

CHINA'S MANY WARS.

CRISIS WHICH AROUSED THE MEEK CELESTIALS TO FIGHT.

The Empire Founded by Titanic Struggles—Her War Lords Were Also Wise Rulers—Conflicts With Tartar, Rebel and European.

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It is not at all trying to the soul of a Chinese man to turn the other cheek also after receiving a blow. He is taught to believe that his humility or moral courage will be respected and that the angry brother will repent his haste. But still there comes a time when patience ceases to be a virtue, and the mild eyed Sin has been known to fight equal to the best. In the early history of the empire, one after another, corrupt and degenerate rulers were deposed by revolutions carried through with bloody wars. It is in accordance with Chinese morality to put a bad sovereign out of the way by violence. He is set down as a "villain" and a "filial" hence not entitled to respect. But "a ruler is never put to death." In the revolutions which rescued China from decay the war leader usually usurped the throne without serious opposition, the people taking it for granted that the ability to win victories meant the virtue and wisdom to rule a nation. The war leaders proved the truth of the principle by their conduct, and some of the best things in Chinese history may be traced to the reigns of war lords. When there were no wars, the life of the palace brought about corruption and in time the necessity for change of dynasty. Generally the warriors turned their energies to internal improvements, and the roads and canals of China were constructed to facilitate intercommunication for national purposes, chiefly in time of war.

Feudalism in China was destroyed by war and the Tartar hordes for centuries kept beyond the border by main force, but at the end of the first thousand years of the Christian era the Tartars held sway. In the wars with the great Khans, especially Kublai, who overran all western Asia and eastern Europe, the Chinese fought better than the people of other countries. Finally the Tartars were expelled and ruled for 200 years. Then the Manchus, taking advantage of civil war in China and favored by a treacherous general, subjugated the Chinese and have ruled them ever since.

The Chinese reasons for avoiding war and neglecting military training are due in part if not wholly to the ethics taught by Confucius. The use of force is universally abjured, and the spectacle of prizefights is unknown in the Celestial Kingdom. For another thing the Chinese policy is such that the people are taught to reverse the locality of birth, to live and die there, generation after generation, and military service and war would break up this strong feature of Chinese social development.

China's wars of the last half century have been against the aggressions of outsiders. The first was the opium war with England, which began in the thirties. The opium war had its tea party, although the commodity in dispute was not tea, but opium. The Chinese destroyed large quantities belonging to English merchants. The way in which the Chinese authorities got possession of 20,000 chests of the drug shows the peculiarity of the heathen. The ultimatum to the merchants of Canton was that if they did not turn over the stuff within three days the water would be shut off from the foreign quarters of the city, at the end of another three days food would be denied the foreigners, and for further delay the last degree of severity would be dealt out. In the fighting which followed the Chinese showed their lack of training for the field. At Chinkiang they fought well for a time, but seeing themselves overpowered, they soon abandoned their walls and, after dispatching their wives and children to prevent desecration by the "barbarians," committed suicide rather than surrender. Nanking was subjugated by the fleet without bloodshed, and as a result the English secured a heavy indemnity and the opening of several ports.

But the war had more disastrous results for China than the loss of money and prestige. The secret societies had a new reason for being, and in a short time several arose with the war cry, "Down with the foreigners!" The opening of ports was resisted, Englishmen were killed and the disturbances developed into an open rebellion, led by a fanatic who, assuming the title "heavenly king," established a capital and entered into rivalry with the emperor.

The ancient city of Nanking, the second city of the empire, became the seat of the new dynasty. In the capture of Nanking the rebels showed how the Chinese fight when under the sway of fanaticism. The garrison of Manchou and Chinese soldiers was a large one, but after blowing up the gates the rebels rushed in and not only slaughtered the troops, but every Manchou inhabitant, irrespective of age.

The generalship displayed by the Taiping leaders was more worthy of penetration than their civil polity. The prophet Hung was a fanatic and could rally the people to his faith, but he had no administrative powers and no moral stamina. Chang Wang, his chief general, was, however, a host in himself for the field. He could plan

and fight and inspire others to fight. In a six months' march he captured 26 cities and arrived within 100 miles of Peking. At Tien-tsin the column was checked by imperial forces, and it was necessary to retreat to Nanking to save the rebel army. This difficult feat was accomplished in spite of the imperial forces thrown across the pathway.

It was during Chang Wang's northward march that Li Hung Chang became a soldier. Being faithful to the imperial regime, he felt it his duty to fight the rebels and raised a regiment. In the early years of the Taiping rebellion the English were at war with China, and the emperor had two foes on his hands. After peace with the Britons he turned his attention to the rebels and sent an army to invest Nanking. Chang Wang was shut up with his army, but the indomitable soldier made his way out through the imperial lines. Collecting a new army he captured city after city, cutting off the imperial forces from their supplies. Finally he turned about and assaulted and scattered the imperial besiegers of Nanking, killing 5,000 of the best soldiers. Another army sent against Chang Wang was defeated, with a loss of 10,000 imperial troops.

At this stage the foreigners turned in to help put down the rebels, who had devastated a vast region. At Shanghai Li Hung Chang selected two energetic Americans to organize a force for the defense of the city. This was the origin of the "ever victorious army," led at first by the American General Ward. General Ward was killed in battle, and his troops, 5,000 strong, fell to "Chinese" Gordon of the British army. Gordon and Li Hung Chang together suppressed the rebellion, capturing Nanking at last. Chang Wang was taken, and during a week's respite granted him before execution he wrote the memoirs of his battles.

"Chinese" Gordon received the credit among military men for ending the Taiping rebellion, although Li Hung Chang got all the honors at Peking. Gordon made conquests, captured cities and scattered rebel hordes. Afterward he pacified the rebellious districts. Gordon found that the Chinese did not fear death and would stand up bravely, although more liable to sudden panic than white troops. He said that the natives hated foreigners like poison and that some day they would rise up and overwhelm them. The day would pass when foreigners could march up to a position and wipe away Chinese soldiers like flies, and there would be no more promenades of a few hundred British or French troops through the country driving the Chinese before them like sheep. When they saw that the only means of meeting the aggressions of the outsiders was military organization, they would buy guns and rifles and ships and with the aid of Europeans create armies to cope with all the world.

Another soldier developed in the Taiping war was the loyal Tso Chung Tang, who perished in the struggle with Japan in 1894. The Taiping rebellion was followed by the Mohammedan uprising. Tso then commanded



GENERAL "CHINESE" GORDON. (First European to suppress rebellion in China.)

a corps of the imperial troops. He proved to be a general of infinite energy and resource and captured cities and recovered whole territories for the throne. At one time, lacking supplies for a long expedition, he turned his army into farmers, planted oases in the desert with crops and when they ripened went forward and put an end to the rebellion. In battle on the Yalu river in 1894 this able general fell at the head of his troops.

In 1883-5 the French encountered some stubborn Chinese fighters in the Tonquin. These soldiers were chiefly refugees from China proper who had taken part in the Taiping rebellion. They were skillful in ambush and were well armed with modern rifles. In the naval battle of Fuchau the Chinese wooden vessels were outclassed by the French cruisers and torpedo boats, but the Celestials gave fight and held out until 1,000 had been killed and 3,000 wounded. Although nominally victorious, the French won no glory in the Tonquin, and their troops were demoralized by the unusual methods of fighting. This war, like that with Japan, was unpopular with the wealthy Chinese, for they had no heart in the quarrel and were the chief sufferers. In China it is the wealthy who pay the extra expenses of the government incurred by war.

Although Japan came out of the war with China lauded as a nation of heroes and filled with military pride, she really won no great glory in actual fighting. The Chinese were poorly equipped and often badly handled. But whenever they had a chance they fought as well as their enemies. In the naval battle of the Yalu the Chinese sailors on the fighting ships stood to the guns gallantly and scored almost twice as many hits as the Japanese gunners. GEORGE L. KILMER.

Her Gratitude.

The snow lay very deep that year at Clinton, Beeches, and Schoolmaster. Ruford was more feeble than usual. And, what with Maria's sewing being interrupted and a new milliner and dressmaker having set up at Beech village, times were very hard.

"You must get me some more wood, Billy," she said, but the schoolmaster said, "The fire nearly went out this morning when you were at school, and the snow was too deep for me to get out to the wood pile."

"Wood pile's all gone," said Billy, biting a semicircular piece out of his bread—"been gone for a week." "Gracious me!" cried poor Maria. "And where has all the wood come from that we've been burning?" "I've been ripping the thorns off the ghost house fence," observed Billy. "I saw the other fellows doing it, so why shouldn't I? And I've chopped up all the wood in the stable."

"But, Billy, that is stealing!" said Maria. "No, it ain't," announced Billy, with the air of one who felt himself an authority on the subject. "The old fellow that bought the ghost house has sold the property to the railway company, and they're going to lay a line of rails right through the back garden. The old house would have been pulled to pieces long ago if folks hadn't been afraid of the ghost, and I may as well have a pull at it as any one else."

"I am quite sure that John Gregory will lend us wood until I am able to order a fresh load if you go down and ask him." "Here he comes now," said Billy, who had been flattening his nose against the window glass. "I think you'd better borrow it yourself." "Comin' this way," said he, "thought I'd stop and inquire how the old schoolmaster is."

"Pa's pretty feeble," sighed Maria. "He'll soon mend again once the spring sets in," said John, encouragingly. "Anything I can do for you, Maria, down in the village?" "Get some more wood," said Maria, wistfully, "but I can't pay for it before pa's annuity money comes in."

"Oh, get out!" said John. "Pay for it, indeed! When our woodland is suffering—yes, actually suffering—to be thinned out, I'll send you down a load, Maria, when I can." "What for?" "Well, if you find a load left at your shed door one of these days, you'll know what it means," said he. "Don't you want to run down the road a piece, Maria? I'm going to the ghost house."

"After a big mahogany chair that was left there," said John. "Old Dawson is a curiosity collector, and he's bought it for \$5. He's got me to take it to the station. He's going to send it down to a place in London where they expect to sell it for much more. I'm told folks are going clean crazy about such old things."

"Hallo!" cried Billy, jumping down from the window seat. "We burned up that chair, Maria, the day you wanted the oven hot last week." He turned a somersault out of the room, and poor Maria, with downcast eyes and burning cheeks, was forced to explain the whole thing to John Gregory.

"Well, if this isn't a fix," said that individual, with a long low whistle. "How am I to fetch the big chair down to the railway station if there's none to fetch?" "Oh, John, John, what shall we do?" groaned poor Maria. "Do you suppose one of Grandmother Ruford's old chairs would do as well? There's half a dozen of them that have stood there ever since I was a child. They're dreadfully old fashioned."

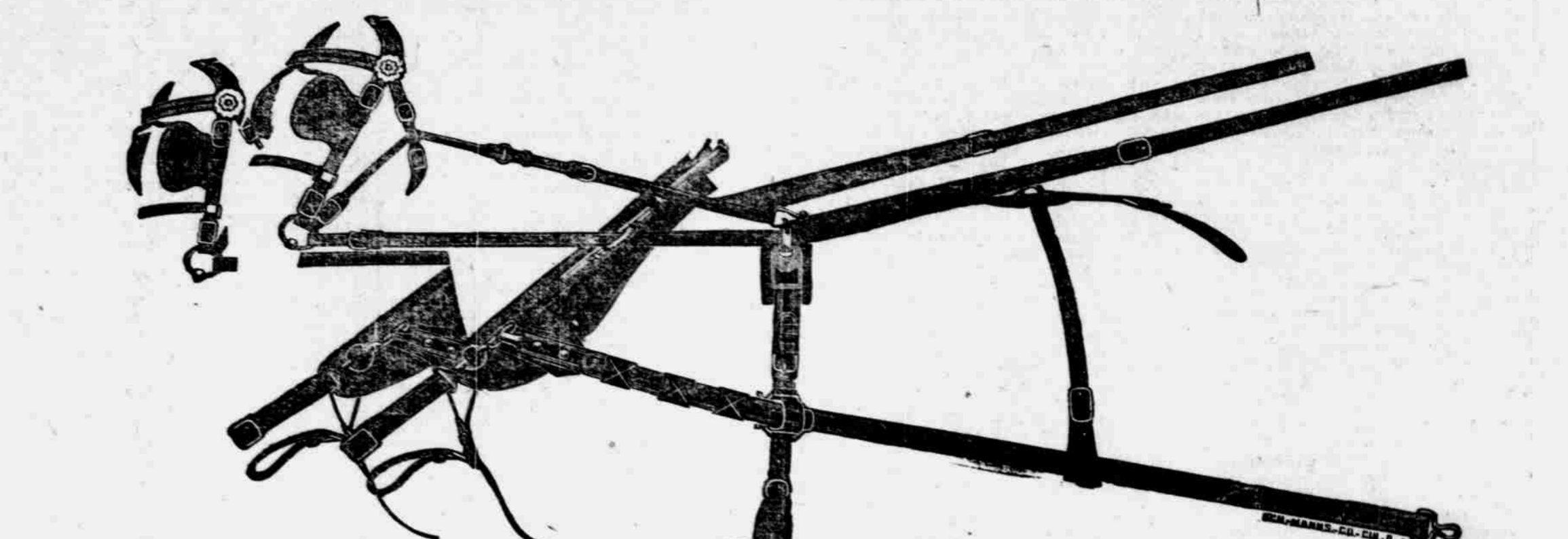
And the result of the inspection was that one of Grandmother Ruford's old shouldered old chairs was cheerfully brought down stairs and lifted into John's cart. John Gregory came up again within a week or two.

"Well, Maria," said he, "I've got a customer for another of them old chairs. There's a lady in London has seen that one and offered \$25 for it, but it was spoke. So when old Dawson told me of it, says I, 'I know where I can get another of the same pattern, or as near like it as can be.' Says he, 'Send it to my shop then.' And if you're willing to sell it on those terms—"

The FARMERS SUPPLY ASSOCIATION LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

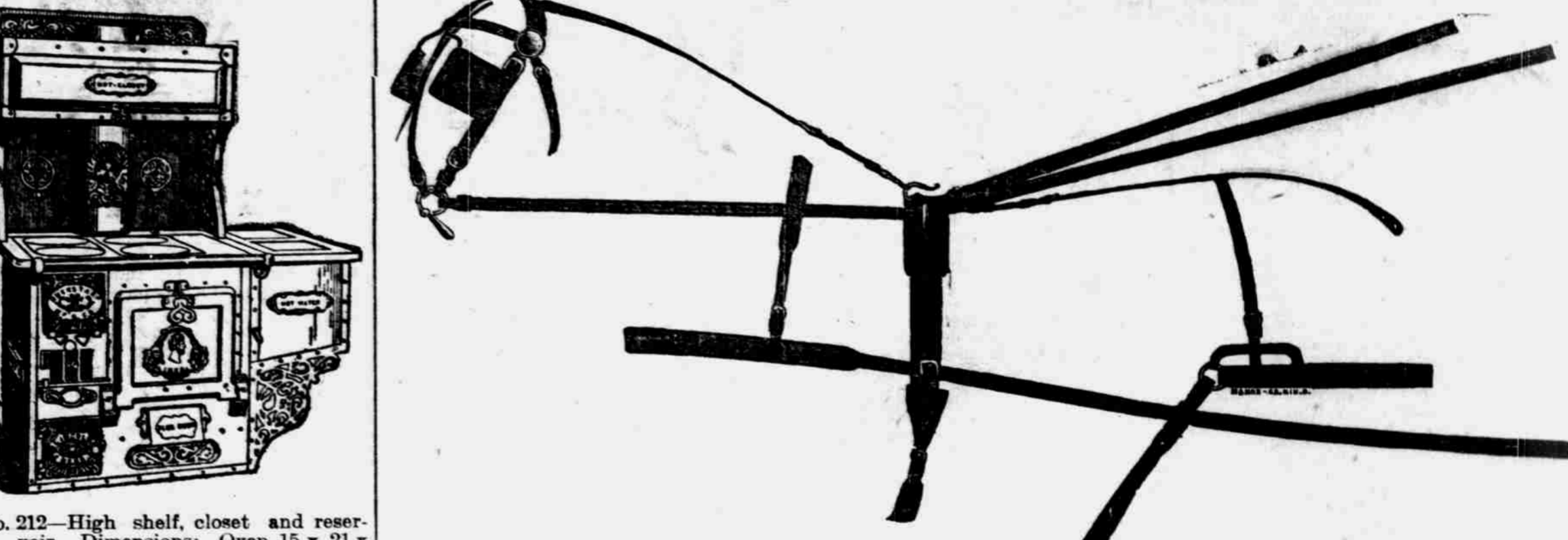
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