

RALPH L. POWELL

# The Rise of Chinese Military Power

*1895-1912*



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*THE RISE OF  
CHINESE MILITARY POWER  
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*BY RALPH L. POWELL*

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*TO MY WIFE*



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R.L.P.



## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

- BPP* Parliament, *House of Commons Sessional Papers*.
- CSK* Chao Erh-hsün, *Ch'ing-shih kao* (The Draft History of the Ch'ing Dynasty), 536 chüan, Peiping, 1928.
- CSL* *Ta-ch'ing li-ch'ao shih-lu* (Veritable Records of Successive Reigns of the Ch'ing Dynasty), 4485 chüan, Tokyo, 1937-1938.
- CSS* Wen Kung-chih, *Tsui-chin san-shih-nien Chung-kuo chün-shih shih* (History of Chinese Military Affairs in the Last Thirty Years), vol. 1 of 2, Shanghai, 1930.
- FR* Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Washington, D.C.
- JATTC* Shen Tsu-hsien, and Wu K'ai-sheng, *Jung-an ti-tzu chi* (An Account of Jung-an [Yüan Shih-k'ai] by His Disciples), 4 chüan, publisher unknown, 1913.
- LCCCF* Shen Chien, "Hsin-hai ko-ming ch'ien-hsi wo-kuo chih lu-chün chi ch'i chün-fei" (The Land Army of China and Its Finance on the Eve of the Revolution of 1911), *She-hui k'o-hsüeh* (The Social Sciences), vol. 2, no. 2 (January 1937), pp. 343-408.
- Monthly Reports* Monthly Reports of Important Military Events—China. This abbreviation is used for all monthly reports filed under this general War Department, General Staff heading. The titles of individual reports vary somewhat.
- NCH* *North China Herald and Supreme Court and Consular Gazette*, Shanghai, weekly.
- PG* *Translation of the Peking Gazette*, reprinted from the *North-China Herald and Supreme Court and Consular Gazette*, Shanghai, annually.
- WDGS* War Department, General Staff.
- YSY* *Yang-shou-yüan chi-yao* (A Collection of Important Memorials of Yang-shou-yüan [Yuan Shih-k'ai]), compiled by Shen Tsu-hsien, publisher and date of publication unknown.

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*THE RISE OF  
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## CHAPTER 1

### THE CHINESE ARMIES PRIOR TO 1895

#### *Introduction*

**I**N the nineteenth century the Chinese Empire was a civil oriental society and the legacy of that tradition has continued to color Western thinking. In fact, until the communists seized power and then intervened to support aggression in Korea in 1950, it was commonly believed that the Chinese were pacifically inclined and militarily incompetent. Yet, since the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1912, militarists have played a leading role. Political power has been measured primarily in terms of the military force available to support it. In the last analysis the influence of political factions has depended on the number and quality of the troops they could control. Even today, although it is the Communist Party which dominates the state, military men have far more importance than they were expected to have in the traditional administrative system. The Red Army was a decisive factor in bringing the communists to power and keeping them there; until late in 1952 the major part of China was governed by military-administrative councils, while the senior army generals are still members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

It was while serving as a military analyst in China during 1946-1947 that I became interested in the rise of military power and also in the misconceptions which have existed concerning China's military potential. After returning to academic life, I determined to make a study of the development of Western-style troops and the role of the military in modern China. Although my ultimate aim is to outline the characteristics as well as the influence of the Nationalist and Communist armies, my research convinced me that before a sound analysis of recent events could be made it was necessary to understand the background from which events arose.

The roots of modern Chinese militarists go back to the period of the Taiping Rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century,

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but it was during the years between the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Revolution of 1911 that warlordism germinated under the decaying façade of rule by a civil bureaucracy. During those years the principal militarists of the republican era either received their military training, or obtained the commands which permitted them to seize power after the collapse of the old order. It is those critical years from 1895 to the abdication of the emperor in 1912 that furnish the basis for this present study. However, since no comprehensive work is available which covers the whole preparatory period from the Taiping Rebellion to 1895, I have found it necessary to write an introductory chapter to lay a foundation for the later period.

The basic objectives of this monograph are twofold. First, I have sought to portray the growth of semi-personal armies and the rise of militarists to a position which permitted them to seize power upon the breakdown of the monarchical system. A vital phase of these developments was the struggle for control of military forces that took place during the last years of the Manchu Dynasty. The second major purpose has been to trace the modernization of the land forces of the Chinese Empire and to evaluate the degree of progress that was attained.

In attempts to increase their military strength during the last hundred years, Chinese leaders have been faced with a whole series of grave problems. These have included industrial backwardness, poverty, illiteracy, political decentralization, nepotism, a shortage of qualified officers and opposition to change. Armies are the products of their society. There is a close relationship between the political, social, and economic structure of a civilization and the armed forces which it develops. Fundamental changes in the characteristics of a society will be reflected in the military establishment; on the other hand, changes in the armed forces necessitated by external or internal pressures can modify the other aspects of a culture. An industrial foundation is essential to the maintenance of an effective army, while the size and equipment of the armed services ultimately depend on the ability of the

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economy to finance them. Also the social structure of an army tends to reflect the social status and prestige of the military profession. If soldiers are considered to be the dregs of society, they probably will be. Since these principles have all been applicable to modern China, cognizance must be taken of them.

The history of the development of an army is a history of institutional training and organization, for the armies of the modern era are highly complex bodies of individual technicians, functioning as members of a team. The form of organization of the various types of military units is the measured result of theory plus experience gained in maneuvers and in combat. The organizational structure of a unit normally dictates the use made of it in battle. Since it is the adoption of new weapons or tactics that necessitates changes in organization, the current effectiveness of an army can be judged in part from its structure. This was true of the new-style armies of the Chinese Empire.

In the early decades of the nineteenth century the Manchu Dynasty had passed its zenith and was already in decline, but ancient China was still a self-sufficient and self-centered empire, largely isolated from the rest of the world. Many of the basic characteristics of her administrative system—in fact, of her culture—took root before the Christian era. By the time of the T'ang and Sung dynasties they had been institutionalized, and henceforth were preserved with amazingly little change. Moreover, the dominant groups in China desired no real modification of the old order. Almost 2,000 years of history had proved the appropriateness of the Confucian system. Dynasties could come and go, but the system was perpetuated largely intact.

The late Manchu Empire was a decentralized autocracy, administered by a bureaucracy in which the civil officials held a preferred status over the military. The social structure was family-centered with a resultant prevalence of nepotism. There was no caste system. In theory or law there were few bars to social mobility, yet in practice society tended to be largely stratified, with the scholar-bureaucrat holding the



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highest status. The emperor was considered to be the Son of Heaven, ruler of mankind. As long as his rule was tolerable, he was considered to possess the Mandate of Heaven. When his administration became oppressive and unbearable, Confucian ideology acknowledged the people's right to revolt. Those beyond the pale of Chinese civilization were regarded as barbarians, whose envoys were tribute-bearing representatives of vassal states. The Chinese had no conception of dealing with other states as sovereign equals. Naturally, such a policy was unacceptable to the proud, nationalistic, and rapidly industrializing nations of the Occident. Given these conditions, in addition to the growing interest of the West in trade with China, conflict was inevitable.

The Chinese armies of the early nineteenth century were the products of their milieu. Following the consolidation of the Manchu Empire, China had faced no great external threat, so the principal mission of the armed forces had become the prevention of internal rebellion and the preservation of local order. Since years of relative peace had led to their degeneration, these decentralized armies proved incapable of defending China's frontiers against a well-armed enemy.

It will be shown that it was the inability of the traditional armed forces to crush the great Taiping Rebellion or to defend China against Western troops in the Opium and Arrow Wars that forced the introduction of modifications in the military structure. In fact, the military system was the first aspect of Chinese society to reflect markedly the impact of Western civilization. Still, so powerful were the forces of conservatism, so ingrained were the traditions of the old order, that it was not until the defeat of China at the hands of her small former protégé, Japan, that sufficient Chinese officials appreciated the absolute necessity for change to instigate a radical reform movement. Thus, after 1895 military modernization became only one phase—although a vital phase—of a broad but generally unsuccessful reform movement.

It is obvious that the organizational structure, techniques, and equipment of the new armies were borrowed from the

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Occident. It can also be demonstrated that the modern troops, as products of changing China, were influenced by Western ideas such as nationalism and republicanism. Yet, it will not be surprising to find that they were also deeply imbued with traditional Chinese concepts.

Confusion has existed as to the proper designation of the various types of Chinese military units; this situation has been complicated by the change of names which took place during the period. Hence an effort has been made to clarify the terminology. Where possible, the Chinese names for military organizations have been translated in terms of the modern military units which most closely approximate them in size and characteristics.

It is hoped that this work will be of assistance not only to students of military affairs, but to all who, being interested in modern China, must deal with the military leaders and armies who march through Chinese history.

### *The Original Manchu Military Organization*

In 1644 troops of the warlike Manchus, attacking from their homeland in Manchuria, seized the imperial capital. After entering the walls of Peking, they remained to rule China for over two and a half centuries, their rulers being known as the *Ta-ch'ing* or Great Pure Dynasty. The Manchus were the most successful of a whole series of "barbarian" tribesmen who for over 2,000 years had invaded across the frontiers during periods of internal weakness. Within a period of sixty years the Manchus had expanded from a small frontier tribe into a state capable of undertaking the subjugation of the great Chinese Empire. Within two generations able leaders had overrun Manchuria, conquered Korea, and won suzerainty over the Mongols of Inner Mongolia. Neither their victories nor their long reign in China were achieved by military power alone. They made effective use of Chinese administrative techniques, of diplomacy, and of intrigue. Nevertheless, they could not have conquered China, even in

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a period when it was in decline, without having first created an outstanding fighting force.

The Manchus were a militant people, hardened by numerous campaigns. Their virtues were military virtues and even their organizational structure was primarily military in nature. Both the Manchus and their auxiliaries were organized into units known as Banners. These Banners were not, however, solely military formations, for they also had political, economic, and social functions in the Manchu state. Not only the soldiers, but also their families were enrolled in the Banner companies.<sup>1</sup>

The creator of the Banner system was Nurhaci, the gifted warrior-statesman who founded the dynasty. This able leader realized that one prerequisite to the building of a strong state was the organization of an efficient and effective military machine. In 1601 he divided his followers into companies (*niru*), later called *tso-ling*, and placed them under four banners (*ch'i*), yellow, white, red, and blue. It was from the color of their flag that the new units took their names. When by 1615 there were some 200 Manchu companies, they were redivided into eight units—banners bordered with one of the four original colors being added. After the Manchus conquered Mongol and Chinese territory, they enrolled under the Banners the soldiers of these races who had surrendered. In 1626 a Mongol force came into being which by 1635 had been enlarged and organized into eight Banners. Two Chinese Banners were created in 1637; by 1643 these had also been increased to eight. Hence, the Eight Banners (*Pa-ch'i*) consisted in fact of twenty-four Banners, eight each of Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese soldiers.<sup>2</sup> The majority of the Bannermen were mounted archers, virile warriors of a pre-industrial army. Capable of carving out a great empire in Asia, the Manchu armies were already inferior techno-

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, Washington, 1943, vol. 1, pp. 1-3, 595-596; Franz Michael, *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China*, Baltimore, 1942, pp. 64-66, 105-106.

<sup>2</sup> Fang Chaoying, "A Technique for Estimating the Numerical Strength of the Early Manchu Military Forces," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 13 (June 1950), pp. 192-193; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, p. 596.

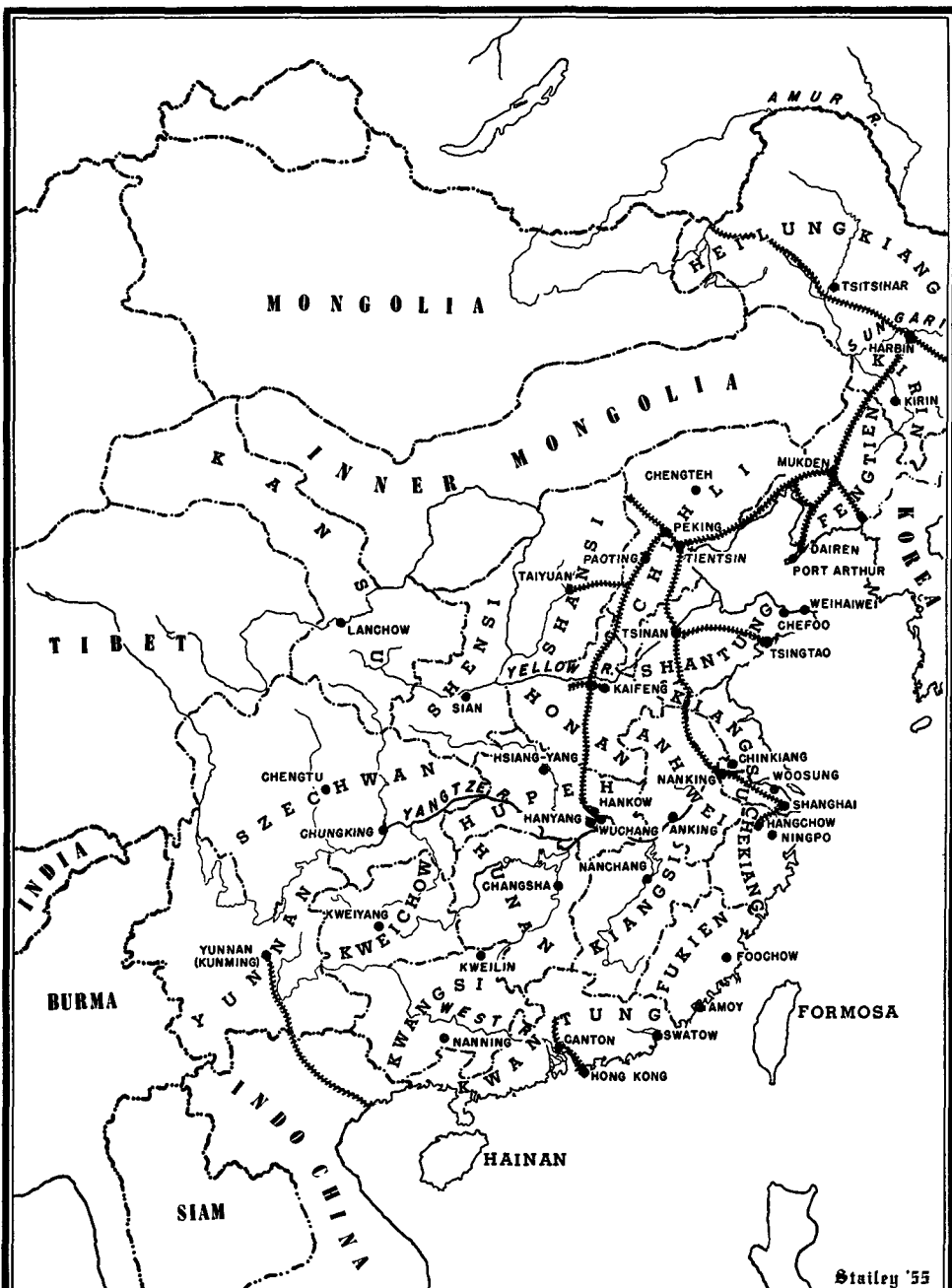
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logically to the armies of Europe. Later the Bannermen came to constitute a hereditary, privileged class in the state; they became the stagnant symbols of a past military glory.

After the capture of Peking, the Banner Forces were distributed as an army of occupation throughout the Manchu Empire, an army whose mission was to preserve the conquest status of the greatly outnumbered Manchus.<sup>3</sup> Naturally the heaviest concentration of forces was stationed at the capital and in a protective cordon of twenty-five cities in Chihli, the province around Peking. The remainder of the Bannermen were stationed at garrisons in most of the provinces. Strong contingents were left in Manchuria to defend the homeland of the dynasty. Powerful garrisons were located in Western and Northwestern China to guard those traditionally dangerous frontiers. In China proper, the garrisons extended in three rough, progressively larger, semicircles southward and westward from Peking as far as Canton and Chengtu, the capital of Szechwan. Only Anhwei, Kiangsi, Hunan, Kwangsi, Kweichow, and Yünnan provinces had no Banner garrisons. Tartar-generals (that is, Manchu generals-in-chief, *chiang-chün*, who ranked with, but before, the governors-general) were stationed in every governor-generalship except Yünnan and Kweichow. A study of the map indicates that the primary function of the Eight Banners was not defense against external aggression but the preservation of the Ch'ing Empire from internal revolt. Furthermore, inside the Great Wall the Bannermen were stationed at strategic administrative, population, agricultural, commercial, and communication centers: for example, the vital Yangtze River area, key points on the Grand Canal, the Chengtu plains, the delta of the West River, and the North China plains received garrisons.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> For an extensive analysis, based on Chinese documents, of the organization, distribution, ranks, pay, and status of the Banner Forces, see T. F. Wade, "The Army of the Chinese Empire," *The Chinese Repository*, vol. 20, nos. 5, 6, 7 (1851), pp. 250-280, 300-340, 363-422.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Pao Chao Hsieh, *The Government of China (1644-1911)*, Baltimore, 1925, pp. 64-65; W. J. Hail, *Tseng Kuo-fan and the Taiping Rebellion*, New Haven, 1927, pp. 3-4.



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# China

1911

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As all interested military analysts have learned to their regret, no strength reports of Ch'ing or Chinese Republican armies can be considered fully reliable, although approximate estimates are possible. According to the Chinese scholar Fang Chao-ying, the Manchus in 1644 had a total of 563 companies. At that time a company may have had some 300 men of military age, which would have given a total potential force of about 168,900; but the common practice was to select only one of every three men for active military service. The number of Banner companies of the three nationalities increased gradually, but not uniformly, from 1601 to 1735, at which time there were 1,155 companies in the Peking garrison. Since the strength of the standing army was in direct proportion to the number of organized companies, the Manchus formed new units when planning a major campaign. Because after 1735 the need for the Banner armies decreased, the number remained relatively stable until 1912.<sup>5</sup> It has been estimated that the minimum personnel throughout the empire receiving pay in 1825 consisted of 10,629 officers (figures from 1812), 236,014 non-commissioned officers and privates, 41,422 supernumeraries, and 5,327 craftsmen and retainers. It should be noted that these figures do not include all the Bannermen, for, with the exception of men in the Three Superior Banners, those who did not render military or civil service were not supported by the state.<sup>6</sup>

The second major branch of the regular forces of the Ch'ing Dynasty consisted of the Army of the Green Standard (*Lu-ying*). In the early days of their reign, the Manchus decided to create an auxiliary Chinese military organization to help preserve order in the provinces. When the invaders conquered China, several Chinese armies fought for their cause. Some of these soldiers were absorbed into the Eight Banners; the remainder formed the nucleus of the Green Standard troops. The balance of the personnel was drawn from Ming armies, from volunteers, and from local corps.

<sup>5</sup> Fang, *op.cit.*, pp. 193-194, 202, 204, 208.

<sup>6</sup> Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 252, 254. Hail (*op.cit.*, p. 3), using the same sources, gives an incorrect figure (10,591) for the total number of officers.

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The officers of this force could be either Chinese or Manchus, but the enlisted men were Chinese and, unlike the hereditary Bannermen, they were recruited by "volunteer" enlistment. Like the Banners, the Green Standard system had been influenced by the practices of the preceding Ming Dynasty.<sup>7</sup>

After its organization, the Army of the Green Standard was divided into Land (*Lu-lu*) and Marine Forces (*Shui-shih*), the troops consisting of cavalry, infantry, and garrison soldiers. A most significant feature of this Chinese army was that it was widely distributed throughout China in small units. The majority of the men were under at least the nominal command of the provincial commander-in-chief (*t'i-tu*), but the governors-general and governors were also allotted a detachment. The troops under a provincial commander-in-chief were divided into brigades (*chen-piao*), territorial regiments (*hsieh-piao*), and battalions (*ying*). The battalions were further subdivided into a number of smaller units.<sup>8</sup>

In the early days of the Ch'ing Dynasty the strength of the Army of the Green Standard was not fixed, but under the K'ang-hsi Emperor (1662-1722) its table of organization called for roughly 590,000 men. Although distribution throughout the country was more regular than in the case of the Eight Banners, there were noticeable concentrations in the northwest, along the South China coast, and in Yünnan, where there was no Banner garrison. In 1764 the Green Standard troops had increased, on paper at least, to approximately 630,00 men, the only outstanding expansion being an addition to the garrison of Kweichow. By 1785 the authorized strength had decreased to about 590,000, but by 1812 the allotted number had expanded again to approximately

<sup>7</sup> CSK, *Ping-chih* 2, p. 1; Wade, *op.cit.*, p. 392; Hail, *op.cit.*, p. 8; Franz Michael, "Military Organization and Power Structure of China during the Taiping Rebellion," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 18 (November 1949), p. 471. For a detailed description of the organization, ranks, mission, and pay of the Green Standard troops, see Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 363-416.

<sup>8</sup> W. F. Mayers, *The Chinese Government*, 3rd edn., Shanghai, ca. 1896, pp. 64-65; H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present-Day Political Organization of China*, Shanghai, 1912, pp. 337-341.

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660,000. Then the Tao-kuang Emperor (1821-1850) ordered that the fixed number of the army be reduced and that the organization be weeded out.<sup>9</sup> By 1825 the strength had been reduced to about 618,000.<sup>10</sup> Just prior to the outbreak of the Taiping Rebellion in 1851, the force may have been further reduced to roughly 585,000 men.<sup>11</sup>

Intermittent increases in the strength of the Army of the Green Standard coincided with the periods of militant foreign policy or great civil wars. The decline noted by 1785 came after the end of the major campaigns of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor and the increase by 1812 is attributable to the revolts of the Miao tribes and White Lotus Society. The Tao-kuang reign (1821-1850), which was marked by frugality, a less aggressive policy, and the decadence of the troops, saw a progressive decline in the strength of the Army of the Green Standard.

It is apparent from its distribution into a horde of small, independent, or semi-independent units that the Army of the Green Standard was a great constabulary rather than a combat army. The mission of the force was primarily the preservation of peace and order. Its troops had pacification duties among the border tribes and internal aborigines. They engaged in crime prevention and aided in the transport of bullion, grain, prisoners, and mail. The army also manned guard stations throughout the empire, but because of the scattered nature of its detachments, the force could not rapidly mobilize to meet a large-scale internal revolt or a threat of foreign invasion. Since the small detachments were of great service to local officials, any attempt to concentrate a large

<sup>9</sup> CSK, *Ping-chih* 2, pp. 19-20. The *Ch'ing-shih kao* gives exact strength figures for the above-mentioned years, but in every case where a breakdown is made, the total is wrong. If it can be assumed that the individual figures for each province are accurate, the totals should read: K'ang-hsi period, 588,174, not 594,414; and the total for 1785 is 588,194, not 599,814. Lo Erh-kang (*Hsiang-chün hsin-chih* [New Gazetteer of the Hunan Army], Shanghai, 1938, p. 1) states that in the K'ang-hsi period the Green Standard numbered about 640,000 men.

<sup>10</sup> Wade, *op.cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>11</sup> CSK, *Ping-chih* 2, p. 20.



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force was discouraged as it would leave the civil authorities without the necessary police force.<sup>12</sup>

The Manchus had begun their rule with a considerable degree of centralized control over their military forces. When the Eight Banners were created in Manchuria, the Emperor had direct command of only one, while the other seven were each controlled by a prince. However, in a deliberate move to increase the power of the Throne at the expense of the imperial clan three of the Banners were placed under the Shun-chih Emperor in 1651 and became the Three Superior Banners. Then the Yung-cheng Emperor (1723-1735) deprived the princes of command of the Five Inferior Banners and named his own appointees. The Army of the Green Standard was also under the ultimate control of the central government, especially of the Board of War (*Ping-pu*). Even more important was the fact that the armies' finances were controlled by the Board of Revenue (*Hu-pu*).<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the vastness of China and the inefficiency of communications necessitated the delegation of great power to the provincial officials. Such action was essential, despite the fact that the traditional spirit of provincialism allied with the selfish interests of the bureaucrats to make such a policy detrimental to imperial power. This danger was particularly emphasized during the 1870's by the major rebellion of three influential Chinese officials in the provinces. Therefore, the K'ang-hsi Emperor created a system of checks and balances to safeguard Manchu rule. In its military aspect, this system consisted of the division of military power in each province among a number of authorities. As we have seen, although they directly commanded only a Banner garrison, the Tartar-generals outranked even the governors-general. The latter officials were, however, ex-officio ministers of war and the governors were vice-ministers of war; thus they were listed

<sup>12</sup> Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 363-364; Hail, *op.cit.*, pp. 10-11; Maj. Gen. Emory Upton, *The Armies of Asia and Europe*, New York, 1878, p. 18.

<sup>13</sup> Lo Erh-kang, "Ch'ing-chi ping wei Chiang yu ti ch'i-yüan" (The Origins of Private Armies in the Late Ch'ing), *Chung-kuo she-hui ching-chi shih chi-k'an*, vol. 5 (June 1937), pp. 237-239; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, p. 218, and vol. 2, p. 916; Michael, "Military Organization," p. 471.

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as military officers on the rolls of the Board of War. As such, they were nominally the supreme military officers in their areas, having indirect control over all the Green Standard troops in their provinces. Yet they directly commanded only their brigades. Moreover, the governors-general and governors acted as a check on each other and, except in those provinces where the governor was concurrently Green Standard commander-in-chief, the provincial commander served as a further counterbalance. Since he was senior in military rank to a governor, he would serve only a governor-general. The commander-in-chief's brigade was almost invariably larger than that of his civil colleagues, but some of their brigadier generals (*tsung-ping*) had larger units directly under them than did their superiors. The brigadier generals were semi-independent, yet their units were scattered and practically sedentary. Furthermore, their forces were of great service to the local officials, who were opposed to any concentration of troops which would strip their localities of police. Another indication of the Throne's jealousy of its governors-general, governors, and generals was the fact that for over two hundred years the regime specially appointed imperial commissioners to quell serious uprisings in the provinces. These commissioners, who were frequently imperial princes or ministers of state, outranked the provincial officials while they were engaged in their military mission. This complicated system may have admirably suited the domestic needs of the K'ang-hsi Emperor,<sup>14</sup> but it created an organization which was almost useless in time of war.

When the Manchus conquered China, they were a hardy militant race, and the Banner forces were composed of tough, battle-hardened, confident warriors with a will to fight. By invading China, they entered an environment which had debilitated equally hardy warriors in the past. This had been true even of the renowned army of the Mongol Dynasty. As a conquering race, the Manchus naturally sought to preserve the military characteristics of their people and extolled martial

<sup>14</sup> Hsieh, *op.cit.*, pp. 258-259, 291-293, 295-298; Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 266-288; Hail, *op.cit.*, pp. 8-11.

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virtues. However, since the Manchus were forced to rely to a high degree on the Chinese Confucian literati to administer their new empire, they perpetuated the prestige of a class who used moral sanctions and tradition to stigmatize the profession of arms. Chinese history is replete with foreign expansion and civil war, and its dynasties as well as its modern regimes have been created by the sword. The use of military force was obviously the most efficacious method of reaching the pinnacle of power. It is amazing that not only its own people but its conquerors should have been largely convinced of the ideal that the scholar is the acme of all virtues, while the soldier is a rascal, strong as a bull, perhaps, but no more intelligent. In this regard, it must be remembered that although soldiers were a necessary evil required to protect the empire, not only were the literati essential to operate the complex machinery of government, but also it was they who wrote, perpetuated, and propagated as doctrine an ideology which extolled the virtue of civil rule.<sup>15</sup> That the Chinese masses were persuaded by them is indicated by the popular proverb: *Hao-t'ieh pu-ta ting; hao-jen pu-tang ping*, "Good iron is not beaten into nails; good men are not made into soldiers." It is difficult for a small minority, even a ruling one, to preserve a martial spirit in the face of such public opinion.

After 1735 the great Ch'ien-lung Emperor began to rely on the Army of the Green Standard to suppress internal uprisings. The subjugation of Sinkiang from 1755 to 1759 was the last campaign in which the Bannermen formed the principal fighting force.<sup>16</sup> In slightly more than a hundred years, the Banner troops had ceased to be the dominant military factor in the empire. They continued to be a symbol of the conquest status of the dynasty, but they were no longer a reliable material bulwark. The Manchus were forced to depend upon their system of checks and balances, plus the loyalty or disunity of the Chinese, to preserve their throne. The Chinese military

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Michael, *Origin of Manchu Rule*, pp. 28-29; Hsieh, *op.cit.*, pp. 180, 389; Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 417-419.

<sup>16</sup> Fang, *op.cit.*, p. 203.

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historian Lo Erh-kang states that as early as the K'ang-hsi reign (1662-1722) the Bannermen had become so effete that the Emperor came to depend primarily on the Army of the Green Standard, which he considered to be superior. The Bannermen stagnated as garrison troops while the Chinese soldiers became the "regular army" of the empire. Yet by the latter half of the eighteenth century, evils developed in the Army of the Green Standard and within a few more decades it could not be depended upon either.<sup>17</sup> The traditional Manchu military forces proved their inadequacy during the Opium War in 1839-1842. A decade later, by the time of the Taiping Rebellion, they were so corrupt that they were completely incapable of defeating or even containing the rebels and had to be strongly augmented.

Many factors which contributed to the deterioration of the armies of Ch'ing China were common to both the Eight Banners and the Army of the Green Standard. Aside from the hostile political and social climate, the troops were debilitated by years of garrison duty; this was especially true of the privileged inactivity of the Bannermen. Corruption and embezzlement were rife, particularly among the officers. Muster-rolls were padded with non-existent soldiers, while those that were present were irregularly paid an inadequate ration. In some Green Standard units, only a sixth to a half of the listed personnel actually existed. Training had become a picturesque formality among troops whose organization and weapons were antiquated. The officers were still studying the tactics and maxims of the ancient military writers Sun-tzu, Wu-tzu, and Ssu-ma. Discipline was lax or brutal. Superiors could not restrain their subordinates, so the army became a menace to the populace, in some cases, their depredations being worse than those of the local bandits. Officers mistreated their men and used them as menials. Both forces were over decentralized. When troops were assembled for training or war, they were drawn in small detachments from a number of units, which meant that the men had different backgrounds

<sup>17</sup> Lo, "Ping wei Chiang yu," pp. 239-240; Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, pp. 1-2.

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and the officers sometimes failed to cooperate. The Banner-men degenerated from hardy warriors into a parasitic class while the soldiers of the Army of the Green Standard began to enter other occupations, including banditry.<sup>18</sup> In 1851 Tseng Kuo-fan reported that both the Manchu and Chinese soldiers had connections with the bandits and were addicted to opium-smoking and gambling. General Wu-lan-t'ai also stated that the armies had never recovered from the defeats suffered in the Opium War; that they considered retreat to be normal and failure to hold strategic points to be a casual affair.<sup>19</sup>

One basic reason for the decline of the armies was the failure to provide competent officers. An elaborate examination system, superficially corresponding to the highly respected civil service examinations, had been established to select officers for military service. As in the case of the civil examinations there were three sets of tests and degrees leading from local to the metropolitan examinations in Peking. The theory behind the practice was laudable, for it presumed that officers were to be selected impartially according to ability and merit. Practice fell deplorably short of the ideal. Each examination comprised military exercises and a stilted written examination, consisting of producing from memory a section from the ancient military classics. In spite of the great prestige of scholarship in China, the literary portion of the examinations was a farce. If, as was frequently the case, a candidate was too illiterate to compose the required quotation, he could obtain assistance from a more learned aspirant. The real emphasis was placed on the tests of strength and skill. These consisted of mounted and dismounted archery, brandishing a great sword, pulling a powerful bow, and lifting a heavy stone. The Chinese suffered from the assumption that the only requirements for military leadership were brute

<sup>18</sup> Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, pp. 2-15; CSS, vol. 1, p. 13; (Japanese) Imperial General Staff, compilers, *History of the War between Japan and China*, Tokyo, 1904, vol. 1, p. 27; Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 417, 420-421.

<sup>19</sup> Ssu-yü Teng, *New Light on the History of the Taiping Rebellion*, Cambridge, Mass., 1950, p. 47.

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strength and courage. Furthermore the whole program was futile from another standpoint. At least by the late nineteenth century a majority of the degree holders did not join the armed services, while most of the regular officers did not possess degrees. In the middle of the nineteenth century some officials were already proposing that the valueless examinations be abolished. Yet, so deep-rooted was opposition to change that these trials of strength were not finally revoked until 1901.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the relative worthlessness of the armies, they were not inexpensive and placed a heavy burden on the inadequate financial structure of China. Figures concerning overall military expenditures must be considered at best to be rough approximations. After a careful, frequently frustrating study of the personnel strength, pay, allowances, and cost of horses, Sir Thomas Wade estimated that the disbursements of the Board of War in the middle of the nineteenth century amounted to 30,874,540 taels. Of this total, the Banner Forces accounted for 15,963,480 taels, while the expenditures of the Army of the Green Standard were 14,662,650. Wade states that all necessary data were not available and that it would not be greatly in error to assume that from sixteen to eighteen million taels were spent annually on the Eight Banners.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Period of the Taiping Rebellion*

The demoralization of the armed services was not an isolated phenomenon. Unfortunately the decay apparent in the military system was a reflection of the gradual deterioration of the whole structure of Ch'ing China. Military corruption was matched by political corruption. Civil officials illegally taxed and squeezed the people, for oppression of the

<sup>20</sup> Etienne Zi (Hsü), *Pratique des examens militaire en Chine*, Shanghai, 1896, passim.

<sup>21</sup> Wade, *op.cit.*, pp. 413, 416. For a chart of the Eight Banners and Green Standard expenses by provinces, see pp. 414-415. There is an error on p. 416: the expenses of the Banner Forces should total 15,963,480 taels.

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populace was not limited to the degradations of imperial troops. Riots and disturbances were frequent, but many officials were more interested in holding the lid on until their term of office was completed than they were in ameliorating the distress of the people. Growing popular opposition to alien rule was already apparent in the increased activities of anti-dynastic secret societies. Political and social instability was intensified by and partially responsible for a growing economic depression. The population was increasing rapidly in relation to the expansion of arable land, while an inequitable form of tenancy was spreading. The impact of the West manifested itself in the form of an unfavorable balance of trade—chiefly incurred through the heavy import of opium—and a consequent drain on China's silver supply. Natural phenomena joined government neglect to increase famine conditions. The stage being set for a tremendous upheaval against the old order, the impetus came from the Taipings or God-worshippers in Kwangsi.

The Taiping Rebellion which grew out of these disastrous conditions was a political, racial, agrarian, and to a degree religious revolution, inspired in part by a perverted form of Christianity. The rebellion had its roots in the southeastern provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi. Most of the original God-worshippers were peasants, but there were also a scattering of other groups, including mutinous imperial soldiers and a few educated men. In 1851 the leaders proclaimed "The Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace," and in 1852 they began a northward march which led to the capture of Nanking early in 1853.<sup>22</sup>

In contrast to the government's troops, the heterogeneous armies of the Taipings possessed a political, economic, and religious ideology which gave them morale and a will to fight. Furthermore, at least in the early days of the rebellion, their armies were ably led, the strategic and tactical planning being

<sup>22</sup> This brief outline of the causes and nature of the Taiping Rebellion is based on Teng, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-61; G. E. Taylor, "The Taiping Rebellion," *The Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, vol. 16 (January 1933), pp. 546-582, 587-594.

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astute. While the imperial troops relied on the defensive strength of city walls and artillery, the Taipings adopted the offensive, both psychologically and physically. Cooperation existed among the leaders. Also, despite strict disciplinary regulations, the relationship between officers and enlisted men was good. As a result the early Taiping armies had an excellent *esprit de corps*.<sup>23</sup> Unlike the imperial armies, the Taiping organization gained strength from a system which, although originally based on a unified supreme command, permitted flexibility and initiative on the part of the army commanders in the field. The fact that they treated the populace much better than did the government forces gave the Taipings the necessary degree of public support to carry out the original campaigns.

The organization of the Taiping armies was modeled on that furnished by the ancient *Chou-li*, or *Ritual of the Chou*, and on the tables of organization of the militia of the Ming Dynasty. The major military unit was the "army" (*chün*), consisting of 12,500 soldiers (actually, the *chün* resembled a division rather than an army). An "army" was divided into five brigades, which were composed in turn of five battalions of 500 men. Each battalion contained five companies of 100 men. The Taipings made the apparently exaggerated claim that they had 1,300,000 men in their land and water forces. They also claimed to possess a total military establishment of 3,085,021, including officers, engineers, retainers, artisans, servants, and civil employees.<sup>24</sup>

The eventual defeat of the Taiping armies resulted from a breakdown of the factors of strength noted above. As had been the case with the Ch'ing armies, corruption spread throughout the whole movement, while military discipline and morale decreased. Any unification of command was destroyed by jealousy, ambition, and growth of cliques

<sup>23</sup> Teng, *op.cit.*, pp. 61-66.

<sup>24</sup> W. L. Bales, *Tso Tsung'ang, Soldier and Statesman of Old China*, Shanghai, 1937, pp. 119, 121; Teng, *op.cit.*, p. 63. Cf. Lo Erh-kang, *Tai-ping T'ien-kuo shih-kao* (Draft History of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace), Peking, 1951, "Ping-chih," p. 121; Taylor, *op.cit.*, p. 596.



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around the senior commanders. The early death of most of the able leaders further reduced the effectiveness of the troops. The loss of their revolutionary spirit and the waning of public support, as well as failure to win over the gentry and the literati, led to defeat in the struggle between the original principles of the Taipings and the traditional Chinese "Confucian" ideology. Less important, but influential, was the foreign intervention on behalf of the established government.<sup>25</sup>

In their advance during 1851-1853, the Taiping troops gradually destroyed much of the Army of the Green Standard, as well as such Banner Forces as they engaged. The situation became alarming, for the Taiping's early successes had proved the inability of the regular military organizations of the Manchus to put down the revolt. As a result several militia armies were recruited in the Yangtze Valley with the objective of stemming the rebellion. Militia (*Yung-ying*) had been used as early as the Ch'ien-lung reign (1736-1796) for service in Formosa and against the Miao tribesmen in Kweichow. Also, during the rebellion of the White Lotus Society at the turn of the nineteenth century, large forces of village militia (*hsiang-yung*) were used to help restore order; yet, despite their contribution, after the campaigns ended the militia units were ordered disbanded. If it proved impossible to disband the troops, as has been so frequently the case in China, the government attempted to incorporate them into the Army of the Green Standard.<sup>26</sup> Still by 1830 widespread discontent, increased banditry, and scattered uprisings had increased the need for local protection, which the Banner Forces and the Green Standard Troops were no longer able to furnish. Hence, local groups of many social origins created their own military units. Although these bands were extra-

<sup>25</sup> Teng, *op.cit.*, pp. 66-67, 70-73.

<sup>26</sup> Chu Wu, "Wo-kuo chih lu-chün" (The Army of Our Country), *Kuofeng pao*, vol. 1 (1910), pp. 52, 54; Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, pp. 15-16; Lo, "Ping wei Chiang Yu," pp. 240, 249. Shen Chien is in error in stating that the militia were not used to assist the Banner and Green Standard troops until the Chia-ch'ing reign (1796-1820) (*LCCCF*, p. 347). Michael points out that the government was never able to eliminate completely the organization of local military forces ("Military Organization," p. 472).

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legal and locally financed, Professor Franz Michael believes that after 1845 the government had recognized the corps (*t'uan-lien*) organized by the gentry and was using them to combat local insurgents. In this process, the gentry gained strength by associating their military units with the movement to reform the decaying internal system.<sup>27</sup>

In the 1850's to meet the serious threat created by the Taiping Rebellion, a number of primarily civil officials or scholars were commissioned to recruit militia forces. The militia armies thus formed were important not only because they were the dominant factor in the ultimate defeat of the Taipings, but also because they were to a large extent personal armies, the predecessors of such semi-personal armies as those of Yüan Shih-k'ai and Chang Chih-tung. They were the forerunners of the private armies of the warlords of twentieth-century China. This is a development which we will examine more fully later in the chapter.

The most famous of these militia organizations was the Hunan Army (*Hsiang-chün*) of Tseng Kuo-fan. Tseng was a scholar who by 1849 had become vice-president of the Board of Rites. In January 1853, while in Hunan, he reluctantly accepted an imperial commission to recruit the militia of that province. Tseng enlisted and trained his organization with care, paying special attention to the inculcation of discipline. He incorporated two smaller militia units, but he also established recruit training camps in each district of Hunan. Before permitting his troops to go into action outside the province, Tseng gave them an opportunity to gain experience by fighting local bandits, despite the criticism of the Emperor, who desired him to throw his forces into combat against the Taipings at once.<sup>28</sup>

The basic military formation of the Hunan Army was the battalion (*ying*) which, according to regulations, consisted of five officers and 500 soldiers. Including attached administrative personnel and carriers, the full strength of a battalion

<sup>27</sup> Michael, "Military Organization," pp. 473-476.

<sup>28</sup> Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 751-752; Hail, *op.cit.*, pp. 147-149. See also LCCCF, p. 347.

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was 688 men. Each battalion consisted of four companies (*shao*) and a bodyguard. In theory, a battalion was equipped with two light mortars and 48 long, two-man muskets, known as gingals, as well as a considerable number of matchlocks, swords, and spears. In practice, the men were armed with whatever weapons were available, but by 1864 each battalion had several squads armed with foreign rifles.<sup>29</sup>

Although there was no specified organization above the battalion, from two to ten or more battalions could be grouped as the command of a brigadier general (*t'ung-ling*). Finally, the forces of two or more brigadier generals could be formed into the "army" (*chiün*) of a general (*ta-shuai*). As was to be expected in a society whose ethics and loyalties were based on family and friendship, the method of selecting officers encouraged the development of a personal, rather than a national, loyalty. The "army" commander chose his brigadier generals from among his relatives and friends; they in turn selected their battalion commanders, who supervised recruiting. Furthermore, the battalions were paternalistic organizations of which the commanding officers might be called the "fathers," the company commanders the "younger brothers" and the men the "sons." The recruits for each battalion were drawn as volunteers from several neighboring villages. Tseng accepted only villagers, especially farmers from the hill country. Each battalion kept a register of the family backgrounds of its men and it was required that each recruit have a good record in his village. Opium-smoking and gambling were forbidden, while an attack on a woman was a capital offense. By 1856 the Hunan Army is reported to have numbered 60,000. At that time, they were probably all Hunanese, but later, soldiers from the armies of other provinces were attached, so the army may have reached a strength of 200 battalions.<sup>30</sup>

The superiority of the Hunan Army over the Banner

<sup>29</sup> Bales, *op.cit.*, pp. 43-46. See also Lo, "Ping wei Chiang Yu," pp. 241-242.

<sup>30</sup> Bales, *op.cit.*, pp. 46-50; Lo, "Ping wei Chiang Yu," p. 242; see also CSK, *Ping-chih* 3, p. 1.

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Forces and the Army of the Green Standard led to its imitation by gentry and officials in other provinces. The most famous of these later organizations was the Army of the Huai (*Huai-chün*), commonly called the Anhwei Army, which was organized in 1862 by Li Hung-chang. Li, who was to become one of the most famous men in modern Chinese history, had been a student and protégé of Tseng Kuo-fan. In 1853 he returned to his home in Anhwei to organize militia troops against the Taipings; then for almost a decade he served in various capacities in the struggle against the great rebellion. In February 1862, he brought newly recruited Anhwei soldiers to Tseng's headquarters at Anking, Anhwei. There these picked men were organized in accordance with the system used by the Hunan Army and several battalions of Tseng's troops were assigned to train them.<sup>81</sup>

The third important militia army which fought under the overall command of Tseng Kuo-fan was the Army of Ch'u (*Ch'u-chün*) of Tso Tsung-t'ang. Tso had been a teacher, but for several years prior to becoming a troop leader he had served as military adviser to the governor of Hunan. Tseng Kuo-fan finally authorized his fellow provincial to raise an army, and in June 1860 Tso was commissioned by the Emperor to recruit a force of 5,000 men in Hunan. Later, this army expanded and fought under Tso's command throughout the remainder of the Taiping Rebellion.<sup>82</sup> Militarily, the militia armies were the ultimate solution to the great rebellion, but since the government insisted on preserving the Green Standard and Banner troops, the new militia forces added an extra burden to the overtaxed financial structure of the empire. Since these new armies were outside the regularly established, traditional armed services, they had no prearranged sources of government revenue. Ultimately they

<sup>81</sup> Chu Wu, *op.cit.*, p. 52; LCCCF, pp. 347-348; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 464-465; Hail, *op.cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>82</sup> Bales, *op.cit.*, p. 114, passim; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 763-764. Two smaller militia armies of the period deserve mention because of the tenacity with which they preserved their identity. They were the *Sheng-chün* of Chou Sheng-po, created in 1853, and the *I-chün* of Sung Ch'ing, which fought in Honan after 1861 (Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 686-688).

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were maintained through the initiative of their commanders, with grave consequences for the future. At first the officers depended for funds on the lukewarm support of the local officials and gentry, but after a victory by militia commanders, the Throne finally recognized the value of the new troops. As a result the governor-general of Hupeh and Hunan and the governor of Hunan were ordered to aid in securing funds for Tseng's armies. Throughout the rebellion, Hunan continued to support the Hunanese armies, but the aid was insufficient. For years the militia leaders, harassed by financial problems, turned to such expediciencies as the sale of ranks, use of the new likin or local merchandise taxes, grants in aid from other provinces, and even private contributions in an effort to maintain armies whose size was limited by the lack of funds.<sup>33</sup>

The militia generals were well aware of the value of personally controlling local taxes in order to support their troops. To accomplish this it was necessary for the senior commander to obtain appointment to the exalted civil post of governor or preferably governor-general. The Throne was reluctant to make such appointments, since to the extensive powers of those high offices the generals would add the support of personally loyal troops—troops who realized that their pay and rations came not from the Throne, but from the efforts of their leaders.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the Emperor had little alternative, for the very existence of the dynasty had come to depend on the militia armies. When the Taiping remnants were defeated in 1866, the principal militia leaders were already among the most influential officials in the empire. The power relationship between the emperor and the provincial officials had been basically modified never again to be restored.

After the capture of the rebel capital from the Taipings in

<sup>33</sup> Lo, "Ping wei chiang yu," pp. 245-246; Hail, *op.cit.*, pp. 149, 159, 174, 194, 203-204; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. I, p. 752; Michael, "Military Organization," pp. 478-479.

<sup>34</sup> Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, pp. 227-228, 232, 240-244; Lo, "Ping wei chiang yu," pp. 246-247; Michael, "Military Organization," p. 479.

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1864, Tseng Kuo-fan demobilized part of his Hunan Army and distributed the remainder under independent commands. The *raison d'être* of the army no longer existed, but in addition Tseng's personal power was too great; the court had become suspicious of him and he feared his enemies would attempt to curb him. The disbanded soldiers were sent back to their farms, while some of the officers were used in projects sponsored by Tseng. Later he arranged to use some 9,000 Hunanese, along with twice as many Anhwei men, in the great campaign against the Nien bandits.<sup>35</sup>

Despite this partial demobilization, the Hunan Army remained a potent military-political force in the lower Yangtze provinces well into the first decade of the twentieth century, long after the death of its founder. Tso Tsung-t'ang used elements of his army, especially officers, against the Nien rebels, as well as in the long drawn-out pacification of the Mohammedan Rebellion in Northwest China. Li Hung-chang led the Anhwei Army against the Nien-fei revolt, and in 1870 forty battalions were ordered against the rebels in Shensi and Kansu. After becoming governor-general of Chihli, Li transferred his army to that province and controlled it until his death in 1901. Yüan Shih-k'ai used some men from Li's troops when he created his Pei-yang Army,<sup>36</sup> and as late as the Revolution of 1911 battalions of the Anhwei Army were employed to help garrison Chihli province.

During the Taiping Rebellion, another development occurred which was of prime importance to the future modernization of the Chinese armies. This was the use of foreign arms and of foreign-led Chinese troops. The most important of these units was the "Ever Victorious Army" commanded first by the American adventurer Frederick T. Ward and later by the colorful British officer Charles G. ("Chinese") Gordon. For three years, this small "army" rendered valuable,

<sup>35</sup> Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, p. 194; Hail, *op.cit.*, pp. 289, 296, 299; Hummel, *op.cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 753-754.

<sup>36</sup> NCH, Oct. 8, 1902, p. 724; Bales, *op.cit.*, pp. 200-201, 204, 325; Lo, *Hsiang-chün hsin-chih*, p. 232; CSS, vol. 1, sect. 1, p. 16; W. R. E. Gill, "The Chinese Army," *Journal of the Royal United Services Institution*, vol. 24, no. 106 (1881), pp. 365-366.

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but sometimes erratic, service in southern Kiangsu province. Another organization which contributed to the imperial cause was the Franco-Chinese force which aided Tso Tsung-t'ang in Chekiang. These troops made a noteworthy, though not decisive contribution to the imperial campaign. More important, they left behind them a heritage of the use of Western arms, training methods, and tactics by Chinese troops. Throughout the Ch'ing period the armies of the empire had used firearms, but the Chinese had failed to improve basically either their weapons or tactics, so by the middle of the nineteenth century they had fallen behind the technical advances made in the West. Tso Tsung-t'ang later stated in a report that the really apt generals who fought in the Taiping and Nien-fei campaigns all preferred foreign weapons, but did not fully comprehend the potentialities of either Western arms or military formations.<sup>87</sup>

It was not only Western small arms and cannon which impressed some Chinese officials. They also came to appreciate the military value of steamships. Steamers were used by the Chinese on a small scale as early as 1853, and in 1862 H. N. Lay, Inspector General of Customs, was commissioned to purchase from England a steam-propelled squadron for the Chinese government. Lay contracted for a small flotilla and engaged Captain Shepard Osborn to command it. However, the fact that Lay demanded a veto over the activities of the ships, while Captain Osborn proved to be satisfied with nothing less than the post of commander-in-chief of the fleet, was viewed with something less than enthusiasm by the proud, suspicious Chinese. Since they objected to possessing a fleet which would not only be commanded by foreigners, but also disturb the decentralized nature of military command, they politely liquidated the project. Thus ended China's first attempt to develop a modern navy by foreign purchase.<sup>88</sup>

During the early 1860's there were a few influential civil-

<sup>87</sup> Bales, *op.cit.*, p. 339.

<sup>88</sup> For a study of the Lay-Osborn Flotilla, including the policies which led to its creation and disbandment, see J. L. Rawlinson, "The Lay-Osborn Flotilla," *Papers on China*, vol. 4 (1950), pp. 58-93.

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ian officials whose duties had forced them into contact with the West and who had become convinced of the necessity for adopting modern weapons. It was this small group of civilians, plus enlightened officials with military backgrounds, who began what was known as the "self-strengthening movement" to build up China's defenses. They, like their more numerous obscurantist colleagues, were convinced of the superiority of China's Confucian society, yet they recognized the technical military superiority of the Occident and wished to employ firearms and steamships to defend the old order. Despite the fact that they were limited in knowledge of the West, during the decade of the sixties their thought concerning defensive measures passed from the desire to purchase arms through several logical steps. They came to appreciate that modern arms must be manufactured in China by Chinese. Then they realized that in order to accomplish this Chinese had to be trained, but training required the establishment of institutions teaching Western sciences and techniques.<sup>89</sup> However, history was to prove that most Chinese officials did not comprehend either this basic principle or the steps through which it was developed.

The revitalization of a nation's military system and power structure does not take place in a vacuum. The reforms of the Taiping period were necessitated primarily by the great revolution, but they were also stimulated by other widespread revolts of the period, as well as by a second defeat at the hands of the Western powers in the Arrow War (1857-1860). Moreover, the internal and external pressures which threatened the very existence of the dynasty and the old order led to a self-strengthening movement of which military reform was only the most conspicuous phase. The challenge presented by the great revolts, as well as the succession of another emperor, led to the rise of new leadership both in the capital and in the provinces. Optimism and an opportunity to rebuild were created by the crushing of the Taiping Rebellion and by the conclusion of treaties ending the Arrow

<sup>89</sup> Ssu-yü Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West, A Documentary Survey, 1839-1923*, Cambridge, Mass., 1954, p. 108.