lessihin, the son of Prince Sourniama, and the representative of the elder branch of the Manchu family, had been publicly known as one of Sessaka's sympathisers, and he was accused of dilatoriness in his official capacity on the occasion of extorting from that personage the fine required by Yung Ching. Whether the accusation was just or not, Lessihin and his brother were involved in the disgrace of Sessaka, and banished to Sining on the western frontier. There, either as the result of long secret conviction, or from some other motive that must now remain inscrutable, these fallen magnates adopted Christianity and were baptised. This conversion† could do

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 374, and Parennin's letter in the "Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xix.

† The missionaries made several converts among the other

nothing but harm to their worldly prospects, and it also certainly had the effect of heightening the new Emperor's antipathy to the Christian religion and its representatives.

Yung Ching had from the first regarded with an unfriendly eye this branch of the Manchu family, and their adoption of Christianity could add but little to his resentment. The importance of this indiscretion consisted in its providing him with a decent pretext to resort to extremities against all whom he had marked out as being ill-disposed towards his person. On the one hand the adoption of a foreign and heretical creed served as some proof of confirmed contumacy on the part of his relations; and on the other it gave a semblance of truth to the statement that the Christian priests meddled and took a side in the internal politics of the country. Yung Ching saw and seized his opportunity. His measures of repression against the recalcitrant party in his own family culminated in the summary exile of Sourniama, and all his descendants down to the fourth generation.*

It was in vain that Sourniama sought to establish his innocence, and to turn Yung Ching from the vindictive policy upon which he had resolved. In accordance with Manchu practice he sent three of his sons to the palace laden with chains to declare the fidelity of their

members of this family. Several of Sourniama's sons had been stanch and zealous Christians for some time. The most prominent of them was called by the Jesuits Count John.—See Mailla, vol. xi. p. 376.

* Mailla.

father, but an audience was refused them ; and Sourniama was curtly informed that no course was open to him save to obey. Even in his place of exile the wrath of the Emperor pursued him, and, to satisfy the suspicious exactions of his Sovereign, he and his were compelled to retire into a district still further from the inhabited portions of the country. Here they were reduced to severe straits from absolute want, and early in the year 1725 Sourniama found in death relief from his misfortunes and necessities. His descendants were to owe to the clemency of Keen Lung such reparation for their wrongs as the present can at any time make for the past.

If Yung Ching thus pressed with a heavy hand on those whose assistance and sympathy he felt it doubtful that he could secure, he was certainly not disposed to regard with less sternness or severity the foreign religion towards which he had never felt any sympathy, and under cover of which his enemies appeared to think that they might find shelter. Having settled most of the disputes which threatened the security of his own position, and having restored, as he might reasonably hope, union and tranquillity to the circle of the reigning family, Yung Ching next turned his attention to the effectual humbling of the bold band of foreigners who had established themselves in the capital and throughout the country, and who, having monopolised some of the most important dignities in the service, continued to preach and propagate their gospel of a supreme power and mercy beyond the control of kings, a gospel which was simply destructive of

the paternal and sacred claims on which a Chinese Emperor based his authority as superior to all earthly interference, and as transmitted to him direct from Heaven.

Yung Ching's sentiments of aversion were seized and turned to advantage by the official classes whose hostility to the foreigners had always been pronounced, and which, long pent up, had begun to reveal itself in acts before the death of Kanghi. It was in the provinces that this anti-foreign agitation naturally enough first began to reveal itself in acts of open hostility. In Fuhkien the military governor issued a proclamation* denouncing Christianity, forbidding its practice, and ordering all the churches that had been opened within his jurisdiction to be closed. This official condemnation of the foreign religion as a pernicious and demoralising creed naturally augmented the popular feeling against strangers who had hitherto been regarded with little more than indifference; and on all sides accusations were freely advanced against the moral character of the Christian converts. The eighteen churches which had been erected by the piety of converted natives† were devoted to different public purposes, and the missionaries were ordered to leave Fuhkien without delay and to return to Macao. The success that

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 379.

† In an edict dated the 7th of September 1723, it is laid to the charge of the Christians, that their doctrine "sows trouble among the people and makes them doubt the goodness of our laws."—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 384.

attended their movements in this particular province encouraged all who were from any cause unfriendly to present a petition to the Emperor for the extirpation of Christianity throughout the country. At Peking the Jesuits lost all their influence. Those who had been well disposed to them either had been banished or were cowed into silence. The Emperor refused to receive them in audience, and they could only wait in inaction, and with such human fortitude as they could muster, until the storm had burst or passed away. Yung Ching expressed in writing his formal approval of everything that had been done, but at the same time he enjoined on his officials the necessity of using as little violence as possible. All the missionaries were to be conducted either to Macao or to the capital, where, if their services were useful, they might still be employed.*

* Some of the views expressed by the Chinese authorities during this crisis may be quoted. The missionaries (Fredelli, Castillon, and De Mailla) entreated a brother of Yung Ching, the thirteenth son of Kanghi, and generally considered as favourably disposed to the Christians, to interfere in their favour. Placed in a judicial position with regard to the throne his favour rapidly cooled, and he declared that since the discussion of their question first began they had been the cause of an infinity of trouble and fatigue to the late Emperor, his father. "What would you say," he continued, "if our people were to go to Europe and wished to change there the laws and customs established by your ancient sages? The Emperor, my brother, wishes to put an end to all this in an effectual manner." The same prince said on a subsequent occasion, "I saw the other day the accusation of the Tsongtou of Fuhkien. It is undoubtedly strong, and your disputes about our customs have greatly injured you. What would you say if we were to transport ourselves to Europe and to act there as you have done here? Would you stand it for a moment? In the course of time I shall master this business, but I declare to you that China will want for nothing when you cease to live in it, and that your absence will not cause it any loss. Here

The missionaries, when they saw the results of many years of labour slipping away from them, and as soon as they found that the foundations of the position they had gradually attained by the tact and fortitude shown during 150 years, from the days of Matthew Ricci in the reign of the Ming Wanleh, were being sapped, resorted to all the efforts of persuasion to avert the collapse of their influence. Their attempt to enlist the sympathy and support of those members of the Manchu family who had once regarded them with favour signally failed to produce any beneficial result. They had all been won over to Yung Ching's views, and the fate of Sourniama and his family proved an effectual deterrent to prevent any imitating their backsliding in the matter of this strange religion. Yet before the controversy closed, Yung Ching received in audience for the first time a deputation from the Jesuits, when, however, instead of listening to their complaints and demands he enunciated his own policy with regard to them, and in his sketch of the question he gave some hints as to the lines upon which it was based.*

“The late Emperor, my father,” he said, addressing the small band of foreign priests who had proved their zeal in the cause of their religion by renouncing

nobody is retained by force, and nobody also will be suffered to break the laws or to make light of our customs.”—Mailla, vol. xi. pp. 392-3.

* This speech is so remarkable that it is given above *in extenso* from Mailla. Without any stretch of imagination it may be conceived that it still forms one of the standard precedents with Chinese statesmen on the subject of their external relations.

all hope of return to their native land, "after having instructed me during forty years, chose me in preference to any of my brothers to succeed him on the throne. I make it one of my first objects to imitate him and to depart in nothing from his manner of government. Some Europeans in the province of Fuhkien have shown a wish to destroy our laws, and they have been a cause of trouble to our people. The high officials of that province have duly apprised me of these facts. It is my duty to provide a remedy for the disorder. That is a matter for the government, with which I am charged. I could not, and ought not to act now as I used to do when I was only a simple prince.

"You tell me that your law is not a false one. I believe you; if I thought that it was false, what would prevent me from destroying your churches and from driving you out of the country? False laws are those which, under the pretext of spreading virtue, rouse a spirit of revolt. But what would you say if I were to send a troop of bonzes and lamas into your country in order to preach their doctrines? How would you receive them?

"Limatow (Ricci) came to China in the first year of Wanleh. I will not touch upon what the Chinese did at that time, as I am in no way responsible for it. But then you were very few in numbers. In fact there were only one or two of you, and you had not your people and churches in every province. It was only in my father's reign that these churches were raised on all sides and that your doctrines spread with

rapidity. We then saw these things clearly enough, and we dared say nothing on the subject. But if you knew how to beguile my father, do not hope to be able to deceive me in the same manner.

“You wish that all the Chinese should become Christians, and indeed your creed demands it. I am well aware of this, but in that event what would become of us? Should we not soon be merely the subjects of your kings? The converts you have made already recognise nobody but you, and in a time of trouble they would listen to no other voice than yours. I know as a matter of fact that we have nothing now to fear, but when the foreign vessels shall come in their thousands and tens of thousands, then it may be that some disasters will ensue.

“China has on the north the empire of the Russians, which is not to be despised; on the south there are the Europeans and their kingdoms, which are still more considerable*; and on the west there is Tse Wang Rabdan, whom I wish to keep back within his borders lest he should enter China and cause us trouble. Lange, Ismaloff’s colleague, the Czar’s ambassador, solicited that permission should be given the Russians to establish factories for commerce in all the provinces. His request was refused, and trade was only allowed at Peking or at Kiachta on the fron-

* What Yung Ching probably meant by this was “on the south are the Europeans and behind them are their different kingdoms which are still more considerable than Russia.” Kanghi knew, or believed, that France was the first kingdom in Europe.

tier, in the Khalka country. I permit you to reside here and at Canton as long as you give no cause for complaint; but, if any should arise, I will not allow you to remain either here or at Canton. I will have none of you in the provinces. The Emperor, my father, suffered much in reputation among the literati by the condescension with which he allowed you to establish yourselves. He could not himself make any change in the laws of our sages, and I will not suffer that in the least degree there shall be cause to reproach my reign on this score. When my sons and grandsons are on the throne they may do as shall seem good to them. It matters not to me in the smallest what Wanleh did on your account.

“Do not imagine in conclusion that I have nothing against you, or on the other hand that I wish to oppress you. You are aware how I used to act in your behalf when I was only a Regulo. What I do now, I do in my character of Emperor. My sole care is to govern the Empire well. To that I apply myself from morning to evening. I do not see even my children or the Empress; but only those who are engaged in the public administration. This will continue as long as the term of mourning, which is for three years. When that is over I shall, perhaps, then be able to see you more often.”

There is no contesting the ability shown by the Emperor in this speech, which summed up the formal indictment against the Christians as the propagators of a religion incompatible with the constitution and customs of China, and from his point of view much in

the argument cannot be gainsaid. The persecution of the Christians, of which the letters from the Peking missionaries were so full, did not for a time go beyond the placing of some restraint on the preaching of their religion. No wholesale executions, or sweeping decrees passed against their persons, attended its course or marked its development. Yung Ching simply showed by his conduct that they must count no longer on the favour of the Emperor in the carrying-out of their designs. The difficulties inherent in the task they had undertaken stood for the first time fully revealed, and, having been denounced as a source of possible danger to the stability of the Empire, they became an object of suspicion even to those who had formerly sympathised with their persons if not with their creed.

Yung Ching was still engaged in dealing with these difficult questions of dispute with his relatives and his alien subjects, when his attention was called away by reports from several of his viceroys on the subject of great floods which had carried destruction to the crops throughout a large part of northern China. The provinces of Pechihli, Shansi and Shensi in particular suffered greatly from this cause, and many thousands of persons were compelled out of sheer want to take refuge in Peking. Yung Ching devoted all his energy and resources to the task of alleviating the prevalent distress and of mitigating the public misfortune. Large supplies of rice were brought from the south at the expense of the State, and when the Emperor learnt that owing to

the peculation of minor officials rice of a very inferior quality was being distributed, he immediately took steps to put an end to these malpractices, ordering, under penalty of death, that none save the very best rice should be purchased and supplied to those in want. About the same time the amount of taxes leviable on the important cities, Nankin and Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi, was greatly reduced in compliance with a petition made on the ground of their excessive character. Yung Ching showed in both these matters that he kept his people's best interests very much at heart. His sincerity in these acts of public charity was demonstrated by his emphatic refusal to allow a statue to be erected in his honour, and by his grave rebuke of those who suggested such a useless expenditure during a time of great public want. At one period during this time of famine as many as forty thousand persons were fed daily for more than four months at Peking alone.

The suffering from this cause had scarcely been allayed, when one of those terrible visitations of nature, which come at long intervals to startle the world into a general feeling of insecurity, carried wholesale destruction throughout the metropolitan province of Pechihli. As if to afford some counterpoise for the too bounteous favours showered on them by Providence, the northern districts of China have for many centuries been liable to the frequent recurrence of earthquakes on a terribly vast and disastrous scale. None, however, of which any record has been preserved equalled in its terrific grandeur that of

the year 1730. More than one hundred thousand persons in the capital were overwhelmed in a moment, the suburbs were laid in ruins, and the havoc extended for a wide distance round the country. In several places the ground opened, and from the fissures issued forth either a thick smoke or jets of black water. During a period of ten days* the shocks were repeated at frequent intervals, and terror reigned supreme among a superstitious people.† The Emperor himself feared to remain in the interior of his palace, and camped out with his court and family in tents specially erected for their accommodation. Even the splendid pleasure-house of Yuen Ming Yuen, which Yung Ching had erected near his father's palace at Chang Chun Yuen, was so seriously damaged that for a time it was thought to be uninhabitable. Large sums were drawn from the Treasury for the alleviation of the public necessities, and as much as fifteen millions of our pounds are stated‡ to have been distributed before the exigencies of the occasion were considered to have been met, or before Yung Ching's feelings of humanity rested satisfied.

Yet notwithstanding these terrible visitations and afflictions the general state of the country continued to

* 30th of September to the 10th of October 1730.

† The superstition of the Chinese is an admitted fact, although their general character is at variance with the idea implied. A proof of it may be found in the statement of a competent observer that "Hope is half a Chinese faith; his cult is to him as a lottery; he will pay his last farthing to a soothsayer to predict good fortune."—De Laturé's "La Chine." Another Chinese saying is, that "only the wicked fear ghosts."

‡ Mailla, vol. xi. p. 493.

be most prosperous. A full exchequer and a contented people were accompanied by their necessary concomitant and consequence, an increase in the population. In Yunnan and Kweichow in particular this increase was so great as to attract much notice, and to raise no inconsiderable alarm on the score of the rice supply. A partial remedy was applied to the evil by the distribution of large tracts of waste lands among the poorer classes. Yung Ching seems to have attached great importance to the growth of the population, which he evidently regarded as a permanent feature in the condition of his country rather than as a passing phase in its social history. It was in view of that evil that he issued an edict offering special rewards to such widows* as did not marry again, and to bachelors who preserved their state. To the former he decreed that there should be erected in their native town at the public expense a triumphal arch, and to the latter, who had devoted themselves to the performance of their filial duties, he gave titles of honour. By this latter means he also enhanced the merit of that filial obedience which is not only the corner-stone of Chinese social life, but also the very foundation on which Chinese sovereignty rests.

These endeavours to check in a simple and natural way any excessive increase in the number of his subjects did not blind Yung Ching to the claims that the aged and infirm had upon the care and consideration of

* "The beauty of government," said this Emperor, "depends more than anything else on the regular conduct of the women."
—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 421.

the State. Imitating the example of his father he issued doles to those who had exceeded the allotted space of man's life. These were divided into three classes—those above seventy, those above eighty, and those who had exceeded ninety years. He also encouraged the Empress to institute a similar system of relief for women who had passed the seventieth year of their age. From these instances it may be recognised that Yung Ching had formed a high ideal of the duties of a paternal ruler, and he was employed, to use his own words, from the rising to the going down of the sun in performing the numerous and varied duties of his onerous position.

Although Yung Ching had from the first shown but scant favour to the foreigners, yet in the second year of his reign he allowed an envoy, who had been sent by the Pope, to come to his capital. Beyond according him a favourable reception, and giving expression to several platitudes as to “all religions being calculated to do good,” Yung Ching did not commit himself to any promise on the subject of his policy towards the Christians; and we have already seen how fully made up his mind was on that point. In the following year a Portuguese embassy under the charge of Don Alexander Metello, which had been sent in consequence of communications sent in the reign of Kanghi through the instrumentality of Antony Magelhaens,* arrived in China, and as its origin

* A Jesuit missionary to whom we owe a very interesting sketch or memoir on China.

was due to the initiative of the Chinese themselves the Emperor felt obliged to receive it in audience. While the Pope's legate had come to discuss matters of religion, Metello confined his attention to the more practical questions of commerce. His gravity of demeanour and general tact made a favourable impression at a court where the etiquette reflects by its severity the polished taste of a people of culture; but of practical results, even for the Portuguese, this costly embassy produced none. It was very shortly after the departure of Metello that Yung Ching took steps of marked severity against several officials who were said to be Christians, and expressed for the first time in a public document his contempt for the religion of the foreigners. Strange as it may seem he connected in this formal indictment Christianity with Buddhism, and expressed his final astonishment at the fact that any of his subjects should be so misguided as to "be ready to shed their blood in such a cause."*

It was not until the year 1732, towards the close of Yung Ching's reign, that the inimical sentiment of both the people and the Government towards the foreigners again revealed itself in open acts; and then Canton, the second city of importance in the Empire so far as the Christians were concerned, was

* Mailla, vol. xi. p. 471.—The missionaries drew up a memorial in reply to the accusations brought against them. In connection with this it may be noted that the authorities of the "Pekin Gazette" refused to publish it because it was not received from the Emperor through the Tribunal of Rites.—"Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxii. p. 281.

the scene of these measures of national antipathy or repressive legislation, according as we may feel disposed to regard the question. At one moment the situation appeared to be pregnant with danger for the Europeans, as Yung Ching, influenced by the views expressed even by the Canton mandarins—who had been more sympathetic, from selfish motives it is true, towards Europeans—was on the point of giving an order for their expulsion without exception from the Empire, when in a moment of indignation he summoned the missionaries into his presence in order to read them a homily on their want of paternal respect. He appears to have been informed by some of his ministers that the Christian religion did not enjoin filial obedience, which, of course, shocked his understanding. When, however, the missionaries in defending themselves pointed out that it was one of their first and principal laws, Yung Ching was too just and enlightened a man to persist in his threats as soon as he found that he had been working on a fallacy and that his argument was untenable. From that time to his death in 1735 the missionaries had nothing worse to complain of at his hands than his passive indifference to their presence. So far as notice of them by either the Emperor or the Court went, they might just as well, indeed, have quitted China and returned to their own countries. The arrival of recruits being interdicted, it was only a question of time until they should all die and disappear from the scene of their labours. It was also a question, as

the event showed, of the duration of Yung Ching's own life.

When Yung Ching ascended the throne, the wars which had long disturbed the Western Marches were far from being concluded. Kanghi's successful campaigns had given security to the Khalkas, and had asserted the predominance of Chinese influence at Lhasa; but they had not availed to curb the growing power and pretensions of Tse Wang Rabdan. The last few years of Kanghi's reign had been saddened by military reverses, and although there was no relaxing in the energy of the steps taken towards their retrieval, yet, with the absence of the Emperor and with no worthy successor for the intrepid Feyanku, the result had not corresponded either with Kanghi's hopes, or with the greatness of the effort made.

Tse Wang Rabdan, although unable to attempt so distinct a trial of strength with the Chinese Emperor as his relative Galdan had done, continued his attitude of more or less open defiance, and his acts of aggression* were numerous and frequently successful in their objects. The general opinion, certainly, was that Yung Ching would carry on these operations with renewed vigour, and that he would seek to exact a speedy and complete satisfaction for the reverses that marked, but could not dim the lustre of, his

* These operations have been picturesquely described in the "Memoires concernant les Chinois" (tom. i. p. 330). See *ante*, p. 393 note. Experience had taught the Chinese the inconvenience and futility of pursuing a savage opponent in a barren and uninhabited region. They were at last forced to adopt the opinion that there was no safe course between conquering this region and leaving it alone.

father's latest years. Yung Ching's policy disappointed these natural expectations. He was essentially a man of peace, caring nothing for the so-called glory of foreign wars and costly expeditions, and declaring that his proper province was to attend solely to the wants of his own people. Instead, therefore, of despatching fresh armies into Central Asia he withdrew those that were there, leaving the turbulent tribes of that region to fight out their own quarrels and to indulge their petty ambitions as they might feel disposed. The policy in this matter* which Yung Ching began with the first day of his reign was continued until the hour of his death.

* Here may be briefly summarised the closing scenes of the career of Tse Wang Rabdan, the most powerful of Jungarian monarchs. We have seen the success with which he had intervened in Tibet and operated against Kanghi. His paramour was generally recognised throughout Eastern Turkestan, or Little Bokhara, where he had stepped in successfully to advance the interests and establish the authority of a chief called Daniel. His career was cut short by his murder in 1727, and his power passed to his son Galdan Chereng. Galdan Chereng was the monarch of the Jungarians during the whole of Yung Ching's reign and the first years of that of his successor. Mr. Howorth ("History of the Mongols," vol. i. pp. 646-9) gives a very interesting account of the relations that subsisted between Tse Wang Rabdan and his neighbours the Russians. So far back as the year 1714 a scheme was laid before Peter the Great for the annexation of the country of Little Bokhara. The prime motive put forward for this act was the gold said to be contained in this reputed El Dorado. The Russians went so far towards the realisation of their designs as to send a force of nearly 3,000 men down the Irtish, whence they proceeded to Yamishewa where they built a fort. The conquest of Yarkand was its immediate object. The expedition was assailed on all hands by the Calmucks and compelled to retreat. The attempt was renewed several times at later periods, but one and all of these expeditions failed. These schemes for a conquest, not yet accomplished, furnish historical proof of the antiquity of Russia's designs in Asia.

Yung Ching's death* occurred suddenly. On the 7th of October 1735 he gave audience to the high officials in accordance with his usual custom, but feeling indisposed he broke off the interview earlier than on ordinary occasions. The same evening his indisposition assumed a grave character, and in a few hours he had ceased to live. The loss of their Emperor does not appear to have caused any profound sentiment of grief among the masses, although the more intelligent recognised in him one of those wise and prudent rulers whose tenure of power makes their people's happiness. Rumours were spread about to his disadvantage and to the detriment of his private character ; but an impartial consideration of his reign shows them to have possessed little or no foundation in fact. During the thirteen years that he ruled we find him ever anxious to promote the public weal and to alleviate the sufferings of his people. Whether it was in matters of state, or of his private conduct, he seemed equally mindful of the dignity of his position and of the fame of his family. Without aspiring to the eminence of his father, he left a name for justice and public spirit that entitles him to rank high among the sovereigns of China who have deserved well of their country. Even his attitude towards the Christians was dictated by a firm belief in the necessity of limiting the intercourse of his people with the Europeans, and of curtailing the growing influence of the latter.

* The reader will find a contemporary notice of this event in "Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxii. pp. 190-2.

Yung Ching* had always placed the public interests in the foreground of his conduct, and whether re-arranging the order of the official classes, or compiling the history of his family, or providing for the wants of his people we find him equally true to his principles and not less ardent than consistent in carrying out the dictates of his conscience.

Yung Ching left three sons, but, as none of these had been formally declared heir-apparent, the eldest was placed upon the throne by general consent. The result proved the choice to be singularly happy, for the young prince who ascended the throne as the fourth of the Manchu rulers has earned an imperishable place in history as the Emperor Keen Lung.

* Yung Ching was hardly less devoted to literary pursuits than were his father and also his own son after him. For a list of his works, see Pauthier, tom. i. p. 450-1.

CHAPTER XIX.

KEEN LUNG'S EARLY YEARS.

Yung Ching's Successor.—Keen Lung.—Celestial Benefit.—A Student.—Appointment of Regents.—His Clemency.—Recalls the exiled Princes.—Restores their Rank.—And Honours.—His Views about the Foreign Missionaries.—Hostile to Christianity.—Persecution of Christians.—Executions.—Castiglione.—The Yellow and the Red Girdle.—Internal Condition of the Country.—The Princes of the Blood.—Central Asia.—Galdan Chereng.—His Death.—Affairs in Jungaria.—Division of Kashgaria.—The chief Dardsha.—First appearance of Davatsi.—And of Amursana.—The Struggle with Dardsha.—His Success.—Return of Davatsi.—Dardsha slain.—The Rivalry of Davatsi and Amursana.—The latter flees to China.—Internal Events.—Deaths of the Empress and of the Heir Apparent.—Keen Lung's physical Weakness.—A Sixtieth Anniversary.—Painters at the Court.—“The Land of Vicissitudes.”—Jehol.—Keen Lung's Portrait.—Wishes to make the Artist a Mandarin.—Automatons.—Close of the Period of External Peace.—The Son of Heaven.—His Claims and Rights.

WHEN Yung Ching's sudden death left a void in the seat of authority, there was none probably more surprised at the first consequences of that event than the young student, who was summoned from the

interior of the palace to take his place as the responsible head of affairs. For although the eldest of Yung Ching's sons, he was not the offspring of the Empress, and the custom of imperial succession was too uncertain to allow anyone in his position to feel much confidence as to his claims securing the recognition they might seem to warrant. Keen Lung had been brought up by his father in the pursuit of literary knowledge, and his skill and proficiency in the field of letters had already been proved before Yung Ching's death. But of public affairs, of the work of administering a great empire, Keen Lung knew literally nothing. He was a student of books rather than of men, and he had to undergo a preliminary course of training in the art of government before he felt himself competent to assume the reins of power. When it has been said that Keen Lung was more fully persuaded of this fact than anybody else, it will be understood how great must have been his merit and strength of character to have realised wherein he was deficient to fulfil the duties of his onerous post. Few princes of his years, born in the purple, have ever had the profound sagacity to admit their shortcomings, and still less the prudence to take efficacious steps to supply them. Keen Lung's first act was to appoint four regents to show him how to rule.* The very edict, however, which entrusted them with so much authority expressly limited its application to

* Keen Lung was then only twenty-five. His name signifies Celestial Benefit.—Mailla.

the period of mourning, extending over four years, but as a measure of precaution against illicit ambition, he made the office terminable at his discretion.

Keen Lung began his reign with acts of clemency, which seldom fail to add a special lustre to the character of a sovereign. His father had punished with rigour many of the first princes of the court simply because they happened to be connected with his family; and he had been in the habit of making use of his antipathy to the foreign heresy as a cloak to conceal private animosities and personal apprehensions. Keen Lung at once resolved to reverse his predecessor's policy on this point, and to offer such reparation as he could to those who had suffered without valid cause. The sons of Kanghi and their children, who had fallen under the suspicion of the Emperor Yung Ching, were released from their confinement and restored to the rank* from which they had been deposed. The young Emperor was so far fortunate in that instead of harbouring vindictive feelings for their long imprisonment they felt the

* Taitsou or Noorhachu had in the early days of his power divided the members of his family into two branches, distinguished from each other by the colour of their girdles or belts. To himself and his direct descendants he reserved the use of the yellow girdle, while to his brothers and their heirs he awarded a red girdle. The principal distinction between these different branches of the family was that, whereas the former could be made Regulos, the latter could not. On this occasion some of those, *e.g.* the descendants of Prince Sourniama, who experienced the clemency of Keen Lung, although entitled to wear the yellow and enjoy all its privileges—which appear to have consisted of free quarters and an allowance from the State—were only restored to the rank of the red girdle.—See Mailla, vol. x. p. 454 and vol. xi. p. 517.

warmest gratitude towards him as their benefactor and rescuer, to the splendour of whose reign some of them afterwards greatly contributed. The impression made on the public mind by this admirable moderation was scarcely less favourable, and the sentiment became generally expressed that a reign which began so auspiciously could hardly fail to prove a benefit and blessing to the people at large.

The restitution of their rights and privileges to these personages, whose former sympathy with the Christian missionaries had been marked and notorious, revived the hope among the latter that the evil days of persecution were at an end, and that they would be received back into such favour with the Emperor as they had enjoyed under the wise Kanghi. These hopes were destined to rude disappointment, as the party hostile to them remained as strong as ever at Court, and the regents were not less prejudiced in their case. Keen Lung's own opinion does not appear to have been very strong one way or the other, but it is probable that from being so thoroughly versed in Chinese literature he was imbued with more or less prejudice against foreigners. When the subject was placed before him by his regents he sanctioned their suggestion of an order prohibiting the practice of Christianity by any of his subjects, and ordaining the punishment of those who should obstinately adhere to it. The foreign missionaries themselves were ordered to confine their labours to the secular functions in which they were useful, and to give up all attempts to propagate their creed.

The restoration to their natural positions of the Manchu princes, who had formerly regarded the Christians with a favourable eye, was not followed by that return of the foreigners to favour which had been anticipated. The young Keen Lung* showed himself disposed on this point to continue and carry out the policy of his father.

Ten years after Keen Lung's accession to the throne these persecutions still continued, and, indeed, they had developed a fresh and more serious phase, for in the year 1746 several Spanish missionaries were arrested and tortured, those who had given them shelter were strangled, and all who had shown or expressed sympathy with either their persons or their religion suffered different degrees of punishment. The province of Fuhkien was again the principal scene of these outrages, but it is possible that the local officials were impelled to commit acts of greater severity by the knowledge of what their own countrymen had suffered at Manilla. The example set by the Viceroy of Fuhkien found faithful imitators among the other governors throughout the country, and a general outcry was raised against both the teachers of the foreign religion and their converts. The Emperor himself lent all his countenance to the movement, and it seemed that Keen Lung with the greater vigour of his character had

* The missionaries succeeded in placing a petition before him by means of one of their order, Castiglione the painter. The result was that some slight abatement took place in the persecution of the Christian converts that had just begun.—Mailla, vol. xi. p. 516.

resolved to relieve himself once and for all from the embarrassment and trouble caused his Government by the ever-recurring question of the Christians and their demands for greater liberty of action.* The order sent to the Viceroy of Fuhkien to execute the missionaries, who had been thrown into prison and tortured, seemed to mark the limit of Chinese tolerance towards Christians.

The first years of Keen Lung's reign were devoted not merely to his self-instruction in the art of government, but also to the task of arranging the internal affairs of his vast possessions. Yet, strange as it may appear, very little is contained in the annals that have as yet seen the light about the events of the first ten years, during which Keen Lung's authority was recognised. They were undoubtedly years of great internal prosperity, and their predominant characteristic was the general prevalence of peace and the accompanying satisfaction and natural progress of a great and thrifty people. With the restoration of union among the ranks of the ruling family, which had now so widely extended its branches that there were stated to be at this time more than two thousand princes† of the blood, one of the most disturbing causes to the assured tranquillity of a military race disappeared; and the mass of the subjects were only

* Mailla gives several references to conversations which the painter Castiglione succeeded in forcing upon Keen Lung on the subject of religion. The inference is suggested that these made a lasting impression on the Emperor's mind, but the evidence will hardly bear it out.

† Parennin's letter in tom. xix. of the "Lettres Edifiantes."

too eager to follow the example thus set them of concord and good-will. During this period there appear, from certain vague references to be met with in the letters of the foreign residents, to have been some disturbances among the Miaotze and several of the intractable tribes of the south; but these were probably of no great importance.

Keen Lung's attention had at a very early period of his reign been attracted to the unsatisfactory condition of things on his remote frontier, where the advantages gained by his grandfather Kanghi had been sacrificed by his father Yung Ching's indifference or neglect. Although there could not be said to exist in this quarter a state of open war, yet the Mongol tribes, under the protection of China, had suffered much at the hands of Tse Wang Rabdan and of his son and successor Galdan Chereng. There was also the memory of unavenged defeats which had occurred during the last few years of Kanghi's reign to further complicate the situation, and to prevent men's minds from settling down on the basis of the existing condition of affairs. And although matters assumed a somewhat more favourable aspect after the accession of Keen Lung, it was clear that the vague and undefined basis on which these frontier affairs were being regulated contained little guarantee of any long continuation of tranquillity. Galdan Chereng shared, but in a minor degree, the abilities and ambition of his father, and during the last years of his rule, which was contemporary with the first ten years of Keen Lung's reign, he refrained from any direct

conflict with Chinese authority. Until the death of Chereng in 1745 there was some probability that the turbulent spirits and nomadic tribes of the Gobi region would have been kept for an indefinite period tranquil and in inaction by the existence of an understanding between the Chinese Emperor and the sovereign prince of Jungaria. To the death of Galdan Chereng in the year mentioned must undoubtedly be attributed the re-opening of the whole question of border policy and frontier security which had been long pressing itself under notice at Pekin.

Chereng had maintained the paramount influence which his father had acquired in the region south of the Tian Shan. On the death of the chief Danyal, he had divided the kingdom of Kashgaria into four distinct governorships, over each of which he placed one of Danyal's four sons. So long as the vigour of the Jungarian prince remained undoubted, this arrangement produced the most beneficial results, for the country of Little Bokhara had been for generations the prey of intestine disorders, and it needed a strong hand to repress these for the sake of the common weal. When Chereng died that hand was removed, and the old dissensions began to reveal themselves. There existed no longer any assurance of stability, and the Chinese border officials saw reason to fear the early recurrence of difficulties with their turbulent neighbours. When this unsatisfactory phase of the question arose, the Chinese also were less advantageously placed than they had been. Their authority was established firmly enough in the Amour region,

and on the Kerulon; but in the districts of Hami and Turfan it had been displaced.

The death of Galdan Chereng proved the signal for the outbreak of rivalries and contentions, and among those of his relatives who succeeded in establishing their authority none rose higher than the representative of the collateral branch of Ta Chereng. The son* of Galdan Chereng, after enjoying a brief term of power, was deposed by an elder but half-brother, who usurped his place, and ruled for several years, chiefly by the support of the lamas, as monarch of Jungaria under the style of Dardsha. This insurrection and the violent scenes by which it was accompanied carried confusion throughout the tribes and peoples who had acquiesced in the supremacy of Tse Wang Rabdan and his son. The further stages of this complication were marked by a contest between Dardsha and the faction headed by Davatsi, Ta Chereng's grandson, assisted by Amursana chief of the tribe called the Khoits. At first the balance of victory inclined in no uncertain manner to the side of Dardsha, who drove his opponents out of their territory and compelled them to seek refuge amongst the Kirghiz. But although thus unfortunate, neither Davatsi nor his friend and supporter Amursana despaired of the result, and when they had succeeded in raising a fresh force among the Kirghiz tribes they returned to renew the struggle with their rival. This time they experienced a kinder fortune. Dardsha was taken by

* Howorth, vol. i. p. 650.

surprise, his troops were scattered, and he himself was slain. Thus was Davatsi restored to the enjoyment of the sovereignty of Jungaria. His ally Amursana, whose assistance had greatly contributed to this success, evidently felt persuaded that the best way to promote his own ends was up to a certain point to advance his friend's interests; and when the struggle with Dardsha terminated he proceeded to set up his authority in the Ili region. He there assumed the semblance of royal state, and affected to regard Davatsi rather as his ally and equal than as his superior. Davatsi showed that he did not share his former colleague's opinion of their relative positions, and he accordingly turned his arms against his ambitious neighbour. Amursana either did not await, or at once succumbed to the storm. Davatsi's followers seized and occupied Ili, and Amursana fled to bear the tale of his grievances to the Emperor of China—a circumstance which will be found pregnant with important consequences.

The first decade of Keen Lung's reign had, therefore, little more than closed when the course of events began to make it clear that the affairs of these neighbouring peoples would attract much of the Emperor's attention. Before considering the reasons which induced Keen Lung to take up arms in support of Amursana, we may briefly consider the remaining events of this tranquil season which preceded the long period of war carried on by Keen Lung in Central Asia. The severe measures to which the Emperor at last had recourse against the Christians continued

during the whole of this period. In the year 1750 these acts of repression had been extended into parts of China which had enjoyed a happy immunity from polemical warfare. The country round Nankin became the scene of persecutions, not less energetically carried out than those in the province of Fuhkien. These persecutions served the one useful purpose of inducing the missionaries to tell us of some of the inflictions that visited the country during these years. They failed to see, or neglected to record, events of national and historical importance passing under their very eyes; but when it became a question of retribution for wrongs inflicted on themselves they hastened to describe* some of the events that made up the history of the country.

From their remarks it appears that, in the year 1751, Keen Lung had the misfortune to lose not only his eldest son, but also the Empress herself, while several of the provinces were ravaged by a terrible famine. The ministers whose advice had contributed to increase his dislike for the Christians happened to fall under his suspicion for different crimes, and were punished with severity—a coincidence which seemed in the eyes of a religious enthusiast to mark the vengeance of Heaven. These punishments may be taken with less stretch of the imagination as showing that the difficulties of conducting the state administration in the Chinese Empire included the manage-

* See Père Forgeot's letter in vol. xxiii. of "Lettres Edifiantes" as some proof of this.

ment of a powerful and almost uncontrolled official class.

To the other difficulties of his position there were added for Keen Lung a physical weakness and a susceptibility to bodily ailments that detracted, during the first few years of his reign, from his capacity to meet all the duties of his position; and more than their usual share of power consequently fell into the hands of the great administering tribunals of the State. Probably the disgrace of the officials referred to must be attributed to this cause, but when Keen Lung resolutely devoted himself to the task of supervising the acts of the official world they became less perceptible, if they did not cease to exist, and gradually the provincial governors and administrators found it to be their best and wisest course to obey and faithfully execute the behests of the sovereign. For a short time Keen Lung seemed likely to prove more indifferent to the duties of his rank than either of his predecessors; but after a few years' practice he hastened to devote himself to his work with an energy which neither Kanghi nor Yung Ching had surpassed.

An interesting and imposing ceremony marked the commencement of the year 1752 on the occasion of the Emperor's mother attaining her sixtieth year. The capital was given over to the due performance of the accompanying fêtes, which were celebrated with much magnificence. The Emperor and his Court proceeded through the streets of Peking escorting the Empress mother in state; but according to our ideas half the effect was destroyed by the people being compelled to

remain in their houses with closed doors and barred windows. The masses were, however, allowed to share in the Imperial rejoicings,* and benefactions were placed at the disposal of the poor and the aged. Even the European residents were permitted to offer their presents, and we fancy we can trace to this time some relaxing in the regulations made with regard to their position.

Among Keen Lung's favourite pursuits was that of witnessing the painters Castiglione and Attiret engaged in their labours within the palace. But we are told that the Imperial wish in regard to such alterations or changes as he might suggest in their work was equivalent to a command. It is to this period that must be assigned the various portraits we possess of the principal and earlier Manchus. Keen Lung seems to have greatly appreciated an art that served to bring events as well as persons prominently and clearly before him; and to the sense of gratification produced by this cause must be mainly attributed the more favourable opinion formed of the European missionaries by the Emperor during these last few

* The greater part of these were celebrated within the precincts of the palace, of which a very complete and interesting description is given by the Brother Attiret in the twenty-second volume of the "Lettres Edifiantes." Its vast size and the extent of its gardens attracted general notice, while the artistic beauty of the ornaments strewn on all sides did not excite less admiration. In Chinese eyes the comparison between their palaces and those of Europe was not in favour of the latter. Kanghi said, "Europe must be a very small and a very poor country since there is so little land to extend the cities that they are obliged to build their habitations in the air."

years. As one* of them wrote, China, indeed, was for them "the land of vicissitudes."

Much of Keen Lung's time was passed in his summer residence at Jehol,† a small town beyond the Wall, where he was able to enjoy the quiet of the country, and the purer and more invigorating breezes of his native land. Here he varied the monotony of rural pursuits with grand ceremonies, of which he ordered a missionary selected for that purpose to draw him a picture, and although his instructions left little scope to the artist's genius or imagination, he passed no harsh criticisms on his works, and generally sent him word that it was "very well." At last he was induced to sit for his own portrait,‡ and so pleased was he with the result that he wished to make the painter Attiret a mandarin. The worthy missionary experienced much difficulty in escaping an elevation which he appears to have regarded with almost superstitious objection.

In order to gain some increased freedom in the practice of their religion, the French missionaries devoted all their ingenuity to the amusement as well as to the edification of Keen Lung. The automatons§ they invented and constructed, which were moved principally by clockwork, served to while away his hours of leisure, and their conversation

* Amiot.

† Jehol, situated 130 miles north-east of Peking, beyond the Great Wall.

‡ A reproduction of this portrait forms the frontispiece to this volume.

§ See vol. xxiii. of "Lettres Edifiantes."

enabled him to form a fairly accurate and complete idea of the kingdoms of Europe. To this period must be traced the conviction always existing in Keen Lung's mind that France was the great country of the West. The variety of Keen Lung's tastes kept all the foreigners employed at their different pursuits, and he seems to have taken peculiar pleasure in studying their practice of arts which he admired and appreciated.

From these peaceful pursuits, and this tranquil palace life, we have now to pass to the more stirring and exciting events that were in progress on the scene of foreign affairs, which occupied the greater part of Keen Lung's reign, and which have given it the prominent place that it can rightly claim in history. Throughout his life we find him equally determined to carry his ends, and to exact from all his officials the fullest amount of work of which they were capable. What he had shown himself to be in the smaller details, he was evidently resolved to prove in the larger affairs of government. He regarded the events in his neighbours' territories from the sublimity of the position of a Chinese Emperor, or, as he loved to call himself, of the Son of Heaven; and he expected all minor potentates to bow before him, and to resign themselves to his will. Such were the principles of his conduct; the result will show how well he could carry them into practice.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONQUEST OF CENTRAL ASIA.

The Central Asian Question.—China the Prize of Ambition.—The Chief Dardsha.—The Rivalry of Davatsi and Amursana.—Flight of the latter to China.—Keen Lung's Views.—Yung Ching's Advice.—Keen Lung disposed to Peace.—Davatsi's Defiance.—Puts forward his Claims to Equality.—Keen Lung's Indignation.—Takes up the Cause of Amursana.—His extensive Military Preparations.—The Solon Warriors.—Keen Lung supervises the Campaign.—“As at a Game of Chess.”—The Condition of his Empire.—Davatsi's Overthrow.—Panti.—Amursana's Triumph.—His Ambition.—Asserts his Authority in Kashgaria.—Barhanuddin Khoja.—Amursana summoned to Peking.—Throws off the Mask.—Massacres Panti and the Chinese Garrison.—King of the Eleuths.—Pusillanimous Counsels.—“End a useless and disastrous War.”—The Emperor's Fortitude.—“The Blood of my slaughtered Soldiers.”—A fresh Campaign.—Further Reverses.—The Incapacity of Generals.—The Chinese Authority debased.—Amursana triumphant.—A great General discovered.—Tchaoheui.—Withstands the Enemy.—His Plan of Campaign.—Keen Lung sends large Reinforcements.—Tchaoheui victorious.—Amursana's Flight.—Fouta.—Amursana dies in Russian territory.—“The Peace Party” at Peking.—The Administration of the Country.—Kashgaria.—Barhanuddin's Defiance.—Tchaoheui invades that State.—Rapid Success.—Fouta's Victories on the Pamir.—Badakshan.—A

Letter from Kashgar.—Tchaohoei's Wisdom.—The Subjugation of the Kirghiz.—Khokand pays Tribute.—The Administration of Kashgar.—Tchaohoei's Rewards.—The closing Anecdote of his Career.—The Tourguts.—Their Flight to Russia.—And Return to Ili.—The Chiefs Ayouka and Oubacha.—Tranquillity in Central Asia.—A Vigorous Policy.—Its complete Success.—“A Chimerical Pretension.”—Keen Lung's Sagacity demonstrated.

THE arrival of the fugitive prince Amursana at the Chinese Court called Keen Lung's attention to a very old question, which had been a source of trouble to the Emperor at an early period of Chinese history, and which has only been settled in our own time with any appearance of duration. This question was what relations should subsist between the Chinese and the disunited but turbulent tribes holding all the region westward of Shensi and Kansuh. In the eyes of these clans the wealth and weakness of China had for ages been at once the prize and the incentive of ambition. The Chinese were in the majority of years the victims and easy prey of these races, who were kept in order neither by the solemnity of their engagements nor by any political expedient that had up to this been devised. These tribes had on some occasions been welded into a military confederacy of no slight power, when the danger with which they threatened the Chinese and their Empire became proportionally increased; and in the cases of the Kins and the Mongols their efforts had resulted in giving foreign dynasties to China. The Manchus, least of all rulers of the Celestial kingdom, were not disposed to regard with indifference the measures and

movements of these warlike clans, for their success warned them that the example they had set must find imitators, whose fate would depend on their own supineness or energy. The growth of Galdan's power had for that reason been watched with attention by the Emperor Kanghi, and when it threatened to absorb the faithful Khalkas all the resources of the Empire had been devoted to the task of arresting its growth, and of subverting the influence that chieftain had acquired.

The overthrow of Galdan did not effect the durable remedy of the evil which Kanghi anticipated. His nephew, Tse Wang Rabdan, became after his death an opponent hardly less formidable, and certainly not more friendly to the Chinese, although the pacific disposition of the Emperor Yung Ching had induced him to withdraw from the strife, and to leave this potentate and the hordes which acquiesced in his nominal authority masters of the field. The establishment of a Jungarian monarchy served to dispose the minds of Chinese statesmen to more willingly recognise the advisability of a policy of not interfering in the affairs of the Central Asian countries; and, had it shown a capability to stand the test of time, their views of cultivating friendly relations with its ruler as the wisest and simplest solution of the difficulty might have finally prevailed. The contest for supremacy between Dardsha* and Davatsi,

* This prince is described by a writer in the "Lettres Edifiantes" (tom. xxiii. pp. 311-3) as follows:—"This new sovereign, restless and turbulent in his disposition, always bold and now

followed by the rivalry and contention of Davatsi and Amursana, showed conclusively that the Jungarian monarchy was an ephemeral creation, that it would be speedily replaced by the old tribal chiefships, and that a fresh era of confusion and turbulence on the frontier was probably about to commence. Keen Lung had, therefore, as the responsible ruler of the country, to devise some means to avert these threatened troubles, and to ensure the security and tranquillity of his borders. Taking a large view of the situation, and regarding the matter in all its bearings and ramifications, as illustrated by the repeated occasions on which it had presented itself as a question of practical politics during the past history of his country, he arrived at the conclusion that the soundest course would be to seize the first favourable opportunity to attempt a settlement that should prove enduring.

The flight of Amursana, and the tale of wrong which he carried to the foot of the throne of the Bogdo Khan, seemed to afford that opportunity, and Keen Lung did not fail to listen to the woes of a distressed prince whose information as well as whose

inflated by his first success, wished to attempt fresh enterprises, trusting in his own skill and good fortune. He took it ill that his neighbours the Khalkas should be tributaries of China, and he began some preparations towards bringing them into subjection. He even made the ridiculous proposition to the Emperor to cede to him the claims he put forward, alleging that they formed part of the privilege of his crown. . . . The Emperor's sole reply to his pretensions was to invite him to send in his voluntary recognition of the fact of his being a tributary of the Empire." Keen Lung in his narrative calls him the Lama Torgui.

sense of injury promised to afford him the means of realising his object. It is one of the most cherished traditions at Peking that the unfortunate or unsuccessful princes of the neighbouring states should be accorded protection against their opponents, and, where possible, assistance in recovering their lost possessions. Amursana's claim to the former was freely recognised, and, while the Emperor* and his council were engaged in considering whether measures should be taken to reinstate him in his former rank, he was permitted to reside as an honoured guest in an apartment of the palace.

The Emperor Keen Lung has himself instructed posterity as to the motives which induced him to take up this quarrel, and also upon the objects which he set before himself for realisation. With delicate tact he suggests that he inherited this difficulty from his father, whose vacillating policy and half-hearted measures had failed to provide a remedy for the evil, or in any way to curb the aggressiveness of his neighbours. Yet Yung Ching had left him some excellent advice on this very subject; † but, while Keen Lung put

* The account of these events is based mainly on that given by Keen Lung himself in his history of the conquest of the kingdom of the Eleuths translated by the Père Amiot.

† Yung Ching's advice is remarkable for the loftiness of its moral conception. "Do not take up arms," he said, "until it has become absolutely impossible for you to do otherwise. Those who are spread on all sides beyond our frontiers will not fail from time to time to provoke your just wrath. So did they in the time of my father, and also in my own. It is good that you should know, in general at least, what are their pretensions and views. I am about to instruct you on this point. In offering unceasing provocation in order to induce us to declare war upon

prominently forward his desire and natural inclination to imitate the moderation of his predecessor, he did not fail to show his resolution not to shrink from the duties of his position. "If I draw the sword," he wrote, "it is that I may use it, but it shall be replaced in the scabbard when my object has been attained."

When Keen Lung first ascended the throne his intentions were of the most pacific character. He resolved to continue the policy of abstention which had been adopted by his father, and on sanctioning the withdrawal of his troops from their districts he announced that he did so in order that the Eleuths might be able to show, without pressure and of their own free will, their devotion to his person and his family. For a time that plan answered its purpose, and promised to work well; and several of Tse Wang Rabdan's successors paid to Keen Lung the formal

them, the Eleuths are actuated by two principal motives. The first of these is the desire to acquire a name among their neighbours the other Mongol tribes. By daring thus to measure themselves against the troops of the Empire, by engaging them when separated from each other, they render themselves formidable and acquire the power to impose their law on their neighbours. Their second reason is that by engaging us they compel us to weaken our frontiers at one point, which forthwith becomes the object of their attack. Proud of such pretended successes as these, inflated by these trivial advantages, which they regard as equal to victories obtained over us, they make themselves feared by their neighbours, and insensibly, as it were, the number of their friends and allies increases. These have broken away from the obedience they owe to us, and delude themselves into the belief that they can resist all our efforts in regular war. Do not allow yourself to be taken in by their artifices. Do not undertake their subjection until you feel sure of the means you can employ to extract from them a fresh promise of obedience."—Amiot.

recognition of his supremacy that he so eagerly required. It was not until the years immediately preceding the flight of Amursana, which had been caused in the manner already described, that these relations were violently disturbed, and that the Emperor again found himself threatened by the well-known inconsistency of his neighbours with a renewal of the old disorders.

There is no violation of probability in supposing that Amursana, knowing something of the views of his host on the subject of the Eleuths, lost no opportunity of impressing on him the advantage of taking up his cause, and of how easily he might effect a solution of the whole question by restoring him to a position of supreme authority over the territories from which he had been expelled by Davatsi. Keen Lung listened to the narrative of his guest, but might have refrained from having recourse to action,* despite the specious arguments and flowing rhetoric of the Eleuth prince, had not the disturbances on the frontier been suddenly aggravated by the defiant attitude and arrogance of Davatsi.

That chief, not content with the recovery of his position, when reduced to the verge of extremity, or with his second triumph over an inconvenient and dangerous rival, imagined that he had nothing to fear from either the indignation or the power of China, and that no evil consequences would ensue if he were to openly

* He himself says, "My intention at first was not to enter upon a war, of which I could see no advantage for the Empire."

proclaim his independence. The tie which bound these tributary states to China had never been very exacting. It was a question more of sentiment than of any practical moment, and the Chinese Emperor required little more than respectful sentences, and a recognition of a paramount which was seldom exerted. Davatsi thought to heighten his reputation by a cheap defiance of established precedent, and he sent an embassy into China with messages of friendship indeed, but couched in language only used by sovereigns of equal rank. This slight to his dignity roused the indignation of Keen Lung,* who at once denounced Davatsi as "a traitor and usurper." Then only did the Emperor enter heartily into the schemes and proposals of Amursana, the support of whose cause seemed to offer the easiest and most efficacious way of restoring the suzerainty of China over the kingdoms and states in Central Asia.

Keen Lung's military preparations were commensurate with the importance of the undertaking and worthy also of the loftiness of his position. One hundred and fifty thousand men, including the picked soldiers of the Manchu banners and of the Solon† contingent, were placed in readiness to take the field,

* "Full of a stupid pride he has dared address me in his letter as he would his equal. From this it may easily be seen that he is only a barbarian ignorant of the very first law inculcated by Heaven on all men alike, that of a just subordination."—Amiot.

† The Solons were a tribe neighbouring to the Manchus, who granted them a position equal to their own. They made excellent soldiers. "A Solon soldier is worth ten others" passed into a saying.

and Amursana received a seal of rank and the title of Great General. Although thus placed in a position of recognised authority the actual command was entrusted to the Manchu general Panti, who enjoyed the reputation of being the best of living Chinese commanders. The ostensible task* with which Keen Lung charged this army was to repress the insolent Davatsi, and to elevate to his place the injured Amursana.

The success which attended this great enterprise was unexampled both in its extent and in the rapidity with which it was attained. Five months sufficed to enable this large army to cross the desert, and to penetrate to the recesses of the Ili region where Davatsi indulged a belief as to his security. Little or no resistance† was attempted. Davatsi's power

* Keen Lung takes much of the credit of his success to himself. He wrote, "Although, on account of the very great distance separating this place from the seat of war, I have not found it possible to take the field in person, I can say, nevertheless, that I have taken part in this campaign. I have been, as it were, at a game of chess; I have arranged all the pieces, and I have caused them to be moved as was most appropriate." His description of the condition of his Empire also calls for quotation. "My Empire is the most vast in the universe, it is the most thickly populated, it is also the wealthiest. My coffers are full to overflowing; my arsenals are stored with all kinds of provisions. I have the means to furnish without stint the requirements of the largest war, or to comfort my people under unforeseen calamities, or to employ multitudes of workmen by placing them on public or other works."

† Keen Lung says in his brilliantly composed description, "Confident of marching to victory they broke cheerfully through every obstacle; they arrive, terror had gone before them. Scarcely have they time to bend a bow, or draw an arrow, when everything submits to them. They give the law, Davatsi is a prisoner, he is sent into my presence."

crumbled to pieces at the first contact with the Manchu legions, and the chief himself was conveyed as a state prisoner to Peking. Thus by the aid of a Chinese army Amursana recovered what he represented, though with doubtful accuracy, to be his birthright; and, finding himself in the possession of the privileges to which he had long aspired, he gave reins to his imagination and placed less curb upon his ambition.

Great as had been Amursana's success, it did not suffice to render him contented with the position to which the friendship of Keen Lung had raised him. The larger portion of the Chinese army had returned after the overthrow of Davatsi, but Panti remained with a small contingent, partly to give stability to Amursana's position and partly to uphold the interests of the Emperor. Amursana considered that the presence of this force detracted from, more than it enhanced, the dignity of his position. It became his main object to rid himself from it, hoping that with its departure or disappearance he would also be freed from the control of the Chinese Government and officials, which he was inclined to regard as so irksome as to be almost intolerable. It soon became clear that the harmony of the relations between the Eleuth prince and the Chinese general was irretrievably broken, and that the existence of their respective authorities was incompatible with each other. The rupture was for a short time averted by Amursana's designs upon the independence of Kashgaria, for the success of which he needed further

assistance from the Chinese. That assistance was granted only with reluctance, but still the loan of 500 Chinese troops sufficed to bring the cities of Yarkand and Kashgar under the subjection of Barhanuddin Khoja, who held his authority as the friend and dependent of Amursana. This further success confirmed Amursana in the favourable estimate he had formed of his own capacity and strength, and rendered him less disposed than ever to play a secondary part in his native kingdom. He aspired with more determination than before to exercise unquestioned authority.

Rumours of Amursana's dissatisfaction* reached Peking; and Keen Lung, distrustful of the good faith of the Eleuth prince, summoned him to his capital. This step compelled Amursana to take a decided part and to declare his intentions sooner perhaps than he intended. His reply was emphatic and extreme enough to please the greatest admirers of uncompromising resolution. He surprised the small Chinese contingent, massacred every man of them, and caused Panti and the other officers to be executed. Thus, by the slaughter of his allies and supporters, did Amursana hope to gain that supreme and independent position in Central Asia to which he had aspired from the first days of his public career, and with which

* One of Amursana's grievances was the favourable reception accorded to Davatsi. Keen Lung gave the latter titles and an allowance. He seemed to intend keeping him as a check upon Amursana, but Davatsi's early death marred these plans.—Amiot, (note) pp. 347-8.

the recognition of Keen Lung's authority appeared in his eyes to be incompatible.

The fruits of Keen Lung's labours and military success were thus as rapidly destroyed as they had been attained. Five months of the year 1755 had sufficed to give tranquillity to Central Asia, and to replace a hostile potentate by one reputed to be a friend. And now, by another turn in the wheel of events, the old sense of insecurity and uncertainty was revived, and an ambitious and defiant prince grasped the reins of power among a warlike population. The change had been effected in the most open and unequivocal manner, and Amursana thought he had ensured his success by the slaughter of the Chinese garrison and its commanders.

The impression produced by this event was profound, and when Amursana followed up the blow by spreading about rumours of the magnitude of his designs they obtained some credence even among the Mongols. Encouraged by this success, he sought to rally those tribes to his side by imputing sinister intentions to Keen Lung. His emissaries declared that Keen Lung wished to deprive them all of their rank, authority, and estates, and that he had summoned Amursana to Peking only for the purpose of deposing him. They also protested that their master, Amursana, like a true desert chief, preferred his liberty to every other privilege, and, sooner than trust himself within the toils of the wily Emperor, had bidden him defiance, and raised between them an inexpiable cause of hostility. Amursana pro-

claimed himself King of the Eleuths, and many of the clans gave in their adhesion to his rule and promised to support him in war.

If the shock caused by the news of the great disaster on the banks of the Ili gave a little confidence to those who were unfriendly to the Manchu authority, it also roused Keen Lung's indignation to the highest point. The sense of disappointment at the failure of his plans was increased all the more by the memory of the easy victory which had both flattered his vanity and attained his aims. There were those among his ministers who impressed upon him the wisdom of discontinuing a costly war, of which the results among a turbulent and treacherous population would always be doubtful. "We must have done with this useless and disastrous war," they exclaimed in the palace and at the council-board. But Keen Lung did not allow himself for a moment to be swayed by their advice. The blood of his slaughtered soldiers called for a summary revenge, the objects of his policy demanded that Amursana should be deposed from the position of defiance and independence which he had assumed, and the reputation and fair fame of China rendered it absolutely imperative that a reverse suffered in the field should be as openly and as signally retrieved. For each and all of these reasons Keen Lung rejected the counsels of the timid, whose natural courage, as the Emperor said, should have led them to reject their own advice as unworthy of their race and country.

Keen Lung made, therefore, the necessary prepara-

tions for another campaign beyond the frontier, and sent two generals, at the head of a large army, with orders to capture the rebel Amursana dead or alive. Amursana was in no position to resist this force, and many of his adherents deserted him at the mere approach of the Chinese. Amursana himself was on the point of being taken when the disagreement of Keen Lung's two commanders provided him with an avenue of escape. The inaction of these officers, after the dispersion of their opponents' forces had gained them a bloodless victory, enabled the Eleuth prince to make fresh head against the invader. Keen Lung lays all the blame for the small result of this campaign to the apathy of his generals, whom he recalled to Peking. His intention was to execute them for their misconduct in the field, but on their journey back they were surprised and slain by a band of Eleuths. Two other generals were appointed to take their places, but they did no better than their predecessors. Keen Lung had to thank the incapacity of his officers for a second abortive campaign. Amursana, it is true, was compelled to lead a perilous existence among the Kirghiz tribes; but so long as he survived or remained at large there could be no assurance of peace in the Central Asian region. Keen Lung attributed the escape of his foe to the negligence of his generals, who were a second time recalled and, on this occasion, executed.

The nature of their offence appears to have been that they placed too much confidence in the promises of the Kirghiz. Taltanga, one of these generals, was

on the eve of entering their country, when he allowed himself to be dissuaded from doing so by their pledge to surrender Amursana on the return of one of their chiefs. The Mongol contingent, disgusted by the credulity of their commander, or wearied by a protracted campaign barren of result, left Taltanga and returned to their homes. The Kirghiz did not keep their faith; Taltanga saw that he had been duped, and Amursana again took the field against Keen Lung's army. The Chinese commanders found themselves obliged to order a retreat, and during the return march to Kansuh they were harassed by their active and enterprising assailants. The destruction of the small rear-guard under the intrepid Hoki, who seems to have voluntarily sacrificed himself by making a resolute stand to save the rest of the army, completed the disastrous events of this campaign. Encouraged by Amursana's success every petty chief hastened to set up his own authority, and they uniformly celebrated the commencement of their independence by the massacre of every Chinese subject on whom they could place their hands.

Yet not for these disasters and unfortunate occurrences did the Emperor Keen Lung give up his policy or depart from the line of action, in the wisdom of which he continued firmly to believe. To the incompetence of his commanders he could with much justice attribute the failure of his plans, and without indulging in useless recriminations or complaints he devoted himself to the task of discovering a man capable of executing his projects.

The loss of Panti appeared for a moment to be irreparable. Keen Lung was still engaged in this search, when the message came from the scene of war that the exigencies of the situation had led to the discovery of a military genius. An officer named Tchaohoei had the command of a small detachment, and, when Taltanga began his retreat towards Kansuh, he hastened to collect such troops as he could, and made preparations for defending the district under his control against the advancing Eleuths. He gathered round him the relics of Hoki's force and the stragglers of Taltanga's army, and with them he prepared to uphold the Emperor's authority until assistance should come to him from China.

The news of Tchaohoei's fortitude and energy confirmed Keen Lung in his belief that the policy upon which he had decided was the right one, and that its success demanded only a competent and cautious general. Tchaohoei's conduct in face of a confident enemy and under arduous circumstances seemed to mark him out as the very man for the occasion, and in a despatch to the Emperor, describing the position of affairs and suggesting the measures that seemed to him necessary, he showed such a grasp of the whole question, and his views so closely accorded with those of Keen Lung himself, that the Emperor at once determined to send him the reinforcements he required, and to entrust him with the chief command over all the troops beyond the frontier. When Tchaohoei revealed his talent as a commander Keen Lung had been almost on the point of giving up the contest in

despair. The sufferings of his troops had been great, their losses severe, and the result appeared as remote as ever. The complaints at the capital for the waste of precious lives and treasure could not with safety be much longer ignored; and had Tchaohoei failed in his task the Manchu ruler would, no doubt, have abstained from further action and given up the prosecution of his favourite policy as an unprofitable pursuit.

In 1757 two fresh armies were sent across the desert, and, when they reached Ili, they enabled Tchaohoei to at once assume the offensive. Amursana, although he had so far preserved his life and avoided complete overthrow, was in no better state to offer a determined resistance to the onset of his assailants than on the first occasion of the Chinese advance. Again his supporters abandoned him, and sought only to secure their own safety by a flight to the mountains that surrounded the favoured district of Ili. Amursana, unable to rally round him a sufficient body of troops to justify his attempting open resistance to the Chinese, and possibly awed by their persistence in pursuing him, imitated the example of his supporters, and again fled for safety to his former friends the Kirghiz. His flight was so precipitate that he marched day and night without staying to inquire whether he was even being pursued, or whether his own supporters were following him.*

Tchaohoei entrusted the pursuit of Amursana to

* Almost exactly Keen Lung's own words.

Fouta, the most trusted and skilful of his lieutenants. This officer followed by forced marches on the traces of the fugitive. He reached Amursana's first place of retreat very shortly after that ill-advised prince, and he had the satisfaction of receiving the surrender of the principal Kirghiz clans. But Amursana had then made his escape into Russian territory, where he was permitted rather to wander at large than to enjoy the absolute protection of the Czar's Government. Yet even at this remote distance, and notwithstanding that the solitudes to which he had fled were unknown and had not been penetrated by Chinese soldiers, Amursana still was not safe from Keen Lung's vengeance. The result of this war remained indecisive, his objects were considered to be but half-attained so long as Amursana continued at large. Both to Tchaohoei and to Fouta Keen Lung sent fresh instructions to lose no opportunity and to spare no effort to capture the rebel alive or dead.

The close of Amursana's troubled career was at hand, although the fatal blow that ended it was not struck by his implacable enemy. "An irritated heaven hastened the time of its vengeance," to use Keen Lung's phrase, "and a pestilent malady slit the black thread of his life." A demand was presented to the Russian officials to surrender the body, but with this request they refused to comply on the ground that their religion forbade the expression of enmity after death. They showed the emissaries of Keen Lung the corpse of his unfortunate antagonist, and with this incident the campaign that had as its

main object the chastisement of Amursana may be said to have terminated.

The first intelligence of Tchaohoei's success had served to supply the peace party at Peking with a favourable opportunity for renewing their advice, that it would be wise to withdraw from Central Asia and to abandon once and for all dangerous and unprofitable enterprises in a far distant and impoverished region. "The kingdom of the Eleuths," exclaimed these men,* "is too remote from the centre of our authority for us to be able to long govern it. Let us therefore abandon it to the care of whoever wishes to take it. What matters it to the glory of the Middle Kingdom, these uncultivated lands, and a people more than half savage?" The advice of these timid counsellors carried less weight than it would otherwise have done because Keen Lung had decided in his own mind the right policy to pursue. He had resolved on nothing short of the establishment of his authority in the midst of the turbulent tribes that had disturbed his frontier, and, although momentarily undecided by a succession of reverses, he returned to the original plan with fresh confidence and energy as soon as he realised that in Tchaohoei he had found a worthy successor to Panti.

Having conquered the regions of Jungaria, and the favoured district of Ili, Keen Lung next turned his

* "Sunk in the bosom of repose, to whom indolence and ease supply the place of all the virtues"—Keen Lung's own exclamation. "I made as little of these absurd representations as they deserved," he went on to say.

attention to the bestowing of the advantages of a settled government upon the inhabitants of those territories. At first he attempted to rule the tribes by means of native chiefs and princes, on whom he conferred the dignity of Khan. The plan did not work well. Many of them turned out incapable, and those whose ability increased their importance chafed at the restrictions placed upon their liberty and rebelled against Keen Lung. The Emperor's first scheme for the administration of his new possessions thus fell through, and it became necessary to devise another which should leave the people their liberty while it would place greater power of control in the hands of the Chinese officials. During this period of disturbance the Chinese commanders acted with marked severity, and the Eleuths suffered for the crimes and ambition of their chiefs.

Those who disturbed the tranquillity of the new Chinese possession were encouraged to do so by the knowledge that the country south of the Tian Shan mountains, known as Little Bokhara or Kashgaria, offered an asylum in the event of defeat. The authority of the Khoja Barhanuddin, who had been established in the place of power by the assistance of Amursana, was still recognised in the greater portion of that region; and neither at the time of Amursana's overthrow, nor during the period of the rule of the four Khans whom the Emperor had nominated as his viceroys, did Barhanuddin consider it to be necessary for him to make any overtures to Keen Lung's representatives, or to enrol himself as one of the Chinese

well-wishers. Yet, according to Keen Lung's view of the situation, the conquest of the kingdom of the Eleuths carried with it the proper subordination if not the open surrender to him of the territory of its vassals. Of these the principal was Little Bokhara, the incorporation of which with the Empire was stated by Tchaohoei to be necessary to the permanent and tranquil possession of Ili.

The Chinese writers assume for their country the credit of having released Barhanuddin and of having restored him to the seat of his ancestors at the time of Panti's invasion, but the fact seems to have been that he owed his liberty and restoration more to Amursana than to the Chinese general. When Amursana departed from the stipulations of his arrangement with the Emperor, and suffered at the hands of his more powerful allies, Barhanuddin allowed himself to forget all considerations of prudence in the fervour of his indignation against the Chinese. There was room for hope that a hostile collision might be averted until Barhanuddin and his brother laid violent hands upon the persons of an envoy and his suite, sent by Tchaohoei to discover whether a pacific understanding with these neighbours could not be arranged. The massacre of this embassy precluded that idea being any further entertained, and the Chinese troops were collected for the invasion of Little Bokhara just as a few months previously they had been assembled for the conquest of Amursana and his dominions. The murder of his representatives afforded Keen Lung the strongest reason for sanctioning the

proposals of his general. This outrage compelled him to again draw the sword which he had only just placed in the sheath. "March," he wrote, "against the perfidious Mahomedans, who have so insolently abused my favours; avenge your companions who have been the unhappy victims of their barbarous fury."

Although Keen Lung simply reports that his generals duly set out on their enterprise, and that in a very short time they had subdued and annexed the country of Altysahr, some of the details of this interesting campaign have been preserved in other quarters. The Chinese crossed the frontier in two bodies, one under the command of Tchaohoei, the other under that of Fouta. Such feeble resistance as Barhanuddin and his brother attempted was speedily overcome; the principal cities, Kashgar and Yarkand, were occupied, and the ill-advised rulers lately rejoicing in all the conviction of security were compelled to seek their personal safety by a precipitate flight. The two brothers fled over the Pamir into the remote state of Badakshan,* but so great was the terror caused by the successes of the Chinese that the prince of that country not only refused to receive them, but caused them to be slain, and sent their heads as a gift of propitiation to the Celestials. Fouta had followed hard upon their track, and succeeded in inflicting two reverses upon them in the elevated region

* A state beyond the Hindoo Koosh in the north-east corner of Afghanistan, of which it is now a tributary province.

of the Pamir. The more important of these battles took place near Sirikul, and the followers of the Khoja princes were driven from the field with heavy loss. Of the vanquished there escaped from the pursuit of the Chinese, and from the perfidy of their reputed friends, only the boy Sarimsak, who became the ancestor of the Khoja adventurers of a later period. Thus satisfactorily terminated the campaign in Little Bokhara, the conquest and annexation of which completed the task that Tchaohoei* had been

* Tchaohoei described in a letter to Keen Lung his entry into Kashgar. The following are its principal passages. It was written from the camp before Kashgar on a date which corresponded with the 13th of September 1759. "The two Hotchom" (Barhanuddin and his brother) "having learnt that your Majesty's troops were marching against them, abandoned their amusements in repairing the fortifications of Kashgar and Yarkand. They at once perceived that it would be impossible for them to resist your arms. They fled from their cities, and they dragged themselves and their families from hiding-place to hiding-place. The inhabitants of Kashgar, like those of Yarkand,"—who had surrendered to Tchaohoei without offering any resistance before he advanced on Kashgar—"surrendered to us with every demonstration of joy, which was a sign that they asked for nothing better than to live under the laws of your Majesty, to experience in their turn the effects of the goodness of your great heart which embraces all the world. They came before us, bringing refreshments, which I accepted, and caused to be distributed among the soldiers, whilst giving in all cases to those who brought them small pieces of silver, or other money, not under the name of payment, but rather as a reward. They appeared to me to be very well satisfied with the arrangement. I entered the city by one gate, and left it by another. The inhabitants covered me with honour. Some accompanied me throughout my progress, crying out frequently, 'Long live the great Emperor of China.' Others lined the streets through which I had to pass. They were kneeling, and remained in that posture the whole time that I was making my progress. I made them a short address, in which I pointed out the happiness that they were about to enjoy, if they remained faithful in their duty to your Majesty. At the same time I announced that those amongst them who had followed the

charged to accomplish. Keen Lung's main idea had been realised. His authority was set up in the midst of the turbulent tribes who had long disturbed the Empire, and who first learnt peaceful pursuits as his subjects. At the cost of considerable sacrifices he had attained his object; and it only remained for experience to test and for time to show the soundness of his views and the practical advantage of what he had accomplished.

The Chinese commanders followed up this decided success by the despatch of several expeditions into the adjoining states, although the exact extent and results of these campaigns* have not been preserved as historical facts of which we can feel quite certain. The ruler of Khokand was either so impressed by his neighbours' prowess, or, as there is much reason to believe, experienced himself the weight of their power by the occupation of his principal cities, Tashkent and Khokand, that he hastened to recognise the authority of the Emperor of China, and to enrol himself among

side of the rebels would be sent to Ili, and that that would be the only punishment for a crime for which they deserved to lose their lives. I was frequently interrupted by fresh cries of, 'Long live the great Emperor of China! May he and his descendants give us laws for ever!' I at once gave orders for the preservation of public tranquillity, and for the prompt re-establishment of all things on their ordinary basis." The remainder of the letter is filled with a description of the Emperor's new province, which is very interesting, but which we need not quote.—See "Memoires concernant les Chinois" (Amiot), tom. i. pp. 384-95.

* Mr. Howorth says that the effect of these successes was to strengthen "a Mahomedan superstition that the Chinese would one day conquer the whole globe, when there would be an end to the world."

the tributaries of the Son of Heaven.* The tribute which he consented to pay was regularly delivered at Kashgar by himself and his successor, and it was not until fifty years later that its discontinuance afforded some proof of the relaxing of Chinese vigour.

What the prince of a considerable state like Khokand consented to allow, the petty chiefs of the scattered Kirghiz hordes could not well refuse. One chief after another of these tribes sent in his acknowledgment of Chinese supremacy, and in return for their courtesy and friendly expressions they received various titles of honour and presents. Whereas the overthrow of Amursana and the incorporation of the kingdom of the Eleuths with the Empire had brought neither tranquillity to the Chinese nor prosperity to the new subjects on whom they had forced their yoke, the conquest of Kashgaria and the chastisement of its Mahomedan neighbours were very soon followed by the establishment of a firm peace throughout the whole of this region, and by its attendant era of prosperity. So far as was compatible with the preservation of Keen Lung's authority, Tchaohoei, when he drew up the scheme of administration, left the inhabitants as much liberty as he could, and the executive to which the charge of Chinese dominion was entrusted consisted of a native and Mahomedan official class.†

* "Valikhanoff," translated in "The Russians in Central Asia," by R. Michell.

† At the head of this was a Hakim Beg, who very often proved a greater tyrant than the Chinese Amban.—See "Life of YakooB Beg," chap. v., for an account of the Chinese administration of Kashgaria.

For the present we can leave the Chinese victorious in Central Asia. Whether it is considered that the results have justified the means in this case, or that the cost has been repaid, it must be remembered that at no previous epoch in history has the western frontier of China been less disturbed by hostile attack than during the last one hundred and thirty years. This triumph had been won by the military skill of the two generals Tchaohoei and Fouta, as well as by the indomitable will and resolution of Keen Lung. Its results were assured and consolidated mainly, if not solely, by the admirable tact and moderation of Tchaohoei.*

One event, and one only, remains to be recorded before concluding this description of the Chinese conquest of Central Asia. The Tourguts were the neighbours of the Eleuths in the days when Tse Wang Rabdan raised high his pretensions as the

* The closing scene, so far as history is concerned, of this general may here be quoted from a paper, summarising his career, that appeared in the "Calcutta Review," October 1880:—"Keen Lung, on his approach to Peking, went out half-a-day's journey to meet his successful general. One of the royal palaces was set apart for his use, and he was raised to the title of Count, and appointed a minister of State, while his son was espoused to a princess of the blood royal. For several years Tchaohoei enjoyed in peace the honours which his master bestowed upon him, and then he sank under the infirmities to which flesh is heir. An incident occurred in connection with his death that is worthy of preservation. Keen Lung paid him a visit, although it was known that he was dead. He wished it to be supposed that Tchaohoei was still alive, and the General was dressed and placed in his chair to receive his Majesty, who addressed him as follows:—"I command you to remain as you are. I come to see you for the purpose of exhorting you to leave nothing undone towards the re-establishment of your health. A man like you is still necessary to the empire.'"

sovereign of Jungaria, and Ayouka was their chief. Not himself without courage and ambition, he feared in the Eleuth the qualities which he knew that he possessed, and which under more favourable auspices he might have exercised with practical effect. Ayouka saw in Tse Wang Rabdan an opponent too powerful to be resisted, and one of whom he could not but stand in awe. The Tourgut felt that the one chance of avoiding the danger that menaced him lay in a prompt withdrawal from the neighbourhood of the aggressive Rabdan. His followers shared his love of liberty, and, recognising the gravity of the emergency, agreed to adopt his proposal, and to seek a fresh home beyond the sphere of their rival's influence. Ayouka took his measures with the necessary vigilance and precaution. Tse Wang Rabdan was on the eve of delivering his attack when he learnt that the Tourguts had fled into Russian territory, and were beyond his reach.

Ayouka had to march with his people across the steppes of the Kirghiz for many hundred miles before he reached the settlements of Russian authority. The movements of this considerable body of people created some alarm, but when the Government of Orenburg realised their intentions, a district between the Volga and the Yaik was allotted as their place of residence. There as the faithful subject of the Czar, Ayouka lived out the few remaining years of his life, and his son succeeded to his position as chief without possessing the desire to return to his ancestral home by the Ili. For fifty years and more the Tourguts remained the contented dependants of the Russian Government.

The report of Keen Lung's victories reached their settlements on the shores of the Caspian, and they appear to have stirred in their hearts a memory of their own country. The race of tyrannical despots, of whom Tse Wang Rabdan had been not the worst but only the most notable instance, was extinct, and in their place had been established the milder and more just rule of the Chinese Emperor. The Chinese* had not neglected to proclaim that the Tourguts would be welcome whenever they pleased to return to their old settlements; and the exactions of the Russian tax-collector and drill-sergeant, which were rendered more severe by the wars with his neighbours in which the Czar was constantly engaged, gave increased weight to considerations of sentiment and patriotic feeling. The Tourguts might long have wanted the resolution to undertake a second journey across Asia, but for an outrage offered to their chief Oubacha, the great grandson of Ayouka. The Russian officials seized his son either as a hostage for his father's good conduct, or as a further recruit for the service of the Czar.

Whatever the motive of the outrage, it decided the Tourguts to no longer hesitate about the return to their native state to which the friendliness of the Celestial Government invited them to come back. Towards the close of the year 1770 they, to the number of several hundred thousand, gathered in their worldly belongings, collected their flocks, and, breaking up

* See, for this statement, Keen Lung's "Historical Narrative of the Transmigration of the Tourguts," translated by Amiot.

their camps, which served them in the place of more permanent dwellings, began their return march to the district they had reluctantly and under the pressure of a great fear quitted half-a-century before. Eight months were occupied in traversing the region from the Yaik to the Ili, but the local forces were too few, and the means of summoning fresh troops too inadequate to allow the Russians to interfere with their movements or to molest their flight. The Tourguts reached their destination in safety, and became the faithful and peaceful dependants of the Chinese Emperor or Bogdo Khan. Their flight* from east to west, and their return to their old settlements, contribute a picturesque episode to the establishment of Chinese power in Central Asia, and we may attribute their coming back after the proclamation of Chinese authority either to the hardships of Russian rule, or to the greater attractions offered by that of China. Certainly in the eyes of Asiatics there never has been a more lenient or considerate government established over them than that of the Chinese in times of peace and domestic tranquillity.

The return of the Tourguts ten years after the close of active campaigning in Kashgaria came as if to ratify the wisdom of Keen Lung's Central Asian policy. The sneers and doubts of the timid or the incapable had been silenced long before by the prowess and success of Tchaohoei, but ten years of peace and prosperity had placed in still clearer light than military triumphs

* The reader may be referred to De Quincey's "Flight of a Tartar Tribe."

the advantages of the able and far-seeing policy of Keen Lung. A strong frontier had been secured; the hostile and semi-hostile peoples and tribes of Mahomedan Turkestan had been overawed and converted into peaceful subjects; the reputation of China had been extended to the furthest bounds of the Asiatic continent; and the monarch who had conceived the grand scheme of conquest, and seen how to carry it out, had crowned the glory and durability of his achievements by showing that he knew when and where to stop.* In the boundless wastes and intricate passages of the Pamir, in the dizzy heights and impracticable passes of the Hindoo Koosh, and the Kara Tau, he had found the perfection of a frontier. His own immediate territory, the rich provinces of China, were rendered secure against aggression by the strong position he occupied on either side of the Tian Shan, in the remote Central Asian province three thousand miles distant from his capital. His policy had been vindicated by results. He could say that he had effected a complete and lasting remedy of an evil that up to his time had been dealt with for many centuries only by half-measures and by compromise.

* On this point the words of Keen Lung himself may be quoted:—"There is no cause to blush when we know how to be contented; nor is anything to be feared when we can desist from a course at the proper moment. In all the places under the sky, to as far as the remotest quarters beyond the sea, men are to be found who are accustomed to obey either as subjects or as slaves. Shall I persuade myself that they are all submitted to me, and that they recognise themselves as my vassals? Far from me be so chimerical a pretension."—Amiot, vol. i. p. 406.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WARS WITH THE BURMESE AND THE MIAOTZE.

The Frontier of Yunnan.—Pegu and Ava.—Alompra the Hunter.—His Successes.—The great Burmese Ruler.—Sembuen.—Fouta's Mishaps.—His Character.—Count Alikouen.—War in the Irrawaddi Valley.—An ignominious Peace.—Burmah becomes Vassal to China.—The Miaotze of Szchuen.—Their Defiance.—Constant Conflicts of Authority.—Their Exploits.—Chinese Reverses.—Keen Lung's Policy of "Thorough."—The Great and Little Golden Rivers.—Akoui.—One of the Noblest of the Manchus.—Great Preparations for the Campaign.—Difficulties of the Country.—The Miaotze resolute to resist to the End.—The Women arm.—Subjection of Little Golden River.—The chief Sonom.—Invasion of Great Golden River.—The stronghold Karai.—The Miaotze Chiefs surrender.—Akoui's Rewards.—Breach of Faith with Sonom.—The Execution of the Chiefs.—A Warning to Traitors.—Stain on Keen Lung's Reputation.—Barbarians outside the Law.—Transportation to Ili.—Rising in Chantung.—Fouta and Akoui.—Their Rivalry.—The Triumph of the latter.—Fouta executed.—The Career of a notable Soldier cut short.

KEEN LUNG'S anxieties on the ground of his foreign relations were far from being confined to one quarter. The frontier of Yunnan was as much the scene of disturbance as the borders of Kansuh. The Shan and Karen tribes were by instinct not less addicted to predatory habits than the Mongols and the Eleuths,

and behind the former stood the arrogant though feeble courts of Ava and Pegu anxious on occasion to make use of the military services of these clans. The weakness of the Chinese Emperor and the numerous other claims on his attention had long made it a point of policy with him to disregard the unsatisfactory condition of the Yunnan frontier, for the simple reason that his Government had neither the leisure nor the available resources to devote to its effectual remedy and permanent settlement. He had been content to leave the problem unsolved as one of the accidents of government, and trusted to the weakness of his neighbours that no serious consequences should ensue. So long as Pegu and Ava remained disunited and antipathetic to each other no cloud of danger threatened the peace of mind of the Viceroy of Yunnan. The corruption of the courts and the effeteness of the dynasties of those two kingdoms corresponded with the decrepitude to which their military power had been reduced by a long period of misrule. The commencement of the eighteenth century found such pretensions as Pegu and Ava possessed to the authority of kingdoms vanishing beneath the incompetence of the ruler and his advisers. From such neighbours China even at its worst days had nought to fear.

In the hour of their distress the peoples of Burmah found a champion and reliever in the person of one of those men sent by Providence to scourge and purify a profligate society. Alompra sprang from the people. He belonged to the hunter class which,

among a race averse to danger, had been relegated to a position of undeserved contumely and inferiority. He overthrew the Talaing* kings of Pegu who had established their supremacy in Ava, and when he had freed his native state he proceeded to expel his foes from their own kingdom. He extended his Empire from the Bay of Bengal to the frontier of China. The tributary kingdom of Assam recognised his might, and the terror of his name penetrated to the Gangetic Delta. Alompra imparted an unknown vigour into a decaying system, and left to his children an authority in the Irrawaddi region which could claim the obedience of its subjects and for a brief space also the respect of its neighbours.

Alompra's successors, surrounded by courtiers who flourished by extolling the virtues and power of their master, allowed themselves to be easily deluded into the belief that they had nothing to fear from the utmost power of China, even if a policy of irritation should result in provoking the wrath of their great but impassive neighbour. The exact details of the origin of the war that broke out have not been preserved, but there is little doubt that it arose from border disturbances which the Burmese authorities neglected to do their part in repressing. The arrogance of the Court of Ava had been swelled to a higher point than ever by the military successes of Alompra, and when the pretensions of the two

* See General Fytche's "Burma," 1878, and also Colonel Yule's "Narrative of a Mission to the Court of Ava in 1855." (London, 1858.)

haughtiest courts of Asia clashed it was inevitable that a hostile collision should ensue. The greater power possessed by Keen Lung, and the more complete results from the work of administration which he demanded within his frontiers, also contributed to produce a grave complication on the Yunnan border. The successful campaigns in Central Asia had not long closed when Keen Lung gave orders to increase the garrisons in the south-west provinces, and to make general preparations in that quarter in the event of the outbreak of hostilities.

It was not until the year 1768, when Alompra's grandson Sembuen occupied the throne, that the Chinese troops began the invasion of Burmah, which had been imminent for several years. Keen Lung entrusted the conduct of this war to a favoured officer, the Count Alikouen, whose experience in the field had, however, been so slight that many raised a cry that Fouta should be recalled from his enforced retreat and placed in the principal command.* But the Emperor was fixed in his resolve,

* The valiant Fouta after the close of the campaigns in Central Asia returned to Peking, where, however, he failed to sustain as a courtier the reputation he had gained as a soldier. Fouta was a member of the Solon tribe, and his appearance has been painted in the following words, which serve to bring the bluff character of the plain simple-minded soldier before us:—"Fouta had been brought up in Tartary among his compatriots, the Solon Manchus, and like them he had passed his youth in inuring himself to the fatigues of the chase and to military exercises. He had not contracted that easy air and that suppleness to be acquired only at a court, where he always appeared embarrassed. Frank and incapable of disguising his thoughts, and even slightly rough, he would have chosen to have been rather the last of soldiers than the first of courtiers. The tents, a camp, soldiers, those were

and it was under Count Alikouen that his troops marched for the invasion of Burmah. The Chinese advanced guard, computed to consist of some 50,000 men, crossed the frontier and took up a strong position between Momien and Bhamo. The Burmese troops advanced in greater force to expel it from the camp, which the Chinese commander had fortified. The result of this action is not known, but both sides claim it as a great victory. The approach of the main Chinese army compelled the Burmese to retire, and the scene of war was shifted from the Chinese frontier to the valley of the Irrawaddi.

The Chinese commander, Count Alikouen, established a strongly fortified camp at Bhamo, where he left a considerable detachment, while with the greater portion of his army, said to number more than 200,000 men,* he marched on Ava. So far as numbers went

what he needed, and then nothing was impossible to him. To support the greatest hardships, and rudest fatigue; to endure the extremes of thirst and hunger; to march by night or by day across arid deserts, or marshy places; to fight, so to speak, at each step as much against the elements as against man,—these are what he was seen to perform during the course of a war which had added to the number of the provinces of the Empire the vast possessions of the Eleuths. The Emperor had said on one occasion to an envoy boasting of his master's artillery, 'Let him make use of these cannon, and I shall send Fouta against him.'” His end did not correspond with the promise of his brilliant prime. Accused by an official of having appropriated some Government horses for his own use, he was recalled to Pekin, where he was sentenced to death. This was commuted to the deprivation of all his ranks and titles and to a state of permanent confinement. Keen Lung refused to pardon Fouta with a persistence strangely disproportionate to the trivial offence.

* This number was probably greatly exaggerated by the vanity of the Burmese, who also claim most of the encounters as victories. The terms of peace clearly show how far these pretensions are justified by the facts.

the superiority still rested with the Burmese king, whose military position was further improved by his well-trained band of elephants and by the natural difficulties of the region of operations. Yet notwithstanding these obstacles, and that Alikouen did not evince any exceptional capacity in the field, the Chinese remained masters of the greater portion of the upper districts of Burmah during the space of three years.

Although no decisive engagement appears to have been fought the Burmese were obliged, after this protracted occupation, to sue for peace on humiliating terms. The King of Ava was so irritated at the poltroonery of his general, in having concluded an ignominious but probably inevitable treaty, that he sent him a woman's dress.* But he did not dare to repudiate the action of his officer; and the Chinese army was withdrawn only after having obtained the amplest reparation for the wrong originally inflicted on a Chinese subject, and a formal recognition on the part of the ruler of Ava of the supremacy and suzerainty of the Emperor of China. This campaign resulted, therefore, in the addition of Burmah to the long list of Asiatic kingdoms paying tribute to Peking.

The war with Burmah was followed by a more protracted contest with the Miaotze tribes,† who, secure in the difficult mountain regions which formed

* Crawford's "Journal of an Embassy to Ava," 1829.

† For a description of these clans see Du Halde, tom. i. pp. 66-71, and also "Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxii. pp. 321-9.

their home, had long bidden defiance to the Chinese authorities, and proved a source of constant trouble and danger to the settled inhabitants of the provinces of Kweichow and Szchuen. When the Emperor Keen Lung ascended the throne these people had just inflicted a severe reverse upon the Imperial troops, and, although no steps were immediately taken to retrieve it, the fact had not been forgotten. There appears to be little doubt that the Miaotze were not alone to blame for this unsatisfactory state of things, and that much of their turbulence and misconduct should rightly be attributed to the provocation offered them by the local mandarins both civil and military.

The Miaotze recognised the authority of tribal chiefs and heads of clans. They were by nature averse to agricultural pursuits, and chafed at the restraints of a settled life. Their courage and rude capacity for war enabled them to hold and maintain a position of isolation and independence during those critical periods which had witnessed the disintegration of the Empire and the transfer of power from one race to another. Each successive war of conquest had passed over the face of the country without disturbing their equanimity or interfering with their lot. The Miaotze remained a barbarian people, living within the limits of the Empire but outside its civilisation, and the representatives of some pre-historic race of China. When Keen Lung mounted the throne their position was practically unchanged, and their late success seemed even to warrant the supposition

that their independence was more assured than at any previous period. Nothing happened to disturb this persuasion until the year 1771, when Keen Lung had ruled the Empire for more than thirty-five years.

In that year the Miaotze had broken out in acts of disorder on a larger scale than usual, and whether incited to commit these depredations by the pressure of want or by the arrogance of the Chinese officials, there is no question that the area of their raids suddenly became extended, and that the Chinese troops met with further discomfiture. Whereas, however, the Miaotze of Kweichow had hitherto been the most turbulent, it was on this occasion their kinsmen of Szchuen who carried their defiance to a point further than the Emperor could tolerate. Orders were, therefore, issued for the prompt and effectual chastisement of these hillmen, and troops were despatched against them for the purpose of reducing them to obedience. The troops marched, but their valour proved of little avail. The Miaotze were victorious in the first encounter of the war, and it was made evident that in order to subjugate them a regular plan of campaign would be requisite.

Rendered over-confident by these preliminary successes, the Miaotze completed by an outrage the defiance they were resolute in showing towards the Emperor. They murdered the two officers he sent to their capital to negotiate, and they completed the insult by tearing up the letter which Keen Lung had condescended to write to them. The excessive pretensions and ambition of the Eleuth princes had

compelled Keen Lung to take up the settlement of that question and to prosecute it with vigour. Success beyond precedent had attended his efforts, and established the wisdom of his policy of "thorough." The outrages committed by the Miaotze led him to the conclusion that similar energetic action in this quarter might very possibly be followed by results as satisfactory and as conclusive as those that had been attained in Central Asia. Therefore, precisely as he had decreed the annexation of a vast region beyond Gobi for reasons of state, so now he ordained from scarcely less weighty causes the destruction of the Miaotze.

The Miaotze of Szchuen inhabited the mountainous region in the north-west corner of that province, which skirts a remote portion of Tibet. Their two principal settlements were known, from the names of streams, as the Great Golden River and the Little Golden River districts. The occupation of these settlements became the principal object with the Chinese Emperor, for he well knew that, when these hillmen were deprived of the only spots capable of sustaining themselves and their flocks, they would be obliged to recognise his authority and to accept his law without murmur. It only remained for Keen Lung to select some competent commander to give effect to his wishes, and to carry out the military scheme upon which he had resolved. The necessity for exercising care in such a choice had been shown by the tardy and meagre results of Alikouen's campaign in Burmah, but either the etiquette of the court or the dislike of

the Emperor prevented the recall of Fouta,* whose great capacity appeared to render him the fittest leader for the post. Keen Lung's choice fell upon Akoui, by birth one of the noblest of the Manchus, and, as the result was to show, of talent equally conspicuous.

When Akoui reached the scene of operations he found that the gravity of the situation had been aggravated by the excessive confidence of those in command. One of the lieutenants of the border had worsted the Miaotze in an engagement, but, carried away by the ardour of pursuit, he allowed himself to be enticed into the mountains, where his detachment was destroyed almost to the last man. Akoui had, therefore, to devote all his attention to the retrieval of a defeat that might easily have been avoided. Several months were occupied in collecting the necessary body of troops, and a sufficient quantity of supplies for their use during a campaign that might prove of some duration in a barren region where means of sustenance were almost unprocurable.

The district of the Little Golden River formed the first object of Akoui's attack. The Chinese troops advanced in several bodies, and the Miaotze, assailed on all sides, were compelled to precipitately evacuate the territory. In less than a month the first part of Akoui's task had been successfully performed, and the Little Golden River settlement became incorporated with the province of Szchuen and accepted the Chinese law.

The second portion of his undertaking proved

* Fouta appears to have accepted a command under Akoui.— See Mailla, vol. xi. p. 593.

infinitely more arduous, and the Miaotze collected all their strength to defend their possessions round the Great Golden stream. The king or chief of the Miaotze was called Sonom, and, undaunted by the overthrow of his neighbour, he prepared to defend his native valleys to the last extremity. So resolute and unanimous were the Miaotze to fight to the death in defence of their last strongholds, that they refused to listen to any terms for a pacific arrangement, and even the women took up arms and joined the ranks of the combatants. The advance of the Chinese troops was slow, but being made systematically there could be no doubt that it would prove irresistible. The narrowness of the few passes, the natural strength of fortresses built on the summit of mountains and protected on several sides by precipices, and the impossibility of effectually utilising their superior numbers, all contributed to retard a decisive result; but notwithstanding all these obstacles the Chinese steadily approached Sonom's chief stronghold of Karai.

At last the Chinese appeared before the walls of this place, within which the entire Miaotze population had now been driven. The Chinese completely surrounded it, and there was no room for hoping that starvation or an assault would not speedily terminate the siege. Under these circumstances Sonom expressed a desire to surrender on the guarantee of their lives to himself, his family and his people. Akoui had no authority to grant such terms, and, as Sonom refused to throw himself on the favourable consideration of the Emperor, the siege continued. When Keen Lung

learnt that this petty opponent was reduced to the last extremity, he sent word that the lives of the chief and of all his followers might be spared. Whereupon Sonom surrendered, his fort was destroyed, and the Great Golden River district shared the fate of the Little Golden district, and became portion of the province of Szchuen.

Akoui was largely rewarded, and Keen Lung rejoiced at being able to congratulate himself on having permanently settled one of the oldest and most troublesome internal difficulties that beset the Empire. The Miaotze of Kweichow took the lesson inculcated by the chastisement of their kinsmen in Szchuen to heart, and refrained from causing the Chinese officials the trouble they had been wont to produce on the borders of civilisation. A great quantity of treasure, and several thousand lives had to be expended to attain this result, but once attained there could be no doubt that a serious blot on the efficiency of the administration had been removed, and that a well-timed act of vigour had sufficed to establish tranquillity in another part of China.

Although Keen Lung had given his pledge that the lives of his captives should be spared, he neglected to keep his word, thus leaving himself open to the charge of a breach of faith, which it would have been better for his reputation to have avoided. Sonom, the chief members of his family, and his principal officers, were all executed within the precincts of the palace; and the other Miaotze captives were exiled to Ili* in

* Transportation to this place became a favourite form of punishment with the Manchus after their annexation of Central Asia.

Central Asia. The motives which induced Keen Lung to proceed to such lengths of severity, if not of absolute cruelty, on this occasion, are not known. His moderation was usually conspicuous, and we can but suppose that the intensity of the general antipathy to the savage Miaotze, who were regarded as only half-human, led him to sanction measures he would not otherwise have permitted. The spectacle of the heads of these brigand chiefs placed in iron cages over the gates of his capital could not have added much to his personal gratification, nor could it have proved any very great deterrent to those disposed to rebel.*

The province of Chantung was also the scene about this time of disturbances that caused some anxiety to the ruler's mind: A rebel named Wanlan had been the leader there of a considerable seditious movement, and the people appear to have suffered greatly, first from his exactions and then from the presence of the army sent by the Emperor to put down the insurrection and to re-assert his authority. However, Keen Lung's ends were attained in this case as elsewhere, and, before Akoui returned to the capital, peace had been restored in Chantung.

Although Fouta had accepted, or been compelled to take, a subordinate command under Akoui in the Miaotze campaign, he had secretly been piqued at the slight thus cast upon him; and when he returned to

* Towards the end of Kanghi's reign in the year 1795 there was a fresh rebellion on the part of the Miaotze—on this occasion of Kweichow. Sixty thousand rebels were said to be in the field.—See “*Nouvelles des Missions Orientales*,” tom. xi. p. 253-5. Londres, 1797.

the capital and found Akoui the object of the Emperor's esteem and affection, he allowed some disparaging remarks to escape him. Akoui's friends were all powerful, and the hero of the Pamir received little consideration when he ventured to assail the reputation of that popular and influential general. Keen Lung, who attached so much importance to the subjection of the Miaotze, that he raised Akoui from the Red to the Yellow Girdle rank, would not listen to petitions to deal leniently with the bluff outspoken soldier, who in his turn became the object of all the evil tongues in the army and at the court. Fouta was accordingly sentenced to death, and his execution in the year 1776 served to show the inconsistency of fortune, and also the severity of the conditions of Chinese service. With his summary death there can be no doubt that a notable military career was cut short. Akoui remained the master of the situation, and his voice decided all military questions; but these did not for a long time present themselves after the pacification of the two most disturbed parts of the Empire. With the Eleuths and Miaotze reduced to a sense of good order, it was only an act of aggression on the part of one of his neighbours that could have availed to disturb Keen Lung's peaceful resolutions. We shall see, however, that as the occasion had not failed to arise from the arrogance of the Burmese, it was to recur from the military ardour and ambitious aggressiveness of the Goorkhas of Nepaul.

CHAPTER XXII.

WARS IN TIBET, NEPAUL, AND FORMOSA.

Affairs in Tibet.—The Dalai Lama, Lobsang Kalsang.—The Gyalpo.—Disorders at Lhasa.—Arrogance of the Chinese Ambans.—Their Rule unpopular.—The Capuchins expelled.—The Chinese Control.—Its sole Justification in the Eyes of the Tibetans.—“A Gross and Impure Race.”—Peril from without.—Nepaul.—Its Condition.—The Newar Kings.—Their Rivalry.—The Goorkhas.—Prithi Narayan.—His Success.—Deposes the Kings.—And seizes their Place.—The Policy of the Goorkhas.—Sudden Resolve to invade Tibet.—The Goorkhas carry everything before them.—Panic throughout Tibet.—Plundering of Teshu Lumbo.—Prayer for Assistance to Keen Lung.—A large Army sent.—General Sund Fo.—The Goorkhas withdraw.—Halt at Tengri Maidan.—Goorkha Defeat.—Numerous Encounters.—Chinese uniformly victorious.—Cross the Himalaya.—Battles in the Passes.—The Struggle at Nayakot.—A Critical Moment.—Sund Fo’s Resolution.—The Goorkhas vanquished.—Sue for Peace.—Terms granted.—Nepaul becomes a Vassal of the Emperor. The Tibetans confirmed in their Allegiance.—Nepaul and India.—The Attitude of the East India Company.—Suspensions of the Chinese.—Their Policy of Isolation.—Exclusion of British Trade.—Missions to Tibet.—English Traveller at Lhasa.—This Campaign a remarkable Military Exploit.—How it was accomplished.—Formosa.—Affairs in that Island.—Official Exactions.—The Arrest of Ling.—Popular Out-

break.—Further Exactions.—General Rebellion.—Manchu Authority subverted.—Abortive Negotiations.—Despatch of Troops.—Several Detachments overwhelmed.—Departure of a large Army.—Rebellion put down.—Peace restored.—“The best School for Military Service.”—Mahomedan Agitation.—Rising in the West.—Keen Lung’s Authority asserted.—Emeute in Szechuen.—A Wide-spread Conspiracy.—Its Fortunate Revelation.—Execution of the Ringleaders.—Summary of Events.

THE control which the Emperor Kanghi had established in Tibet, upon the retreat of the Jungarian army that had pillaged Lhasa, was maintained under both of his successors. The internal affairs of that country regained their normal state of tranquillity after the decision of the rivalry between the Yellow and Red Caps, and after the departure of the Eleuth hordes. Nor does any event of marked importance call for our notice during the fifty years that elapsed between the sack of Lhasa, and the time when Keen Lung’s attention was first drawn by the course of affairs to Himalayan regions. A brief notice* is alone necessary, and, indeed, possible, of the relations which subsisted during this period between the Tibetan lamas and the Chinese garrison and officials.

The young Dalai Lama, who had been removed for safety to Sining because he did not possess the support

* To Mr. Clements Markham we are indebted for the best account extant of the land of Tibet, which he has illustrated by copious notes and by a historical and geographical introduction to his edition of the “Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet, and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa,” 1879.

of the soldier Latsan Khan,* returned to Lhasa after affairs had settled down there, and was restored to all the rights and privileges of his lofty spiritual position. This Dalai was named Lobsang Kalsang, and enjoyed the title for more than half a century. His relations with the Chinese Government continued to be of the most friendly and intimate character during that long period; and although the jealousy of the lamas towards the Chinese Ambans, added perhaps to the natural antipathy between the two races, produced some unpleasantness, the main tenor of the connection continued satisfactory.

In 1749 there occurred the one complication that seemed likely to produce an unfavourable effect on the continuance of this amicable intercourse. The Gyalpo or Regent,† who exercised for the Dalai the civil functions of his authority, incurred the displeasure of the Chinese Ambans, who, without referring the matter to Peking, resolved to carry matters with a high hand, and to give reins to their resentment. The Gyalpo was put to death, and for the moment it seemed that none would dare to cross the path of the Chinese officials. But neither the people nor the lamas were disposed to regard with patience or indifference so flagrant an outrage against one of their recognised chiefs, and the people of Lhasa, instructed by their spiritual guides, or prompted by a natural

* See *ante*, p. 389.

† The Gyalpo, or Gesub Rimboché, was a kind of temporal sovereign or vice-regent. He was called also the Nomen Khan. The Tipa referred to during Kanghi's reign held this post.—See Markham's work on Tibet already cited.

movement of indignation, rose up and massacred all the Chinese, officials and soldiers, upon whom they could place their hands. The consequences of this wholesale slaughter might have been serious, as less provocation than that had many times sufficed to bring down upon a people or country the full weight of Chinese vengeance, but Keen Lung on ascertaining the unwarranted conduct of his representatives refrained from adopting the extreme measures suggested by his natural impulse. An army was, however, sent for the purpose of restoring the connection that had been so rudely dissolved, but its commander was instructed to make concessions to the popular agitation as well as to assert the authority of the Emperor. Keen Lung's moderation and the tact shown by his representatives sufficed to avert the danger of further complications and to restore the friendly relations previously existing.

Up to the time of this outbreak the Chinese authorities had been content to trust for the maintenance of their predominance rather to their influence with the Dalai Lama and their well-known power than to any distinct or generally recognised position at Lhasa, where the justification for their presence had to a great extent been removed by their own occupation of Central Asia and the consequent disappearance of all possibility of a repetition of the Eleuth invasion. But after this popular ebullition the policy of the Celestial authorities so far underwent a change that they no longer confined their efforts to obtaining the sympathetic support of the Dalai Lama. They

resolved to assert their right to have a supreme voice in the nomination of the Gesub Rimboché, and by always filling that office with a creature of their own to secure the support of the principal civil functionary as well as that of the great spiritual head of Tibet. The policy was astute, and proved successful. From that time to the present the Gesub Rimboché has been the nominee and creature of the Chinese, to whose cause and views he stands fully pledged. One of the first objects to which the Chinese turned the undisputed supremacy they thus acquired was to effect the expulsion of the small Capuchin colony* which had resided at Lhasa for nearly half a century.

The cause and the justification of the presence of the Chinese in Tibet were, as has been said, the danger from foreign aggression which beset a people unaccustomed to war and without an army. The sense of security that arose after the destruction of the Jungarian power contributed to give an appearance of unreality to the Chinese occupation, and so long as events favoured the supposition that the Manchu garrison was unnecessary, there was a distinct element of weakness in the hold of the Emperor upon this dependency. The people† of Tibet pined for complete independence, and the Lamas resented the interference of the Chinese Ambans. It is impossible

* Its members retired into Nepaul, then on the eve of passing from the hands of the native dynasty of the Newar kings into those of the Goorkha chief Prithi Narayan.

† Captain Turner says, in his account of an embassy to the court of the Teshu Lama, that "they look upon the Chinese as a gross and impure race of men."

to say whether the connection would have been long maintained in face of these causes of disagreement; but the sudden advent of an unexpected danger to the people of Tibet came to prove the necessity of, and the advantage to be derived from, the protection extended over their country by the Emperor of China. This new peril appeared from an unexpected quarter, and both its gravity, while it lasted, and the important consequences which followed, call for detailed notice of its origin and attendant circumstances.

South of the Himalayan range, but independent of the authority of either the Mogul or the British, there existed at this time several small hill-states or kingdoms, of which the principal and most important was that known as Nepaul. The Nepaulese enjoyed complete independence under a native dynasty, but the strength derived from a happy union soon departed when the state became subdivided into three separate and hostile kingdoms. The kings of Khatmandu, Bhatgaon, and Patan thought of little else than of indulging their mutual antipathies and rivalry; and although each was sufficiently strong to preserve his own independence, not one of them could impose his yoke upon either of his neighbours. In the year 1760 the reunion of the country appeared as remote as ever, when the King of Bhatgaon, threatened by a combination between his two rivals, entreated the assistance of the chief of an insignificant but warlike clan situated in the west of Nepaul and known by the name of Goorkhas. With the assistance of the Goorkhas the King of Bhatgaon

repulsed the attack of his neighbours and signally triumphed over them. Indeed, so great was his success that it looked as if he might be able to subject to his yoke the whole of the Nepaulese valleys. The Goorkha chief Prithi Narayan, having performed his part of the compact, soon showed that he was not only master of the situation, but that he had views of his own on the subject of the future of Nepaul.

Prithi Narayan began his career by supporting one of the rival kings, but the ease with which he overthrew his opponents led him to conceive the ambitious task of retaining what he had won. Availing himself of their dissensions, and making an appeal on larger grounds than had yet been employed by any of the national leaders for the support of the peoples of these valleys, Prithi Narayan, backed by his band of hardy and warlike Goorkhas, soon made himself the undisputed master of the country from Kumaon to Sikhim. Before the year 1769 the Goorkha chief had overcome all his adversaries, and the three representatives of the ancient Newar kings were either slain or fugitives in India. The movement which had been begun by the English for the support of the native dynasty was suspended, and the fortunes* of Nepaul passed into the hands of a military caste which regarded commerce with contempt and strangers with dislike.

Had the Goorkhas rested content with their

* See for a description of this conquest the narrative (in "Asiatic Researches," vol. ii. pp. 307-22) of Father Guiseppe, who was living in Nepaul during its progress.

achievements, it is possible that their views on questions of external policy would not have possessed much practical importance; but their ambition and spirit of aggression soon constituted a disturbing element along the whole of the Himalayan range. Not only did they put a stop, by the severity of their custom dues, to the once flourishing trade that had been carried on between India and Tibet through Nepaul, but they took no measures to prevent the raids which began after their advent to power on their borders, and which very soon excited the displeasure and apprehension of the authorities of Tibet. It was not, however, until more than twenty years after the establishment of Goorkha* power that this border strife attained the serious proportions and resulted in the overt acts of hostility which attracted the attention of the then aged Emperor Keen Lung.

In the year 1791 the Khatmandu Durbar suddenly came to the resolution to invade Tibet. The apparent indifference of the Chinese to the requests sent from Lhasa for support in checking the audacity of the Goorkhas is said to have contributed to strengthen the belief that the Pekin Government would not intervene for the protection of this state, while the, no doubt, greatly exaggerated reports of the wealth to be found in the lamaseries and temples of Tibet afforded a powerful temptation for a race of needy if courageous warriors to essay the enterprise.

* For a full description of these events and for the history of Nepaul, the reader may be referred to Dr. Oldfield's "Sketches of Nepaul," vol. i., and to Mr. Wright's "History of Nepaul."

The Goorkha army was, therefore, ordered to assemble for the purpose of invading the territories of its northern neighbour. With a force computed to number eighteen thousand men, the Khatmandu general entered Tibet, having crossed the Himalayas by the lofty passes of Kirong and Kuti, and advanced by rapid marches into the country. The Tibetans were unprepared for war and ill-able to make any determined resistance against this sudden invasion. The Goorkhas carried everything before them, and captured the second town of the state, Degarchi, with its vast lamasery of Teshu Lumbo, the residence of the Teshu Lama.* This achievement having been thus satisfactorily performed, the Goorkhas halted in their movements, and wasted many precious weeks in counting their spoil, and in asserting the rights of a conqueror.

The approach of the Goorkha army had carried terror throughout the midst of an unwarlike population, and the Tibetans, without giving thought to the possibility of resistance, fled on all sides. In this emergency the one hope of the people lay in prompt assistance from China, and petitions were sent to Peking representing the urgency of the situation and imploring aid before it should be too late. Keen Lung had not felt disposed to send troops to restore tranquillity at so remote and little known a spot as the Nepaulese border, in order to put an end to the petty

* The Teshu Lama is the second head Lama, ranking immediately after the Dalai. His title is the Gem of Learning.—See Bogle's Narrative and Turner's Embassy already cited.

raids which are natural to a frontier adjoining an uncivilised or warlike race ; but it was quite a different thing to hear that a portion of his dominions had been invaded, and that those who called themselves his subjects, and who looked to him for protection, should be suffering under the sword of a wilful aggressor. He at once sent orders for the despatch of all available troops from the south-west to Lhasa, and his preparations for war were made on a large scale. The aged ruler was roused by the outrage committed against his dignity and country to one of those fits of energy which had previously enabled him to settle several of the most difficult and complicated questions that had perplexed his predecessors.*

Within a few months the Chinese army assembled in Tibet had reached the large number of seventy thousand men, with several pieces of light but serviceable artillery ; and the Goorkhas, awed by this formidable array, began to take steps for a return to their country. The quantity of spoil which they carried off was so great that it greatly delayed their march, and time was thus afforded the Chinese to gain upon and to attack them before they had reached

* He may have felt doubly aggrieved against these invaders, because they had pillaged the place of residence of his former friend the Teshu Lama. This was the Lama who entertained Mr. Bogle. The missions of that gentleman and of Captain Turner had left a favourable impression on the mind of the Tibetans, and, on the Goorkha invasion, they sent us a request to compel their neighbours to keep the peace. A deaf ear was turned to the demand, and in retaliation the Tibetans afterwards refused to hold any further intercourse with us, thus destroying what appeared to be a most auspicious commencement of intercourse.

the southern side of the passes. The Chinese commander Sund Fo, or Thung Than, conducted the operations with remarkable skill and vigour, and his manœuvres compelled the Goorkhas to risk a battle north of the Himalayas in the hope of being able by a victory to secure their unmolested retreat.

In accordance with their usual practice the Chinese drew up a list of the conditions on which they would refrain from prosecuting the contest, and these included the surrender of all the spoil taken at Teshu Lumbo, and of the person of a renegade lama, whose tale as to the wealth in the Tibetan lamaseries had been the original cause of the war. It is almost safe to assume that the Goorkhas were also requested to promise better conduct for the future, and to recognise the suzerainty of China. The Goorkhas, accustomed to success by an unbroken succession of victories, haughtily replied that they would not consent to any one of these conditions, and that they defied the Celestials to do their worst.

The Goorkhas took up a position on the plain of Tengri Maidan, where the Chinese commander found them in battle array. The Chinese at once delivered their attack, and after a desperate encounter, of which unfortunately no* details have been preserved, they compelled the Goorkhas to abandon the field and much of their spoil, and to hasten their flight for Nepaul. The vigour shown by the Chinese in the pursuit

* A contemporary reference to the war in Tibet is contained in a letter from Bishop Didier from Szchuen in 1792.—See “*Nouvelles des Missions Orientales*,” tom. ii. p. 170 (Liege, 1794).

proved that their losses could not have been severe, and before the Goorkhas gained the Kirong they were attacked a second time and defeated. The Goorkhas experienced great difficulty in making their passage across the Kirong pass, and had to abandon most of their baggage and spoil in order to march the more rapidly. The Chinese did not slacken their ardour in following up the advantage they had obtained, and pressed hard upon the traces of their defeated enemy.

The Goorkhas became demoralised under this unflagging pursuit, and their resistance more faint hearted. Defeat followed defeat. The forts in the mountains commanding the narrow roads and defiles by which admission could alone be gained into their state, were captured one after another without long delaying the advance of Sund Fo's army. At Rassoa, half-way between Daibung and the Kirong, the Goorkhas defended the passage over a chasm for the space of three days, but here too their despair did not avail to alter the decision of previous encounters. Although the losses of the Chinese had been very severe, not only during these frequent combats, but also throughout the passage of the snowy range, they had practically overthrown their opponents when they succeeded in concentrating an effective army of about 40,000 men on the southern side of the Himalayas. The Goorkha capital, Khatmandu, lay almost at their mercy, and it was in nothing short of sheer desperation that the Goorkhas assembled near the village of Nayakot on the Tadi stream, for the purpose of making

one last effort to defend their principal city and the seat of their Government.

It is impossible not to admire the resolution with which the Goorkhas defended themselves against the foe, whose righteous indignation they had incurred by their own wanton aggressiveness. Within twenty miles of their capital, after having suffered a succession of defeats that would have demoralised any ordinary army, they made a final stand against their persistent and resistless antagonist. The Chinese advance was momentarily checked either by the valour of the Goorkhas, or, more probably, by the strength of their position; and it was only when Sund Fo, resolved to conquer at any price, turned his artillery against his own troops, and thus compelled them to charge that the resistance of the mountaineers was overcome. The fire of the Chinese guns was sustained on the mass of combatants until the Goorkhas had been swept over a precipice into the stream of the Tadi. Many Chinese of course perished, but even in the numbers slain the greater loss fell upon the Goorkhas.

After this crushing overthrow the Goorkhas gave up further idea of resistance and sued for peace. Indeed they had no alternative, unless they were prepared to lose their independence as well as their military reputation. The Chinese general, having assured the attainment of his main object by the destruction of the Goorkha army, was not disinclined to accept the ample concessions offered by the Khatmandu authorities. His own losses had not been slight, and he was anxious before the advent of winter to recross the

lofty mountains in his rear. When, therefore, the Goorkha embassy entered his camp, Sund Fo granted peace on terms which were most humiliating, but which were still as favourable as a people who had themselves invited so crushing a defeat could expect. The Goorkhas took an oath to keep the peace towards their Tibetan neighbours, to acknowledge themselves the vassals of the Chinese Emperor, to send a quinquennial embassy to China with the required tribute, and lastly to restore all the plunder that had been carried off from Teshu Lumbo. On these terms being accepted and ratified, the Chinese army retired to Tibet in two divisions, and such was the effect of this memorable campaign that the Goorkhas still pay tribute to China, still keep the peace* on the Tibetan border, and are still justly and rightly enrolled among the vassals of Peking. Although the main provisions of this treaty are known, its exact phraseology and terms have never been ascertained—the vanity of the Khatmandu Court refusing to make known what Chinese pride and independence have kept a state secret at Peking.

The results of this campaign were to greatly strengthen the hold of the Chinese Government upon Tibet, for the people of that country felt they owed to the intervention and protection of China alone their escape from their formidable aggressors. Not only did Keen Lung then avail himself of the opportunity to

* Later on we shall see that the late Jung Bahadur infringed this clause of the treaty, but after the close of an uneventful campaign affairs reverted to the *status quo ante*.

largely increase the local garrison, but he felt able to assert his authority more emphatically than before in the councils of the Dalai Lama. On the other hand the ruling lamas recognised the necessity of Chinese protection, which the people were henceforth content to accept as a fixed condition in their political being.

In their distress the Goorkhas had applied for assistance to the Governor-General of India against the Chinese, and their request had been refused. A mission, however, was sent, under a British officer, Captain Kirkpatrick, to draw closer the ties of friendship with Khatmandu, and to negotiate a treaty of commerce. The Chinese commander appears to have misunderstood the part taken by the East India Company, and when he returned to Peking it is said that he inveighed against the English for their duplicity in assisting "the robbers" of the Himalaya. In consequence of his representations the Chinese took increased precautions to prevent commercial intercourse between India and Tibet, and the Khatmandu Durbar irritated by what it considered the desertion of the English seconded their object by adopting a policy scarcely less exclusive than that of the Chinese. The passes through the Himalayas were closed by means of strong block-houses situated at the northern entrances, and the use of the principal of them, that known as the Kiring, was prohibited to all except those employed on official business.* The country of Tibet with its interesting secrets has since then

* Mr. Clements Markham in Bogle's Mission. /

remained closed to us, and this great dependency of the Chinese Emperor touching our possessions in Hindostan, along a mountain barrier of some 2,000 miles, remains to this day sealed both to our commerce and to our desire for increased knowledge concerning one of the least known communities in the world.*

There can be no doubt that, regarded simply as a military exploit, the Chinese campaign in Nepal was a very remarkable achievement, and one deserving of a high place among the famous wars of Asiatic peoples and countries. It may, perhaps, be said that the Chinese triumphed by sheer weight of numbers, and of course the statement is partially true. But in this respect the Chinese were only following the precepts of the best masters of the art of war in bringing to bear

* After the return of the Bogle and Turner missions there was a long interval of inaction. In 1811, Mr. Thomas Manning, one of the most intrepid and highly gifted of English travellers, succeeded in reaching Lhasa, where he resided for some months—a feat in which, so far as this country is concerned, he stands alone. Thirty years afterwards the French missionaries MM. Huc and Gabet visited the same city from China, and again thirty years later they were followed by the Indian explorer the Pundit Nain Singh. The relations between the Indian Government and the Himalayan states of Nepal and Bhutan have also by their unsatisfactory character contributed to postpone the day when there shall be free and unrestricted intercourse between India and Tibet across the Himalayas. The Goorkhas, disappointed in their ambitious plans north of the Himalaya, hoped to secure some equivalent for them in the country south of that range. They seized Kumaon, and began a series of aggressive acts which brought them into contact with the English. War was declared against Nepal in 1814, and at first the advantage rested with the Goorkhas. Sir David Ochterlony, however, turned the scale by some admirable manœuvres; and the Goorkhas were obliged to relinquish the conquests they had made towards the Punjab, and to give a promise to refrain from further military undertakings.

against their opponent a preponderating force. When we consider the difficulties that had to be overcome, firstly in moving a large army across the barren country between Sining or Szchuen* and Tibet, and then in providing for it when assembled at Lhasa, we shall not be disposed to disparage the skill shown by Chinese commanders in organising their forces for such an arduous campaign. Nor when we recollect that the natural obstacles of northern and eastern Tibet are not for a moment to be compared with those to be met with between the Dalai Lama's capital and the seat of the Goorkha dynasty, will our wonder become less at the many and signal victories obtained by Sund Fo over his adversaries, although the latter always possessed the advantage of position, if not that of superior weapons as well. The valiant resistance with which the Goorkhas opposed us in 1814-15, the courage and intrepidity shown during forty years of service in the Anglo-Indian army by the Goorkha sepoy, preclude the idea that the Chinese success was due to the craven spirit of their foe. The victories of Sund Fo were gained over the bravest of Indian races under circumstances all in favour of those who were fighting on the defensive; and they serve to show, by what ill-armed and imperfectly trained Chinese soldiers have done in the past against a foe whose military capacity we can gauge, what a well-armed and disciplined Celestial army may be capable of in the future. The successful

* The Chinese troops were apparently moved from both those quarters. The former is 900 miles distant from Lhasa; from Lithang, in the latter province, is about 580 miles.

defence of the Tibetans, the rout of the Goorkhas, and the subjection of Nepaul, form a complete military achievement of the most striking character, and bring to a glorious termination the great and solid exploits in war which have raised the fame of Keen Lung to the highest place among great rulers. The aged prince, then more than an octogenarian, felt able to congratulate himself not merely on the success of his arms, but also on the conviction that his sword had been drawn in a righteous cause, and that the millions of Tibet felt grateful to him for having rescued them from the hands of a cruel* and savage race of marauders.

Some years before the Tibetan question had reached the crisis that has been described, and before its settlement had been precipitated by the aggressions of the Goorkhas, the state of affairs in Formosa had caused very great anxiety to the minds of the Peking authorities, and had rendered a great effort necessary for the recovery of their position as the governing power in Formosa. That island had been styled† at a much earlier period of Keen Lung's reign "the natural home of sedition and disaffection," but it was not until the year 1786 that the discontent of its inhabitants or the machinations of a few intriguers became revealed in acts. Early in that year the news reached Macao that the islanders had risen, massacred the Tartar garrison, and subverted the authority of

* The cruelty of the Goorkha is unfortunately as marked a feature in his character as are his intrepidity and fortitude.

† By a writer in the "Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxii. p. 325.

the Emperor. At first the news was discredited, but later intelligence showed that the report was well-founded.

The control exercised over the subordinate mandarins in China has never been very exacting, and for all questions of administration and revenue there is scarcely any appeal from the decision of the local official. But if the supervision of the central tribunals over the provincial functionaries was slight on the mainland, it practically did not exist at all beyond the sea in Formosa. The Tartar officials in that island did not abstain from indulging all their rights, and from enforcing to its fullest extent the authority placed in their hands. Despite the small number of the Tartar garrison available to maintain them against the antipathy of a numerous and turbulent colony of Chinese from Fuhkien, they acted with all the arrogance and reckless indifference to popular prejudices shown by tyrants of an alien race.

When the general opinion among a people is one of dislike, if not of absolute detestation, towards their rulers, it needs but a trivial circumstance to reveal what is uppermost in their minds. Such was the case in Formosa. An individual named Ling* incurred the displeasure of the principal mandarin, and, because he refused to pay the heavy bribe demanded by this official, he was at once thrown into prison, where his early death was assured if he persisted in

* See M. Dufresse's letter in "Nouvelles des Missions Orientales," tom. i. pp. 169-76.

refusing to satisfy the demands of the mandarin. Fortunately for himself, and unfortunately for the Peking Government, Ling was very popular with his neighbours, and apparently a representative man among the people. His arrest proved the signal for a general insurrection on the part of the Chinese in Formosa.

The mandarin was the first victim of this outburst of popular indignation, and the prisoner Ling was released from his place of confinement. At first the Chinese settlers appeared satisfied with what they had accomplished, and might have taken no further steps against the Manchu Government, had a wise oblivion been cast over acts which were due to the tyrannical proceedings of an official. The viceroy of the province of Fuhkien, to which the island of Formosa is dependent, regarded the situation from too lofty a stand-point, and despatched a military mandarin with plenary powers to bring the Formosans to a proper sense of their position and duty towards the central authorities. This officer exercised his powers to their fullest extent, and confounded the innocent with the guilty in the sweeping measures he took against the disaffected. The popular indignation, which had been temporarily allayed by the release of Ling and the death of his persecutor, broke out afresh in face of these exactions; and the military mandarin found himself compelled to make as precipitate a retreat as he could to the mainland. The small garrison kept in the chief town had not the same good fortune, as the Tartars were put to

the sword and those of Chinese race were compelled to enrol themselves in the ranks of the insurgents. The Tartar practice of shaving the head was prohibited, and for the time being Keen Lung's authority was completely subverted in this island.

At first the Emperor endeavoured to conclude an amicable arrangement with the rebels, by means of which it might be possible to satisfy the exigencies of his honour and at the same time to spare his government and people the expense and trouble of overcoming the resistance of a brave and turbulent race. He, therefore, sent instructions to his lieutenants to propose a suspension of arms to the rebel Ling, who had been entrusted by his countrymen with the command-in-chief of their forces, in order that some settlement of the question might be arrived at without further bloodshed. Having emancipated themselves from a yoke that had pressed heavily upon them, the Chinese in Formosa were still not so elated by their success as to feel confident of their capacity to maintain their independence against the full force of the Peking ruler; and Ling was not, therefore, indisposed to negotiate. But it was soon made evident that the only negotiation to which the Emperor was likely to give his consent was an unconditional surrender on the part of the rebels, with which Ling* not unnaturally declined to comply.

* Ling stipulated three conditions as the basis of negotiation:—Firstly, “that the mandarin who had ordered the cruel measures of repression the previous year should be executed”; secondly, “that he personally should never be required to go to

Negotiations failing, troops were despatched from Fuhkien to bring the islanders again into a state of subjection, but they appear to have been sent in too few numbers to be able to effect much against a desperate and courageous people. They were attacked on landing before they had time to fortify their positions, or to combine their detachments, and overwhelmed by superior numbers. In fifty encounters Ling was reported to have been victorious, and the Manchus met with scarcely a single success. Twenty thousand soldiers and eighty mandarins of high rank had fallen in the field, and with each fresh success the courage and confidence of the rebels were correspondingly increased. Keen Lung said in a public proclamation that "his heart was in suspense both by night and by day as to the issue of the war in Formosa."

So long, however, as the arrangements made to reassert the Emperor's authority were of the desultory nature shown in these small expeditions, a satisfactory conclusion of the war appeared as remote as ever. The military disasters culminated in the defeat of a body of 7,000 troops sent from Canton; but although this was the most signal reverse experienced by the Imperial troops, it was also remarkable as being the last. The experience of the campaigning in Formosa had been singularly unpleasant and bitter, but it showed that in this case, as in most other human affairs, half-measures never succeed. After

Pekin"; and, thirdly, "that no mandarins should in the future resort to the tyrannical proceedings that had marked their rule in the past."

the serious loss mentioned Keen Lung threw himself into the question with his usual energy and ardour, and ordered the despatch of a large army to Formosa to effectually put down this rebellion that had already continued too long.

An army of nearly 100,000 men commanded by Fou Kangan, whose brother was married to one of the Emperor's daughters, was sent across the channel to quell the disturbances. The provinces of Kwangsi, Kwantung, and Kiangsi were required to send in special contributions for the war, while a large fleet of war-junks was kept permanently at sea. Although Ling and his Formosans continued to oppose the invader with resolution, the inevitable result at last arrived, and numbers carried the day. The suppression of the revolt in Formosa cost the Emperor many thousands of lives, a vast expenditure in money, and some anxious months; but in the end his good fortune reasserted itself, or the excellence of his arrangements received their due reward.*

In the year 1785 further cause of anxiety had been produced by the insurrection of some of the Mahomedan colonies established in Western China. In Kansuh these settlements had increased both in numbers and importance since the subjugation of the territories in Central Asia, for the establishment of commercial relations with the Mahomedan cities of the Tian Shan region and the Khanates of Western Turkestan had

* Since these campaigns Formosa has been considered "the best school for military service."

been necessarily followed by the gradual but sure introduction of Mussulman ideas and customs into the north-west portion of China. As early as the year 1777 disturbances had broken out at Hochow* in Shensi. Under the leadership of a fanatical priest a considerable band had collected at that place and defied the authority of the local officials. The provincial mandarin found it necessary to send a considerable force against them, and it was only after a stubbornly contested engagement that he was left master of a field on which the greater number of these religious partizans lay extended. The Emperor was inclined to resort to extreme measures† against these sectaries, but on the recommendation of his ministers he refrained from putting his desires in force, and remained apparently satisfied with having cowed the opposition of subjects of such dubious fidelity.

The war in Formosa had only just reached a satisfactory conclusion, and that in Tibet had not yet begun, when an insurrection took place in the province of Szchuen which met with unexpected success, and which attained almost incredible proportions considering the firmness with which the Manchu dynasty was then established. Two Taouist priests took the principal part in organising this seditious movement, which aimed at nothing short of the subversion of

* The most important of the Mahomedan towns within the Chinese frontier. The Tungani rebellion began there in 1862.

† He proposed to pass a decree ordering the execution of every Mahomedan male above the age of fifteen, and some steps appear to have been taken towards carrying it into effect.

the reigning family, and of the elevation of a young man,* said to be a descendant of the Ming dynasty, to the throne. By the lavish promise of dignities and rewards as soon as their enterprise had been crowned with a successful issue, these intriguers succeeded in gathering round them a very considerable number of supporters, both among the well-to-do as well as from the masses. Several districts of the great province of Szchuen were to simultaneously throw off the Emperor's authority, and to proclaim in its place that of the young pretender, who was to assume the dynastic title of Chow. Forty or fifty thousand men were said to have received arms, and to be in readiness to rise at the given signal. The insurrection was to be inaugurated by a general massacre of the garrison and the officials.

The secret was well kept until the very eve of the proposed massacre, when one of the conspirators revealed the plot. The Governor of Chentu at once took vigorous measures to arrest the ringleaders and to seize the arms they had collected. The so-called emperor was one of the first to fall into the hands of the authorities, and the execution of himself, his family, and his chief supporters effectually tranquillised the province without further bloodshed. Many Christian converts happened to be implicated in this seditious movement, and the fact was naturally taken advantage of by the numerous enemies of the foreign

* A phrenologist, or rather physiognomist, declared that he was of royal descent and born to empire.

religion. Fortunately the mandarins could not find sufficient evidence upon which to base an accusation against the colony of French missionaries established in the province of Szchuen. The suppression of the Chow rebellion, therefore, was not followed, as at one moment appeared likely, by an outburst of official persecution against the Christians.

These frequent disturbances, added to the numerous occasions on which it had been found necessary to take up arms against a foreign foe, were all followed by the complete vindication of the Emperor's authority, and at no previous time had the assertion of the supremacy of the central government been more conclusive or easily maintained. The reputation of the Chinese Empire was raised to the highest point, and maintained there by the capacity and energy of the ruler. Within its borders the commands of the central Government were ungrudgingly obeyed, and beyond them foreign peoples and states respected the rights of a country that had shown itself so well able to exact obedience from its dependents and to preserve the very letter of its rights. The military fame of the Chinese, which had always been great among Asiatics, attained its highest point in consequence of these numerous and rapidly succeeding campaigns. The evidences of military proficiency, of irresistible determination, and of personal valour not easily surpassed, were too many and too apparent to justify any in ignoring the solid claims of China to rank as the first military country in Asia—a position which, despite the appearance of England and Russia in

that continent, she still retains, and which must eventually enable her to exercise a superior voice in the arrangement of its affairs to that of either of her great, and at present more powerful and better-prepared, neighbours.*

* With reference to the tribute-bearing embassy from Nepaul to China it may be pertinent to state here that this embassy is not a mythical ceremony, but one actually in force. The treaty limits the number of its members to twenty-seven persons. The late Mr. T. T. Cooper met it in 1869 in Szchuen, and there are repeated references in the "Pekin Gazette" to its arrival, *e.g.* the gazettes of March 25th, April 9th, and November 14th for the year 1879.

CHAPTER XXIII.

KEEN LUNG'S RELATIONS WITH THE WEST.

The Foreign Relations of China.—The Portuguese.—The Question of their Position.—One easily decided.—The Difficulties of their Trade.—The meagre Result.—The Dutch and the Spaniards.—A ridiculous Mission.—Russia.—A Proposition from the Empress Catherine.—Treated with Disdain.—Border Disputes.—A Letter of Rebuke from Keen Lung.—“Our Empire the Elder Brother.”—France and China.—Insignificance of their Trade.—Henry IV.'s proposals.—Solicitude of Louis XIV. on this subject.—And of Colbert.—M. Duvalcur.—China through America.—Sympathetic Views.—First Chinese in Europe.—Amiot's Translations.—Keen Lung as a Poet.—Voltaire's Letters.—And Compliments.—English Intercourse.—Difficulties of the Trade.—Its early History.—The Conquest of India.—Lord Macartney's Embassy.—Its Fortunes.—Summary of its Reception.—Interview with Emperor at Jehol.—Hostile Officialism.—General Sund Fo.—His Suspicions and Inveterate Dislike.—How Keen Lung left the Foreign Question.—Its Decision handed down to his Successors.

AMONG not the least important incidents of Keen Lung's long reign must undoubtedly be held the steady increase and development that took place in the intercourse between China and the countries of Europe. Up to his accession the question had been confined to

the fortunes of the missionary body, and of the small Portuguese colony at Macao, but as his reign proceeded the subject assumed a wider importance, and embraced all the principal trading nations of our continent. From the frequent discussions between the Canton mandarins and their tenants the Portuguese authorities at Macao, to the reception of the British Embassy under Lord Macartney in the last few years of his reign, the topic of his relations with foreign nations was ever present in some form or other to the mind of Keen Lung.

So far as the Portuguese were concerned, and considering the antiquity of their connection with the Chinese Government their affairs claim precedence, it was no very difficult task for the Emperor to decide what course was to be pursued, and how the matter was to be arranged. His superiority in this case was too incontestable to be challenged, and he had only to give such orders as his inclination suggested, or as the Canton mandarins deemed advisable. In 1750 an embassy was sent to Peking to endeavour to obtain some mitigation of the harsh terms upon which trade was alone allowed, and great sums of money were expended in fitting it out, and in purchasing suitable presents for the Emperor and his chief ministers. But although these gifts were graciously accepted, the practical result was none, and the Portuguese could not have been worse situated if they had never sent any ambassador to the capital and if they had kept their milreis in their pockets.

The Portuguese authorities at Canton were, there-

fore, obliged to get on as best they could with their unpleasant neighbours, the Canton mandarins, who seized every opportunity of hindering them in their commerce, and of compelling them to pay large bribes for their not resorting to the extreme measure of expelling them from Macao. To the losses caused by Chinese arrogance and unfriendliness were added those produced by the depredations of the piratical societies, which had their head-quarters in the purlieus of Canton and in the creeks of the Bocca Tigris.* The Portuguese succeeded in producing a more favourable impression on the Chinese by taking an active part in the measures adopted for the purpose of suppressing these marauding bodies, and to this cause may be attributed the more friendly understanding that was at last effected between these neighbours. The Portuguese had, and indeed still have, to show great tact in the arrangement of their affairs with the Canton authorities, and, although they were the first Europeans to obtain a foothold in the country, and long enjoyed a monopoly of its foreign trade, they have never succeeded in emancipating themselves from the position of being the tenants of China for a small port, of which both the prosperity and the importance have departed during several generations.

Neither with the Dutch nor with the Spaniards were Keen Lung's relations of a nature calling for much notice. The latter had never held any direct communication with the central government, but had

* The name of the estuary of the Canton river.

always been confined to their intercourse with the Viceroy of Fuhkien, to whose charge were generally entrusted the affairs of the islands and territories beyond the sea. The former did indeed send an embassy* to Peking in the year 1795, but its reception was not of an encouraging nature, and its despatch proved productive of more disgrace than of honour and profit.

With Russia the Emperor's relations remained on the whole friendly, although the contact between the two great empires on the Siberian frontier had seemed on several occasions to be likely to result in unpleasantness, if not absolutely in a hostile collision. The difficulties that were threatened by such matters as the surrender of Amursana's body, and the flight of the Tourgout tribe, were fortunately settled without an appeal to arms; and when those causes of disquiet were removed none others of sufficient importance remained to disturb the serene aspect of the political situation. The Empress Catherine, following in the steps of Peter in this matter as in much else, sought to establish more intimate relations with Peking, and even went so far as to suggest to the Emperor Keen Lung the advisability of his deputing a resident agent to her court. When the Chinese Government showed such marked aversion to the reception of foreign envoys at the capital, it is scarcely necessary to say

* The reception has been compared to a masquerade. The envoy was rudely hustled, and lost his hat in the scramble. The Chinese are said to still treat the memory of this embassy with ridicule.

that this proposition was received with absolute disdain. Probably it was in consequence of this unusual message that the Russian envoy was refused an audience, and dismissed without a hearing.

In a spirit of retaliation the Russians refused to surrender some renegade Chinese who had fled into Siberia, and their refusal brought down upon them a characteristic letter* of rebuke from Keen Lung. The Russians remained proof against the implied condemnation, and the caravan trade with Kiachta, despite every obstacle and difficulty, assumed increased dimensions. The very remoteness of the place of contact from the capitals of either Power served to blunt the edge of these slights and indignities, and to avert a hostile collision which repeatedly seemed next to inevitable. The relations between Peking and St. Petersburg continued to preserve the amicable cha-

* This letter read as follows :—"It is found, upon examination, that should a thief belonging to either nation be discovered on the frontier he is to be examined in the joint presence of the authorities, and if guilty punished with death. Pursuant to this law (in the forty-fourth year, *i.e.* of Keen Lung 1779) two men who stole eleven horses from you were condemned and executed. Our great Empire acting according to law and the faith of the treaties did this, not for the preservation of friendship, but from the love of truth which it greatly esteems. But you, not executing the thief, break the laws of friendship and the faith of treaties. Our great Empire perceiving that you wish to act according to your own will, by the obstacles you throw in the way and your duplicity, will on no account permit the trade to be carried on. Although our two empires border on one another, yet our Empire may call itself *the elder brother*. Thus holding in the rank of empires the place of elder brother, and having at your request punished the two thieves with death, while you refuse us the same satisfaction; shall our great Empire submit to this? Ponder well and examine into this matter."

racter they had assumed after the Treaty of Nerchinsk in the previous century.

There remain, therefore, to be described and considered only the intercourse between China on the one hand, and France and England on the other, the two great countries of the west. So far as the former of these European states was concerned the intercourse with China always continued to be one more of sentiment, and of the propagation of Roman Catholicism than of a profitable and advancing trade. There is no doubt that a scheme for the promotion of commerce with India and China found great favour with Henry the Fourth; but notwithstanding the desire of the sovereign to increase the trade of the country the scheme proved abortive and resulted in nothing. Nor was an attempt, made more than a century later in the year 1728, to establish commercial relations between the French possessions on the Mississippi and China more fortunate, although the very boldness of the idea should avail to preserve the name of its author, M. Duvalleur, from oblivion. The right was given to the French merchants, on payment of a small sum, to land their goods at Whampoa, the river port of Canton; but notwithstanding this concession and the general favour shown to all enterprises promising to develop the industries and commerce of France by Louis the Fourteenth and his minister Colbert, the commercial intercourse between France and China always remained limited in its extent and of an unimportant character.

But if the growth of commercial relations proved

slow, and if the result attained was only partial, more satisfactory progress could be reported in the way of establishing between the two countries a sympathetic feeling in the sphere of intellect. The first two Chinese subjects who visited Europe came to France in the year 1763, and their return to China was the first means of opening the eyes of the Pekin Government to the fact that the kingdoms whence the Christians came were as civilised and powerful as their own. The letters written home to Paris from the Chinese capital, and the attention first given to Chinese literature by Frenchmen, also served to strengthen this connection and to establish a link of sympathy that had not been present in the case of any other country. The translation of the Emperor Keen Lung's verses* by Père Amiot attracted the notice of Voltaire, and drew from his pen an epistolary poem asking certain questions of the Imperial author as to the difficulties and requirements of versification in Chinese. Keen Lung was undoubtedly flattered by the implied compliment to his poetical talent in the attention of the great French writer, and could not have remained callous to the delicate attentions of the courtier of Sans Souci.

* The principal of these were his "Eulogy of Moukden" and his poem on "Tea." Voltaire's poetical letters will be found in his collected works. A passage referring more to Keen Lung's position as an Emperor than as a writer may be quoted:—

"Occupé sans relâche à tous les soins divers
D'un gouvernement qu'on admire
Le plus grand potentat, qui soit dans l'univers
Est le meilleur lettré qui soit dans son empire."

The most important incident, however, in Keen Lung's relations with European Powers was undoubtedly the arrival and reception of the British Embassy under Lord Macartney. Up to that period the English intercourse with the Chinese had been of only a fitful and unimportant kind. It had had an inauspicious commencement more than a century and a half before in the bombardment of Canton by Captain Weddell; and after that event ships had come singly and at long intervals, sent either by the East India Company from Calcutta or by private venture from England. The growth of British commerce in China was hampered by numerous vexations, as well as by the hostility of the official classes; but so far as its acts and protestations went it could not be said that the government of either Kanghi or Keen Lung was inimical to the foreign trade, although we have already seen that its private views and opinions were less favourable than its language. Long before the opportunity offered itself it had become one of the main objects with the English merchants to secure some means of approaching the central authorities, as they were likely to act more fairly by them than the Canton mandarins who were in receipt of constant bribes from the Portuguese to exclude all other Europeans except themselves from the benefits of the trade.

The campaign in Nepal had procured the Chinese the information that the English, who were known as suppliants for trade at Canton and Amoy, had established a supreme authority in Northern India;

and while the news had no doubt enhanced the importance of our power in the eyes of the Imperial Government it had also contributed to increase the apprehension with which the European states were regarded, and which furnished the true clue to the policy that found most favour at Peking. That sentiment was to acquire intensified force when the suspicions of General Sund Fo, as to the part we had taken in supporting the Goorkha "robbers," became known and appreciated in the Chinese capital.

But before the Chinese commander, who had overthrown the Goorkhas and given security to Tibet, returned to Peking the preliminary arrangements had been made and settled for the despatch of a British embassy to that city. At the last moment some delay had been caused by the death of the envoy* who had been first selected for the post, but a suitable successor had soon been found in the person of Lord Macartney. As this was the first occasion on which a British ambassador received permission to proceed to the capital to have audience with the Emperor some detailed notice† is called for, especially as we

* The Honourable Colonel Cathcart.

† The reader is referred for the fullest information on this subject to Sir George Staunton's "Authentic Account of an Embassy to the Emperor of China," London, 1797; and reference may also be made to Mr. Anderson's narrative of the same mission, published in the year 1795 in London. The name of Sir George Staunton cannot be mentioned without making a passing tribute to the solid and enduring work which he performed towards the better understanding of China. He was certainly the first Englishman who regarded the subject from an intelligent and comprehensive point of view. His translations from the Chinese, particularly his "Laws of the Manchus," remain a permanent monument to his memory.

have already seen that it had been preceded many years before by embassies from the Czar of Russia, who in this matter anticipated the other potentates of Europe.

Every care was bestowed upon the proper equipment of this embassy. Chinese interpreters were sought for and procured after a difficult search. The presents for the Emperor were selected with the double object of gratifying his personal whims and inclinations, and of impressing him with a sense of the power and magnificence of England. The harshest or most cynical critic could not declare that in either one respect or the other there was anything deficient or open to animadversion. Even the names of the vessels that bore this mission to the shores of China were, whether by accident or design, singularly appropriate—the “Lion” and the “Hindustan.” The embassy sailed from Portsmouth in September 1792—the very month when the fate of the Goorkhas was being decided at Nayakot—but it did not reach the Peiho until the month of August in the following year.

The reception that awaited it afforded every reason for gratification, and much cause to hope that the ends for which the embassy had been despatched would be successfully attained. After Lord Macartney left the man-of-war, he and his party were conveyed with all attention and ceremony up the Peiho to the capital. Visits of ceremony were paid and returned with the Viceroy of Pechihli, and some of the other principal mandarins. At Tientsin they were even accorded the unusual honour of a military salute. A

missionary wrote from Peking to Lord Macartney to say that the Emperor had shown "marks of great satisfaction" at the news of his approach, and the instructions sent by Keen Lung to facilitate the movements of the British mission were too clear and emphatic to be disregarded. The embassy was detained some time in Peking, and for a moment it seemed as if a period of vexatious delay would herald the discomfiture of the mission. Fortunately, when affairs appeared to be most unsatisfactory, a message arrived from Jehol, whither Keen Lung had retired, to inquire after the health of the ambassador and to invite him to pay him a visit at his hunting-place beyond the Wall.

Lord Macartney, with his retinue and the guard allotted to his person, proceeded to comply with the invitation, and travelling in an English carriage he reached Jehol in due course. Although the Emperor and his principal minister were in favour of conceding the English some if not all of the privileges they demanded, a very strong party, headed by the victorious general Sund Fo, who had been appointed Viceroy of Kwantung, were not only unfriendly to all foreign intercourse, but inimical to any with England in particular. However, notwithstanding their efforts to render the mission abortive, the Emperor resolved to receive the British envoy in audience, and the interview duly took place in a tent specially erected for the ceremony in the gardens of the palace. A second interview was held, and then the embassy returned to Peking, whence it made its way overland to Canton. The

dislike of the officials, which had been only partially concealed during the residence at Jehol, broke out more unequivocally after its departure, and during their return to Canton the English ambassador and his suite suffered considerable inconvenience at the hands of officials who took their cue from the general Sund Fo, whose Nepaulese laurels had been won at the cost of an irrevocable enmity to the English.* Beyond receiving from the lips of the Emperor an assurance that he reciprocated "the friendly sentiments of His Britannic Majesty" no practical results followed from Lord Macartney's embassy, successful though it was in so far as its reception was concerned. Keen Lung's advanced age left him neither the inclination nor the power to go very closely into the question of the policy or impolicy of cultivating closer relations with the foreign race which asserted the supremacy of the seas, and which had already subjected one Asiatic empire to its sway. That question had to be left for his successors; but at the least it may be said that Keen Lung did nothing to retard the establishment of cordial and peaceful relations with the countries of the West. In almost the last year of his reign he gave this country a kind of assured diplomatic position at Peking by his flattering and favourable reception of Lord Macartney's embassy.

* He said that among the Goorkha troops there were soldiers with "hats" as well as with "turbans."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE END OF KEEN LUNG'S REIGN.

Keen Lung's Abdication.—His Successor.—Good Government.—Its Difficulties in China.—The Corruptness of the Official Classes.—A Chinese Minister's Opinion.—The Population.—Its extraordinary Growth.—Consequent Famines.—Final Persecutions of the Christians.—A favourable Edict.—Chinese Opinion.—Keen Lung's own View.—The Power of Life and Death.—Banishment to Ili.—Keen Lung's Moderation.—His Assiduity.—Early Habits.—Midnight Councils.—The Hoangho.—Akoui's Scheme.—Its partial Success.—Keen Lung's Encouragement of the Work.—Death of the Emperor.—His Character.—His Appearance.—His Habits.—The Magnificent.—Reason of his Abdication.—The Period of Manchu Greatness.—Kanghi and Keen Lung.—The Chinese Empire.—Its Extent.—Keen Lung left nothing for his Successors to achieve.—The Eve of a less brilliant Period.—What Keen Lung achieved.

At the time that the British Embassy was residing at Peking and Jehol, the Emperor Keen Lung announced his intention of abdicating in the event of his living to witness the sixtieth year of his accession to the throne. Three years after the departure of Lord Macartney the auspicious event came to pass, and the

Emperor therefore retired to one of his palaces, and caused his son Heaking to be proclaimed in his place. Keen Lung survived his abdication about three years, dying in 1799 at the extremely advanced age, in his country, of nearly ninety. During these last few years of his long and eventful reign he enjoyed the internal peace and assured tranquillity which were the just guerdon of his previous labours. Freed from the responsibility of the direct exercise of power, he was also able to guide his successor aright in the task of governing the Empire; but no stronger inducement or incentive could be found for a ruler to do his best in the work of administration than the example left by the Emperor Keen Lung. The energy with which that sovereign threw himself into the settlement of external difficulties, and with which he grappled with questions of foreign policy, showed that he would not rest satisfied with either partial success or meagre results. It formed part of the natural character of the man, and was equally conspicuous in matters of domestic policy as in those affecting his foreign relations.

Good government is not an achievement that can be easily performed, even when the sovereign has to facilitate his task and to assist his efforts a model constitution and an incorrupt civil service. In China, where the whole responsibility is thrown upon the Emperor, it is one of unusual difficulty. But for the admirable conduct of the people it would be a task almost impossible to accomplish, as the speculation prevailing among the ill-paid and loosely controlled mandarins has long reached a dreadful pass. Whether

Keen Lung himself was fully aware or not of the extent to which the corruption had spread appears doubtful; but his principal ministers* were perfectly cognisant of it. But while the evils and inconveniences of this seem to have been fully admitted, nobody possessed either the will or the resolution to attempt to grapple with the difficulty, so as to effectually cure the evil and to remove the great blot which used to and still does mar the symmetry of the Chinese system of administration.

The growth of the population had been quite extraordinary during the reign of Keen Lung. Within the space of fifty years it appears to have almost doubled; but this astonishing increase,† while affording strong evidence of the tranquillity and prosperity

* The strongest testimony of this was given by a high Chinese minister to Monseigneur de Caradre (quoted in "Nouvelles des Missions Orientales," tom. i. pp. 90-1), who asked whether there was not some way of putting a stop to these privations and exactions. "It is impossible," replied the mandarin, "the Emperor himself cannot do it, the evil is too widespread. He will, no doubt, send to the scene of these disorders mandarins clothed with all his authority; but they will only commit still greater exactions, and the inferior mandarins in order to be left undisturbed will offer them presents. The Emperor will be told that all is well, while everything is really wrong, and while the poor people are being oppressed."

† When Keen Lung ascended the throne the population is said not to have exceeded 60,000,000. In 1753 it had risen to 100,000,000, but in 1792 it was returned at more than 300,000,000. Much of this great increase is doubtless to be explained by the extension of the Emperor's authority as well as to natural causes. The conquests in Central Asia affected these returns very slightly, as the population there was very sparse. There appears, however, to be no valid reason to doubt the accuracy of the Chinese official returns.

prevailing throughout the realm, was also accompanied by its necessary and inseparable penalty in a country dependent on its own resources, and where the population, however thrifty and energetic, suffered periodically from the opposite visitations of drought and floods. On several occasions, especially towards the end of Keen Lung's reign, the northern provinces were desolated by the ravages of a famine which depopulated in the course of a few weeks districts as large as English counties, and paralysed all the efforts of the local authorities. The Emperor ordered the gratuitous distribution of grain usual under such circumstances, but the remedy applied proved but imperfect, both on account of the extent of the suffering, and also because of the peculation of many of the mandarins, who sought to turn the national misfortune to the attainment of their selfish ends. In 1785 a state of dearth prevailed throughout the greater part of central and northern China; and the details preserved by the few European spectators, who were eye-witnesses of the scenes described, serve to show that its horrors have seldom been surpassed.

The very same year was also marked by the outbreak of a fresh spirit of fanaticism against the Christians, on the part not only of the people, but also of the representatives of the administration. The general suffering seems to have resulted in the outbreak of numerous petty and local disturbances, such as those previously referred to in the provinces of Szchuen and Kansuh. Whether because of the indiscreet conduct of some of the native converts, or, as may well have

been the case, from a settled design to eradicate heretical doctrines, and to ruin their teachers and votaries, the opportunity afforded by these disorders was seized by the provincial mandarins, and a course of persecutions began which have never been exceeded in their ferocity and vindictiveness. Many of the missionaries were cast into prison, and, although violent hands were not actually laid upon them, several died in consequence of the hardships which they had to undergo whilst in confinement. Those who were proved to have assisted the Christians were branded on the face and banished to Ili, which by the toil of these and similar colonists was rapidly acquiring an unknown, and in Central Asia an unexampled prosperity.

The fury of the popular indignation against the Christians was fortunately soon exhausted, and before the year 1785 closed Keen Lung issued an edict rescinding most of the harsh penalties which he had passed a few months before. The missionaries who had been placed in confinement were released, and the question of the position of the Christian religion reverted to its normal state. The policy* of the

* On this point reference may be made to Keen Lung's edict given in "Nouvelles des Missions Orientales," tom. i. pp. 235-7. A commission of mandarins reported on the subject in the following terms:—"We have examined into the European religion (or the doctrine) of the Lord of Heaven, and although it ought not to be compared with other different sects, which are absolutely wicked, yet, and that is what we lay to its blame, it has had the audacity to introduce itself, to promulgate itself, and to establish itself in secret. No permission has ever been given to the people of this

mandarins was not obscure ; as they proclaimed they were resolved to prevent the growth of Christianity, and to stamp out such of it as had taken root surely and by degrees. With this episode our remarks on Keen Lung's relations with his alien subjects may be brought to an appropriate conclusion.

It is the custom in China that the Emperor alone has the power of life and death in his hands. No capital punishment can be awarded, save under exceptional circumstances, by anyone except the sovereign in person, and in Keen Lung's reign this privilege and duty were practically exercised. Crowds of prisoners were sent every month to Peking to have their fate decided by the Emperor in consultation with his most intimate advisers. Neither Keen Lung nor his two predecessors shirked the onerous and responsible task they had in this respect to perform ; and, so far as can be judged, they all appear to have conscientiously striven to mete out impartial justice in every case. Keen Lung, by the testimony of all beholders, was conspicuous not only for his justice but for the mercy with which he tempered it. None but the very worst cases received the punishment of death, and, indeed, with the existence of so con-

country to embrace it. Nay, the laws have absolutely long forbidden its adoption. And now all these criminals have had the boldness to come all of a sudden into our kingdom, to establish there bishops and priests, in order to seduce the people ! This is why it is necessary to extinguish this religion by degrees, and to prevent its multiplying its votaries." On the other hand, Keen Lung used himself to say that "his people were like children beside the Christians" ("Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxiv. p. 239.)

venient a place of transportation as Ili, it is not surprising to learn how common a form of punishment enforced banishment to that district became during this period.

Keen Lung devoted himself with unsurpassed assiduity to the innumerable subjects that demanded his attention, and he gave up even the night-time to the proper discharge of public business. He began the work of the day at an early hour, a course of proceeding to be attributed partly to the custom of the East, and partly to the active habits he had acquired from long practice, but which astonished those who saw him act with this energy unusual at his advanced age. The most important questions of state were often decided at a midnight council, and most of the ordinary business of administration had been accomplished before the first meal of the day.*

Among numerous other subjects to which Keen Lung devoted his attention was one that had long baffled both the ingenuity and the resources of the Chinese Emperor—the proper control of the course of the river Hoangho. His attention seems to have been drawn the more forcibly to this question by the aggravation it had caused to the suffering of the people, to whose misfortunes from famine were added those

* M. Abel Remusat says in reference to this trait, "Both the missionaries and the European ambassadors, who sometimes participated in these morning audiences, could not conceive how an aged and infirm prince could sustain such fatigue; but the exercises common among the Tartars, and the chase, had hardened him to it."

from the inundations of this great river. To the general Akoui, whose overthrow of the Miaotze had secured him the first place among Chinese soldiers and statesmen, Keen Lung entrusted, in the year 1780, a task that he hoped might serve to celebrate his reign by the achievement of a feat to which none of his predecessors could lay claim. The Emperor's final instructions were published in the form of an edict, so that the nation was taken beforehand into his confidence as to the magnitude of his designs and the excellence of his intentions. "My intention," said he, "is that this work should be unceasingly carried on in order to secure for the people a solid advantage, both for the present and in the time to come. Share my views, and in order to accomplish them forget nothing in the carrying out of your project, which I regard as my own, since I entirely approve of it, and the idea which originated it was mine. For the rest, it is at my own charge, and not at the cost of the province, that I wish all this to be done. Let expenses not be stinted. I take upon myself the consequence, whatever it may be. I have no other instructions to give you. Despatch!" *

Akoui had, before receiving this marked encouragement from the Emperor, instituted some preliminary inquiries into the matter, and had come to the conclusion that it would be quite feasible to resist the encroachments of the river and to prevent its further ravages. Having received an emphatic promise of

* Pauthier, tom. i. p. 459.

support from the Emperor, Akoui devoted himself to the great task which he had undertaken, and in due course he was able to notify to the throne that his efforts, supported by the Viceroy of Honan and the board appointed to control the waters of the realm, had been crowned with success.* But although the ravages committed by this river in flood-time have been much less during the last hundred years than at any previous epoch, the present state of the Hoangho leaves much to be desired.

Keen Lung, as has been said, abdicated in favour of his son in the year 1796, and survived that event almost exactly three years.† His reign forms the most important epoch in modern Chinese history, for it marked what was long thought to be the prime of Manchu power, and it certainly beheld the thorough and complete consolidation of the Tartar authority. Its exceptional brilliance was enhanced and rendered the more conspicuous by not only a succession of unsurpassed military exploits, but also by a series of literary and administrative achievements unequalled in Tartar, if not in Chinese, history. His attention to his people's wants, and his zeal in promoting what he thought were their best interests, showed that he desired to appear in their eyes as the paternal ruler, which is the salient characteristic of a Chinese Emperor. That he was almost completely successful in realising his objects there can be little doubt, and it was by general con-

* See his report translated in Pauthier, pp. 459-60.

† He appears to have retired on New Year's Day (February 6th) 1796, and to have died on February 8th, 1799.

sent more than by palace flattery that the title of Magnificent was attached to his name. Certainly the magnitude of his exploits, as well as the splendour of his court, justified its application to his name and rendered it appropriate.*

Keen Lung had abdicated because he would not consent to his reign figuring in history as being of longer duration than that of his grandfather Kanghi. He also had ruled throughout a complete cycle, and the events of these two long and important reigns mark out a period of almost unprecedented achievement in the annals of any country. In no case that can be called to mind had a greater exploit been successfully performed and satisfactorily maintained. The authority of the Manchus, which appeared likely to be overthrown and obliterated before the vigorous onslaught of the Chinese commander Wou Sankwei, had been triumphantly asserted; and the sovereignty

* This Emperor has been described in the following sentences by a European missionary who had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with him:—"This prince is tall and well-built. He has a very gracious countenance, but capable at the same time of inspiring respect. If in regard to his subjects he employs great severity, I believe it is less from the promptings of his character, than from the necessity which would otherwise not render him capable of keeping within the bounds of dependence and duty two empires so vast as China and Tartary. Therefore, the greatest tremble in his presence. On all the occasions when he has done me the honour to address me, it has been with a gracious air that inspired me with the courage to appeal to him in behalf of our religion. . . . He is a truly great prince, doing and seeing everything for himself" ("Lettres Edifiantes," tom. xxiv. p. 110). At various other times he conversed with other missionaries on the history and geographical features of the countries of Europe. His craving for knowledge was perfectly insatiable.

of the Emperor had been established and made good over remote tributary kingdoms and indifferent vassals. The Emperor Kanghi had accomplished a great deal, but he also left much either undone or for those who came after him to complete. Keen Lung, on the other hand, succeeded in everything he undertook, and his success was never partial but decided and unequivocal. Those who succeeded to his throne had but to retain what he had won, to maintain intact the authority he exercised, to be able to boast with truth and justice that they swayed the destinies of the most wonderful empire of a homogeneous race that the world had seen since that of Rome.

When Keen Lung released his hold upon the sceptre the Manchu power had reached its pinnacle. A warrior race, supported by the indomitable courage of a great people, and by the unlimited resources of one of the most favourably situated of countries, had been able to set up its unquestioned authority throughout the Middle Kingdom and the dependencies, which from a remote period had been included under the vague and uncertain term of tributaries. From that post of vantage, and by means of those powerful elements of support, it had succeeded in establishing its undisputed supremacy throughout Eastern Asia, from Siam to Siberia and from Nepaul to Corea. There remained no military feat for the loftiest ambition to accomplish when the aged Keen Lung retired into private life, leaving the responsibilities and anxieties of power to his son and his descendants.

Well for those later rulers of the Manchu race

would it have been if they could have retained peaceful and undisturbed possession of the great empire to which they succeeded; but a long period of decadence was to follow this century and a half of unexampled vigour and capacity. With the disappearance of the great Keen Lung the stern qualities necessary to the preservation of a widely-extended sway also take for a time their departure from the region of Chinese history. Often it was thought that they had vanished altogether, and that a long period of decay and disunion would terminate in complete disruption and disaster. Within a quite recent period the character of the people has reasserted itself under trying circumstances; and the evil day for China has again been long postponed, if not finally put off. But before that reassertion of natural strength was established, a period of internal trouble and external weakness has to be gone through and described. With the death of Keen Lung the vigour of China reaches a term, and, just as the progress has been consistent and rapid during the space of one hundred and fifty years, so now will its downward course be not less marked and unequivocal, until in the hour of apparent dissolution the Empire shall find safety in the valour and probity of an English officer, and in the ability and resolution of the two statesman-generals of the present Emperor.

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ERRATA IN VOL. I.

- Page 19, line 12, *for* " he also," *read* " he, also."
- Page 187, line 18, *for* " three month's " *read* " three months'."
- Page 191, line 13 (of text), *for* " a Chinese Stilicho," *read* " a Chinese Narses."
- Page 201, line 20, *for* " Stilicho," *read* " Narses."
- Page 236, line 13, *for* " asked," *read* " asked for."
- Page 463, line 7, *for* " triumph," *read* " triumphs " (without comma).
- Page 549, line 15, *for* " degrees," *read* " decrees."
- Page 563, line 12, *for* " large " *read* " great."
- Page 600, line 18, strike out comma after " and."

The Third and concluding Volume of this History will be published early in 1883.

The narrative of events during the present century will be based on private papers and manuscripts (in addition to the official documents) placed in the hands of the author by many who took a foremost part in shaping the destinies of the Chinese Empire, and in procuring for their countrymen the increased rights and privileges foreigners now enjoy in that state.

EXTRACT from Review of Vol. I. in "The Saturday Review" of September 17, 1881.

"But fortunately for us and for all other students of Mr. Boulger's History, the anticipated successions of dynasties, reigns of Emperors, and courtly acts are evidently in his eyes no mere dry bones of history, but are clothed in mortal form and are gifted with life. He has taken up the study with enthusiasm, and has imbued himself so thoroughly with the national instincts and proclivities that he has succeeded in infusing interest into that which in other hands would have been a monotonous record of facts, and has produced a work which is not only valuable as a book of reference for students, but which, by his manner of treatment and the lucidity of his style of writing, is likely to attract the attention of many to whom the history of China has been as little known as that of the Kings of Dahomey or the Khans of Bokhara."

As announced in the original prospectus, the Index of Subjects and a Chronological Table will be given in the Third Volume.

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Author Boulger, Demetrius Charles

Title History of China. Vol. 2.

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