

THE BOOK OF WAR

TRANSLATED BY
E. E. CALTHROP



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Every effort has been made to replicate this text as faithfully as possible. Some changes have been made. They are listed at the end of the text.



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THE MILITARY CLASSIC OF THE FAR EAST

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE BY
CAPTAIN E. F. CALTHROP, R.F.A.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE ST., W.
1908

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THE BOOK OF WAR

INTRODUCTION

I

Written in the fifth century B.C., Sun-tzu and Wu-tzu still remain the most celebrated works on war in the literature of China. While the chariot has gone, and weapons have changed, these ancient masters have held their own, since they deal chiefly with the fundamental principles of war, with the influence of politics and human nature on military operations; and they show in a most striking way how unchanging these principles are.

When these books were written, China was a conglomerate of principalities in continual ferment. Personal ambition and intrigue, and not the wishes of the people, were the main factors in these wars. Patriotism, or a popular cause, could not, therefore, be relied on to maintain the *moral* of the levies. Instead of these, what may be called the force of despair is pointed out as the most powerful agent in giving cohesion and energy to an army. The general is urged to take a vigorous offensive; and to act at a distance from his base, where defeat means disaster, and where desertion is minimised owing to the distance from home. He should, in fact, burn his boats before an action, or, in Chinese phrase, act as one who removes the ladder from under those mounted upon the roof.

On the other hand, every care must be taken not to render the enemy desperate; and, as an instance of this, Sun observes that an opponent should on no account be completely surrounded. A loop-hole of escape weakens the resolution of the general and the energy of his troops.

It is interesting to notice that *moral*, or the spirit of the troops, is thus considered a determining factor in war. The Chinese are perhaps unusually affected by climatic conditions. As is well known, the umbrella was part of a soldier's equipment; and for the same reasons, the sunny side of high ground is recommended as most suitable for defence, tactical considerations permitting.

The large number of banner-men in the Chinese army was out of all proportion to the service of standards in providing rallying points. The chief use of banners was to maintain the spirit of the troops. A forest of banners, held erect, gave a feeling of liveliness and security to the ranks, in the same way as a military

band, and when Sun remarks that the march of an army should be calm like the forest, he is using a simile that is not inappropriate.

Probably owing to the fact that the profession of arms has never been highly regarded in China, we find that the ruler of the state did not usually take the field, but employed a professional to command the army—one of the masters of war who wandered from state to state at that time with the secrets of victory to impart to the highest bidder. The question of political interference with the general in the field naturally arises under these conditions. The two sages point out, that to unite the nation under firm and just government is the business of the ruler and necessary to victory; but that the general is the best judge of the questions that arise on a distant field, and that all interference with him causes delay and disaster.

War meaning ravage, it was essential that the operations should be conducted in the enemy's territory. Once there, however, a vigorous offensive is no longer advised. "At first behave with the discretion of a maiden" is the counsel of Sun. The enemy must be induced to take the initiative, and when he is worn out by marching, or makes a false move, "then," says the master, "dart in like a rabbit."

Unlike the tactics of the Japanese, in whom the spirit of attack burns so strongly, those of Sun-tzu and Wu-tzu are essentially of the offensive-defensive order—manœuvre before fighting, and non-committal until the enemy has shown his hand. The business of the general is to avoid encounter in battle until the enemy is no longer capable of offering a successful resistance.

The masters do not make, however, the mistake of advocating a passive defensive. Sun-tzu lays down that the division of the forces which this strategy involves, is to be everywhere weak, rendering the army liable to be taken in detail by the concentrated forces of the enemy. It is rather the defence which avoids battle by mobility and manœuvre, induces the enemy by stratagem to divide his forces, or act in conformity with our wishes, and then falls upon him.

With regard to the tactics of the battlefield, the pitched battle, or, in other words, the frontal attack, is considered unworthy of the skilful general. The plan of attack should consist, broadly speaking, in the division of the army into two forces. The enemy is "attracted and engaged by one force, and defeated with the other;" and here we have the containing or secondary attack, and the main or reserve force which decides the battle of to-day—a most striking instance of the continuity of military principles.

Considerable space is devoted to the influence of ground on war. The passage of defiles and rivers is still conducted in the same way. The many large rivers of China naturally affected military operations; and, among other axioms, it is laid down that the passage of a river should not be disputed, as the enemy will probably give up the attempt, and make the passage untouched at some other point, but that he should be attacked when half his force is across the stream. Again, an army should not encamp on a river below the enemy, as it is thereby liable to be inundated, or to have its water poisoned; or the enemy may come down stream and make a sudden attack.

While both writers were professional soldiers, they show a fine disinterestedness by repeatedly pointing out that even successful war brings evil in its train. Wu remarks that "few are those who have gained power on earth by many victories," and he is insistent that war should not be undertaken until a careful comparison of the two sides shows that victory is certain; and he adds, "The army which conquers makes certain of victory and then attacks, while the army that is defeated fights in the hope of success."

Hence the importance they assign to intelligence of the enemy, and to the spy; and as the sages dealt with war between members of the same race, the work of spies was greatly facilitated. The spy was treated with great honour by his countrymen, and the fact that many of the national heroes of China were spies, shows that the part that they played was not forgotten. They frequently toiled for years, and rose to high rank in the enemy's service; and thus, by wrong counsel and by spreading mistrust in his ranks, they became a two-edged sword in the hands of the general. "Wonderful, indeed, is their power," exclaims Sun; but he also reminds us that their management is the most difficult and delicate duty of the general.

II

Sun and Wu are perhaps held in even greater reverence in Japan than in China, where war is looked upon as a troublesome phase in national life, and victory in battle is not considered the greatest achievement of a state. Far otherwise is it in Japan; and successive generations of her soldiers have been brought up on Sun and Wu. Like other arts, mystery was formerly supposed to surround the art of war, a belief that was encouraged by the strategist; and for a considerable time, the few copies of this book, that were brought over from China to Japan, were jealously guarded by their possessors. Later, as they became known, an army of

Japanese commentators arose—for Chinese literature is thought compressed, to be unfolded in the mind of the reader.

To-day Sun and Wu have given way to the scientific works of European writers, but their sayings have become proverbs, and their influence undoubtedly helped the Japanese to victory in the late war. Belief in the importance of a knowledge of the enemy and his resources, of preparation and training, had grown out of a long study of these ancient masters; and since it was the vital importance of a successful issue to the Japanese which, after all, fired their resolution and carried them through, they proved the sage's words that it is the energy, born of despair, that wins the victory.

III

Little is known of the life of either master. They were in no sense patriots but professional strategists, continually changing their employer. Chinese history tells a famous story about Sun. A certain ruler asked Sun to give a practical demonstration of his principles in the neighbourhood of the palace, and entrusted him with the women of the court for this purpose. During the operations, the leader of one of the sides did not obey the master's instructions, and her execution was ordered. She happened to be the king's favourite wife, but Sun pointed out that the king's wish that her life should be spared was a case of political interference with the general in the field; and the sentence was carried out.

Wu is represented as a person of low moral character. On two separate occasions, for fear of giving rise to suspicion, he killed one of his wives who belonged to a state with which his employer at the time was at war; and, graver still in the eyes of the Chinese historian, he was not present at the death-bed of his mother.

E. F. C.

NOTE.

The translator is indebted to Major J. C. Somerville for his kind help and criticism.



THE ARTICLES OF SUNTZU



I

PRELIMINARY RECKONING

The words of Sun the Master:—

To all nations War is a great matter. Upon the army death or life depend: it is the means of the existence or destruction *of the State*.

Therefore it must be diligently studied.

Now, in war, besides stratagem and the situation, there are five indispensable matters. The first is called The Way;^[1] the second, Heaven; the third, Earth; the fourth, the Leader; the fifth, Law.

The *Way* or the proper conduct of man. If the ruling authority be upright, the people are united: fearless of danger, their lives are at the service of their Lord.

Heaven. Yin and Yang;^[2] heat and cold; time and season.

Earth. Distance; nature; extent; strategic position.

The *Leader*. Intelligence; truth; benevolence; courage and strictness.

Law. Partition and ordering of troops.

These things must be known by the leader: to know them is to conquer; to know them not is to be defeated.

Further, with regard to these and the following seven matters, the condition of the enemy must be compared with our own.

The seven matters are:—

The virtue of the prince; the ability of the general; natural advantages; the discipline of the armies; the strength of the soldiers; training of the soldiers; justice both in reward and punishment.

Knowing these things, I can foretell the victor.

If a general under me fight according to my plans, he always conquers, and I

continue to employ him; if he differ from my plans, he will be defeated and dismissed from my service.

Wherefore, with regard to the foregoing, considering that with us lies the advantage, and the generals agreeing, we create a situation which promises victory; but as the moment and method cannot be fixed beforehand, the plan must be modified according to circumstances.

War is a thing of pretence: therefore, when capable of action, we pretend disability; when near to the enemy, we pretend to be far; when far away, we pretend to be near.

Allure the enemy by giving him a small advantage. Confuse and capture him. If there be defects, give an appearance of perfection, and awe the enemy. Pretend to be strong, and so cause the enemy to avoid you. Make him angry, and confuse his plans. Pretend to be inferior, and cause him to despise you. If he have superabundance of strength, tire him out; if united, make divisions in his camp. Attack weak points, and appear in unexpected places.

These are the secrets of the successful strategist, therefore they must not be made known beforehand.

At the reckoning in the Sanctuary before fighting, victory is to the side that excels *in the foregoing matters*. They that have many of these will conquer; they that have few will not conquer; hopeless, indeed, are they that have none.

If the condition of both sides with regard to these matters be known, I can foretell the victor.



II

OPERATIONS OF WAR

Sun the Master said:—

Now the requirements of war are such that we need a thousand light chariots with four horses each; a thousand leather-covered chariots, and one hundred thousand armoured men; and we must send supplies to distant fields. Wherefore the cost at home and in the field, the entertainment of guests, glue and lacquer for repairs, and necessities for the upkeep of waggons and armour are such that in one day a thousand pieces of gold are spent. With that amount a force of one hundred thousand men can be raised:—you have the instruments of victory.

But, even if victorious, let the operations long continue, and the soldiers' ardour decreases, the weapons become worn, and, if a siege be undertaken, strength disappears.

Again, if the war last long, the country's means do not suffice. Then, when the soldiers are worn out, weapons blunted, strength gone and funds spent, neighbouring princes arise and attack that weakened country. At such a time the wisest man cannot mend the matter.

For, while quick accomplishment has been known to give the victory to the unskilful, the skilful general has never gained advantage from lengthy operations.

In fact, there never has been a country which has benefited from a prolonged war.

He who does not know the evils of war will not reap advantage thereby. He who is skilful in war does not make a second levy, does not load his supply waggons thrice.

War material and arms we obtain from home, but food sufficient for the army's needs can be taken from the enemy.

The cost of supplying the army in distant fields is the chief drain on the resources of a state: if the war be distant, the citizens are impoverished.

In the neighbourhood of an army prices are high, and so the money of the soldiers and followers is used up. Likewise the state funds are exhausted, and frequent levies must be made; the strength of the army is dissipated, money is spent, the citizen's home swept bare: in all, seven-tenths of his income is forfeited. Again, as regards State property, chariots are broken, horses worn out, armour and helmet, arrow and bow, spear, shield, pike and fighting tower, waggon and oxen used and gone, so that six-tenths of the Government's income is spent.

Therefore the intelligent general strives to feed on the enemy; one bale of the enemy's rice counts as twenty from our own waggons; one bundle of the enemy's forage is better than twenty of our own.

Incitement must be given to vanquish the enemy.

They who take advantage of the enemy should be rewarded.

They who are the first to lay their hands on more than ten of the enemy's chariots should be rewarded; the enemy's standard on the chariots exchanged for our own; the captured chariots mixed with our own chariots and taken into use.

The accompanying warriors must be treated well, so that, while the enemy is beaten, our side increases in strength.

Now the object of war is victory; not lengthy operations, even skilfully conducted.

The good general is the lord of the people's lives, the guardian of the country's welfare.



III

THE ATTACK BY STRATAGEM

Sun the Master said:—

Now by the laws of war, better than defeating a country by fire and the sword, is to take it without strife.

Better to capture the enemy's army intact than to overcome it after fierce resistance.

Better to capture the “Lu,”^[3] the “Tsu” or the “Wu” whole, than to destroy them in battle.

To fight and conquer one hundred times is not the perfection of attainment, for the supreme art is to subdue the enemy without fighting.

Wherefore the most skilful warrior outwits the enemy by superior stratagem; the next in merit prevents the enemy from uniting his forces; next to him is he who engages the enemy's army; while to besiege his citadel is the worst expedient.

A siege should not be undertaken if it can possibly be avoided. For, before a siege can be commenced, three months are required for the construction of stages, battering-rams and siege engines; then a further three months are required in front of the citadel, in order to make the “Chuyin.”^[4] Wherefore the general is angered, his patience exhausted, his men surge like ants against the ramparts *before the time is ripe*, and one-third of them are killed to no purpose. Such are the misfortunes that sieges entail.

Therefore the master of war causes the enemy's forces to yield, but without fighting; he captures his fortress, but without besieging it; and without lengthy fighting takes the enemy's kingdom. Without tarnishing his weapons he gains the complete advantage.

This is the assault by stratagem.

By the rules of war, if ten times as strong as the enemy, surround him; with five times his strength, attack; with double his numbers, divide. If equal in strength,

exert to the utmost, and fight; if inferior in numbers, manœuvre *and await the opportunity*; if altogether inferior, offer no chance of battle. A determined stand by inferior numbers does but lead to their capture.

The warrior is the country's support. If his aid be entire, the country is of necessity strong; if it be at all deficient, then is the country weak.

Now a prince may embarrass his army in three ways, namely:—

Ignorant that the army in the field should not advance, to order it to go forward; or, ignorant that the army should not retreat, order it to retire.

This is to tie the army as with a string.

Ignorant of military affairs, to rule the armies in the same way as the state.

This is to perplex the soldiers.

Ignorant of the situation of the army, to settle its dispositions.

This is to fill the soldiers with distrust.

If the army be perplexed and distrustful, then dangers from neighbouring princes arise. The army is confounded, and offered up to the enemy.

There are five occasions when victory can be foretold:—

When the general knows the time to fight and when not to fight; or understands when to employ large or small numbers; when government and people are of one mind; when the state is prepared, and chooses the enemy's unguarded moment for attack; when the general possesses ability, and is not interfered with by his prince.

These five things are the heralds of victory.

It has been said aforetime that he who knows both sides has nothing to fear in a hundred fights; he who is ignorant of the enemy, and fixes his eyes only on his own side, conquers, and the next time is defeated; he who not only is ignorant of the enemy, but also of his own resources, is invariably defeated.



IV THE ORDER OF BATTLE

Sun the Master said:—

The ancient masters of war first made their armies invincible, then waited until the adversary could with certainty be defeated.

The causes of defeat come from within; victory is born in the enemy's camp.

Skilful soldiers make defeat impossible, and further render the enemy incapable of victory.

But, as it is written, the conditions necessary for victory may be present, but they cannot always be obtained.

If victory be unattainable, we stand on the defensive; if victory be sure, we attack.

Deficiency compels defence; super-abundance permits attack.

The skilful in defence crouch, hidden in the deepest shades; the skilful in attack push to the topmost heaven.^[5]

If these precepts be observed, victory is certain.

A victory, even if popularly proclaimed as such by the common folk, may not be a true success. To win in fight, and for the kingdom to say, "Well done," does not mark the summit of attainment. To lift an autumn fleece^[6] is no proof of strength; the eyes that only see the sun and moon are not the eagle's; to hear the thunder is no great thing.

As has been said aforetime, the able warrior gains the victory without desperate and bloody engagements, and wins thereby no reputation for wisdom or brave deeds. To fight is to win, for he attacks only when the enemy has sown the seeds of defeat.

Moreover, the skilful soldier in a secure position does not let pass the moment when the enemy should be attacked.

The army that conquers makes certain of victory, and then seeks battle.

The army destined to defeat, fights, trusting that chance may bring success to its arms.

The skilful leader is steadfast in the “Way”; upholds the Law, and thereby controls the issue.

Touching the laws of war, it is said: first, the rule; second, the measure; third, the tables; fourth, the scales; fifth, the foretelling of victory.

For the rule is the survey of land; the measure tells the amount of that land’s produce; the tables its population; from the scales their weight or quality is made known; and then can we calculate victory or defeat.

The army that conquers as against the army destined to defeat, is as a beam against a feather in the scales. The attack of conquering forces is as the outburst of long-pent-up waters into sunken valleys.

Such are the orders of battle.



V

THE SPIRIT OF THE TROOPS

Sun the Master said:—

The control of large numbers is possible, and like unto that of small numbers, if we subdivide them.

By means of drum, bell and flag,^[7] the direction of large forces in battle is possible, and like unto the direction of small forces.

By the skilful interchange of normal and abnormal manœuvres are the armies certainly preserved from defeat.

The enemy is crushed, like the fall of a grindstone upon an egg, by knowledge of his strength and weakness, and by the employment of truth and artifice.

Moreover, in battle the enemy is engaged with the normal and defeated by the abnormal force.^[8]

The abnormal force, skilfully handled, is like the heaven and earth, eternal; as the tides and the flow of rivers, unceasing; like the sun and moon, for ever interchanging; coming and passing, as the seasons.

There are five notes; but by combinations, innumerable harmonies are produced. There are but five colours; but if we mix them, the shades are infinite. There are five tastes, but if we mix them there are more flavours than the palate can distinguish.^[9]

In war there are but two forces, the normal and the abnormal; but they are capable of infinite variation. Their mutual interchange is like a wheel, having neither beginning or end. They are a mystery that none can penetrate.

As the rush of rock-shouldering torrents, so is the spirit of the troops.

Like the well-judged flight of the falcon, in a flash crushing its quarry, so should the stroke be timed.

Wherefore the spirit of the good fighter is terrifying, his occasions sudden; like

the stretched cross-bow, whose string is released at the touch of the trigger.

In the maze and tumult of the battle, there is no confusion; in the thick of action the battle array is impenetrable.

If discipline be perfect, disorder can be simulated; if truly bold, we can feign fear; if really strong, we can feign weakness.

We simulate disorder by subdivision; fear, by spirit; weakness, by battle formation.

We set the enemy in motion by adopting different formations to which he must conform.

If we offer the enemy a point of advantage, he will certainly take it: we give him an advantage, set him in motion and then fall upon him.

Wherefore the good fighter seeks victory from spirit, and does not depend entirely upon the skill of his men. He is careful in his choice, and leaves the rest to battle force; yet, when an opening or advantage shows, he pushes it to its limits.

As a log or rock which, motionless on flat ground, yet moves with ever-increasing force when set on an incline, so await the opportunity, and so act when the opportunity arrives.

If the general be skilful, the spirit of his troops is as the impetus of a round stone rolled from the top of a high mountain.



VI

EMPTINESS AND STRENGTH

Sun the Master said:—

To be the first in the field, and there to await the enemy, is to husband strength.

To be late, and hurrying to advance to meet the foe, is exhausting.

The good fighter contrives to make the enemy approach; he does not allow himself to be beguiled by the enemy.

By offering an apparent advantage, he induces the enemy to take up a position that will cause his defeat; he plants obstructions to dissuade him from acting in such a way as to threaten his own dispositions.

If the enemy be at rest in comfortable quarters, harass him; if he be living in plenty, cut off his supplies; if sitting composedly awaiting attack, cause him to move.

This may be done by appearing where the enemy is not, and assaulting unexpected points.

If we go where the enemy is not, we may go a thousand leagues without exhaustion.

If we attack those positions which the enemy has not defended, we invariably take them: but on the defence we must be strong, even where we are not likely to be attacked.

Against those skilful in attack, the enemy does not know where to defend: against those skilful in defence, the enemy does not know where to attack.

Now the secrets of the art of offence are not to be easily apprehended, as a certain shape or noise can be understood, of the senses; but when these secrets are once learnt, the enemy is mastered.

We attack, and the enemy cannot resist, because we attack his insufficiency; we retire, and the enemy cannot pursue, because we retire too quickly.

Again, when we are anxious to fight, but the enemy is serenely secure behind high walls and deep moats; we attack some such other place that he must certainly come out to relieve.

When we do not want to fight, we occupy an unfortified line; and prevent the enemy from attacking by keeping him in suspense.

By making feints, and causing the enemy to be uncertain as to our movements, we unite, whilst he must divide.

We become one body; the enemy being separated into ten parts. We attack the divided ten with the united one. We are many, the enemy is few, and in superiority of numbers there is economy of strength.

The place selected for attack must be kept secret. If the enemy know not where he will be attacked, he must prepare in every quarter, and so be everywhere weak.

If the enemy strengthen his front, he must weaken his rear; if he strengthen his right, his left is weakened; and if he strengthen his left, his right is weakened.

Everywhere to make preparations, is to be everywhere weak. The enemy is weakened by his extended preparations, and we gain in strength.

Having decided on the place and day of attack, though the enemy be a hundred leagues away, we can defeat him.

If the ground and occasion be not known, the front cannot help the rear; the left cannot support the right, nor the right the left, nor the rear the front. For on occasion, the parts of the army are two score leagues apart, while a distance of four or five leagues is comparatively close.

The soldiers of Wu^[10] are less than the soldiers of Yueh; but as superiority in numbers does not of necessity bring victory, I say, then, that we may obtain the victory.

If the enemy be many in number, prevent him from taking advantage of his superiority, and ascertain his plan of operations. Provoke the enemy and discover the state of his troops; feint and discover the strength of his position. Flap the wings, and unmask his sufficiency or insufficiency. By constant feints and excursions, we may produce on the enemy an impression of intangibility, which neither spies nor art can dispel.

The general makes his plans in accordance with the dispositions of the enemy, and puts his hosts in motion; but the multitude cannot appreciate the general's intention; they see the signs of victory, but they cannot discover the means.

If a victory be gained by a certain stratagem, do not repeat it. Vary the stratagem according to circumstances.

An army may be likened to water.

Water leaves dry the high places, and seeks the hollows. An army turns from strength and attacks emptiness.

The flow of water is regulated by the shape of the ground; victory is gained by acting in accordance with the state of the enemy.

The shape of water is indeterminate; likewise the spirit of war is not fixed.

The leader who changes his tactics in accordance with his adversary, and thereby controls the issue, may be called the God of war.

Among the five elements^[11] there is no settled precedence; the four seasons come and go; the days are long and short; and the moon waxes and wanes. *So in war there is no fixity.*



VII

BATTLE TACTICS

Sun the Master said:—

For the most part, military procedure is as follows:—

The general receives orders from his lord; assembles and settles harmony among the forces, and takes the field.

There is nothing more difficult than Battle Tactics. Their difficulty lies in the calculation of time and distance, and the reversal of misfortune.

To make the enemy take a circuitous route by a show of gain, and then, whilst starting after him, to arrive before him, is to be a master of the art of manœuvre.

The operations of an army may reap advantage; the wrangles of a multitude are fraught with peril.

Employing our whole force at one time in order to gain advantage over the enemy, we may not have time enough to gain our object. If we push on with a portion of the force only, the transport is lost. Discarding helmet and armour; stopping neither day nor night; marching double distance; doing double work; and finally contending with the enemy at a distance of a hundred leagues: results in the loss of the general. Since the strong men arrive first, and the tired drop in rear, only one-tenth of the forces is available.

A forced march of fifty leagues to secure an advantage may result in failure to the leader of the vanguard, for only half his men will arrive.

After a forced march of thirty leagues to secure an advantage, only two-thirds of the army will be available.

Further, a lack of ammunition, of supplies, or of stores, may lead to disaster.

The ruler who is ignorant of the designs of neighbouring princes, cannot treat with them.

He who is ignorant of mountain and forest, defile and marsh, cannot lead an

army.

He who does not employ a guide, cannot gain advantage from the ground.

Disguise your movements; await a favourable opportunity; divide or unite according to circumstance.

Let your attack be swift as the wind; your march calm like the forest;^[12] your occupation devastating as fire. In defence, as a mountain rest firm; like darkness impenetrable to the enemy. Let your movements be swift as the lightning.

Let as many as possible take part in the plunder: distribute the profit from the captured territory.

So he who understands the crooked and the straight way conquers.

These are the methods of Battle Tactics.

According to the ancient books on war, the drum and bell are used, because the voice does not carry; the flag is used to assist the sight. The use of bell, drum, banner and flag is to attract the united attention of eye and ear.

When all are united, the strong are not left to go forward alone, the cowardly are not free to retreat unrestricted. In this way can a multitude be used.

Therefore in night fighting, beacons and drums are largely used; in day fighting, a great number of banners and flags and the enemy's eyes and ears are confounded.

We thus awe his army, and defeat his general's ambition.

In the morning the spirits are keen; at midday there is a laziness; in the evening a desire to return. Wherefore, he who uses his soldiers well, avoids the time when the spirits are keen; but attacks the enemy when he is languid or seeking his camp.

Thus should the nature of energy be turned to account.

To oppose confusion with order, clamour with quiet, is to have the heart under control.

To await an enemy from a distance, to oppose hunger with satiety, rest with fatigue, is the way to husband strength.

Do not attack where lines of banners wave, nor the serried ranks of battle spread, but patiently await your time.

Do not attack an enemy on high ground, nor one who has high ground at his back. Do not pursue an enemy who is imitating flight; do not attack a spirited enemy.

If the enemy offer an allurements, do not take it.

Do not interfere with an enemy who has struck camp, and is about to retire. When surrounding an enemy, allow him an outlet. Do not press a desperate enemy.

These are the methods of employing troops.



VIII

THE NINE CHANGES

Sun the Master said:—

In general, the procedure of war is:—the Leader, having received orders from his lord, assembles the armies.

Do not camp on marshy or low-lying ground; enter into friendly relations with neighbouring states; do not linger in a far country; use stratagem in mountainous and wooded country; on death ground, fight.

There are always roads that must be avoided; forces that must not be attacked; castles that must not be besieged; ground that must not be chosen for encounter; orders from the lord that must not be obeyed.

The general who knows the Nine Changes understands the use of troops; on the contrary, he who does not understand them, can make no use of his topographical knowledge.

In the management of armies, if the art of the Nine Changes be understood, a knowledge of the Five Advantages is of no avail.

The wise man considers well both advantage and disadvantage. He sees a way out of adversity, and on the day of victory to danger is not blind.

In reducing an enemy to submission, inflict all possible damage upon him; make him undertake useless adventures; also make neighbouring rulers move as you would desire them by tempting them with gain.

Wherefore in the conduct of war do not depend on the enemy's not coming, but rely on your own preparations; do not count on the enemy not attacking your fortress, but leave nothing undefended.

Generals must be on their guard against these five dangerous faults:—

Blind impetuosity, which leads to death.

Over-cautiousness, which leads to capture.

Quick temper, which brings insult.

A too rigid propriety, which invites disgrace.

Over-regard for the troops, which causes inconvenience.

These five faults in the leader are disastrous in war. The overthrow of the army and the slaughter of the general arise from them. Therefore they must be carefully considered.



IX

MOVEMENT OF TROOPS

Sun the Master said:—

Touching the disposal of troops and observation of the enemy in relation to mountain warfare:—

Cross mountains and camp in valleys, selecting positions of safety.

Place the army on high ground, and avoid an enemy in high places.

In relation to water:—

After crossing waters, pass on immediately to a distance. When the enemy is crossing a stream, do not meet and engage him in the waters, but strike when half his force has passed over. Do not advance on an enemy near water, but place the army on high ground, and in safety.

Do not fight when the enemy is between the army and the source of the river.

With regard to marshes:—

Cross salty marshes quickly; do not linger near them.

If by chance compelled to fight in the neighbourhood of a marsh, seek a place where there is water and grass, and trees in plenty in the rear.

In open country place the army in a convenient place with rising ground in the right rear; so that while in front lies death, behind there is safety.

Such is war in flat country.

Huangti, by observing these things, gained the victory over four Princes.

As a rule, the soldiers prefer high ground to low. They prefer sunny places to those the sun does not reach.

If the health of the troops be considered, and they are encamped on high and sunny ground, diseases will be avoided, and victory made certain.

If there be rising ground, encamp on its sunny side and in front of it; for thereby the soldiers are benefited, and the ground used to our advantage.

If, owing to rains in the upper reaches, the river become turbulent, do not cross until the waters have quieted.

Steep and impassable valleys; well-like places; confined places; tangled impenetrable ground; swamps and bogs; narrow passages with pitfalls:—quickly pass from these, and approach them not. Cause the enemy to approach near to them, but keep yourself from these places; face them, so that the enemy has them in his rear.

If there be near to the army, precipices, ponds, meres, reeds and rushes, or thick forests and trees, search them thoroughly. These are places where the enemy is likely to be in ambush.

When the enemy is close, but quiet, he is strong in reliance on natural defences.

If the enemy challenge to fight from afar, he wishes you to advance.

If the enemy be encamped in open country, it is with some special object in view.

Movement among the trees shows that the enemy is advancing. Broken branches and trodden grass, as of the passing of a large host, must be regarded with suspicion.

The rising of birds shows an ambush.

Startled beasts show that the enemy is stealthily approaching from several sides.

High, straight spurts of dust betoken that chariots are coming.

Long, low masses of dust show the coming of infantry.

Here and there, thin and high columns of dust are signs that firewood and fodder are being collected.

Small clouds of dust moving to and fro are signs that the enemy is preparing to encamp for a short time.

Busy preparations and smooth words show that the enemy is about to advance to attack.

Big words, and the spurring forward of horsemen, are signs that the enemy is

about to retire.

An advance of the light chariots to the flanks of the camp is a sign that the enemy is coming forth to fight.

Without consultation, suddenly to desire an armistice, is a mark of ulterior design.

The passing to and fro of messengers, and the forming up of troops, show that the enemy has some movement on foot.

An advance, followed by sudden retirement, is a lure to attack.

When the enemy use their weapons to rest upon, they are hungry.

If the drawers of water drink at the river, the enemy is suffering from thirst.

Disregard of booty that lies ready at hand is a sign of exhaustion.

The clustering of birds round a position shows that it is unoccupied.

Voices calling in the night betoken alarm.

Disorder in the army is a sign that the general is disregarded.

A changing about of flags and banners is a sign that the army is unsettled.

If the officers be angry, it is because the soldiers are tired, *and slow to obey*.

The killing of horses for food shows that the enemy is short of provisions.

When the cooking-pots are hung up on the wall and the soldiers turn not in again, the enemy is at an end of his resources.

Exceeding graciousness and familiarity on the part of the general show that he has lost the confidence of the soldiers.

Frequent rewards show that discipline is at an end.

Frequent punishments are a sign that the general is in difficulties.

The general who first blusters, and then is obsequious, is without perception.

He who offers apologies and hostages is anxious for a truce.

When both sides, eager for a fight, face each other for a considerable time,

neither advancing nor retiring, the occasion requires the utmost vigilance and circumspection.

Numbers are no certain mark of strength.

Even if incapable of a headlong assault, if the forces be united, and the enemy's condition ascertained, victory is possible.

He who without taking thought makes light of the enemy is certain to be captured.

If a general who is strange to the troops punish them, they cease to obey him. If they are not obedient, they cannot be usefully employed.

If the troops know the general, but are not affected by his punishments, they are useless.

By humane treatment we obtain obedience; authority brings uniformity. Thus we obtain victory.

If the people have been trained in obedience from the beginning, they respect their leader's commands.

If the people be not early trained to obedience, they do not respect their leader's commands.

Orders are always obeyed, if general and soldiers are in sympathy.



X GROUND

Sun the Master said:—

With regard to the different natures of ground there are:—

Open ground; broken ground; suspended ground; defiles; precipices; far countries.

Open ground is that where either side has liberty of movement: be quick to occupy any high ground in the neighbourhood and consider well the line of supplies.

Broken ground. Advance is easy, but retreat from it is difficult. Here, if the enemy be not prepared, we may win: but should he be prepared, and defeat us, and retreat be impossible, then there is disaster.

Suspended ground. The side that takes the initiative is under a disadvantage. Here, if the enemy offer some allurements, we should not advance: but rather, by feigning retreat, wait until he has put forth half his force. Then we may attack him with advantage.

Defiles, make haste to occupy; garrison strongly and await the enemy. Should the enemy be before you, and in strength, do not engage him; but if there be unoccupied points, attack him.

In precipitous ground quickly occupy a position on a sunny height, and await the enemy. If the enemy be before you, withdraw and do not attack him.

If distant from the enemy, and the forces be equal, to take the initiative is disadvantageous.

Now, these are the six kinds of ground. It is the duty of generals to study them.

Again, there are six calamities among the troops, arising, not from defect of ground, or lack of opportunity, but from the general's incapacity.

These are: repulse, relaxation, distress, disorganisation, confusion and rout.

If troops be sent to attack an enemy of equal quality, but ten times their number, they retire discomfited.

Strong soldiers with weak officers cause relaxation.

Able officers with feeble soldiers cause distress.

Enraged senior officers, who fall upon the enemy without orders, and obey not the general because he does not recognise their abilities, produce disorganisation.

Weak and amiable generals, whose directions and leadership are vague, whose officers' and men's duties are not fixed, and whose dispositions are contradictory, produce confusion.

Generals, who are unable to estimate the enemy, who oppose small numbers to large, weakness to strength, and who do not put picked men in the van of the army, cause it to be routed.

These six things lead to defeat. It is the duty of the general to study them carefully.

Ground is the handmaid of victory.

Ability to estimate the enemy, and plan the victory; an eye for steepness, command and distances: these are the qualities of the good general.

Whosoever knows these things, conquers; he who understands them not, is defeated.

If victory be certain from the military standpoint, fight, even if the lord forbid.

If defeat be certain from the military standpoint, do not fight, even though the lord commands it.

The general who advances, from no thought of his own glory, or retires, regardless of punishment; but only strives for the people's welfare, and his lord's advantage, is a treasure to the state.

The good general cares for his soldiers, and lovingly treats them as his children; as a consequence they follow him through deep valleys, and are beside him in death.

Nevertheless, over-care for the soldiers may cause disobedience; over-attention

may make them unserviceable; over-indulgence may produce disorder: they become like spoilt children, and cannot be used.

He who is confident of his own men, but is ignorant that the enemy should not be attacked, has no certainty of victory.

He who knows that the enemy may be attacked with advantage, but knows not his own men, has no certainty of victory.

Confidence in the troops, right judgment when to attack the enemy, but ignorance of the ground, bring uncertain victory.

The wise soldier, once in motion, does not waver, and is never at a loss.

As has been said: "Know thyself; know the enemy; fear not for victory."

Also, if the season and the opportunity be realised, and the ground known, complete victory is certain.



XI THE NINE GROUNDS

Sun the Master said:—

In respect to the conduct of war there are:—

Distracting ground; disturbing ground; ground of contention; intersecting ground; path-ridden ground; deeply-involved ground; difficult ground; enclosed ground; death ground.

At all times, when the prince fights in his own territory, it is called distracting^[13] ground.

That ground a short way inside the enemy's border is called disturbing ground.

Ground giving advantage to whichever side is in possession, is called ground of contention.

Ground to which either side has access, is called intersecting ground.

Ground between three provinces first possession of which enables the peoples of the earth to be controlled, is called path-ridden ground.

The interior of the enemy's country with many of his fortified towns in rear, is called deeply-involved ground.

Mountain and forest, precipices, ravines, marsh and swamp, all places where passage is hard, are called difficult ground.

A narrow entrance and winding outlet, where a small number can oppose a large force, is called enclosed ground.

That ground where delay means disaster, is called death ground.

Wherefore, do not fight on distracting ground; do not linger on disturbing ground.

If the enemy be in possession of disputed ground, do not attack.

In intersecting ground, do not interrupt the highways.

At the crossing of highways, cultivate intercourse.

When deeply involved, levy and store up the enemy's property.

Quickly depart from difficult ground.

On enclosed ground, use stratagem.

On death ground, fight.

The skilful fighters of old were at pains to disconnect the enemy's front and rear; they cut asunder small and large forces of the enemy; prevented mutual help between his officers and men; spread mistrust between high and low. They scattered the enemy, and prevented him from concentrating; if his soldiers were assembled, they were without unity.

If there be a chance of victory, move; if there be no chance of success, stand fast.

If I were asked how a powerful and united force of the enemy should be met, I would say: lay hands on what the enemy cherishes and he will conform to our desires.

In war, above all, speed sustains the spirit of the troops. Strike before the enemy is ready; and attack his unpreparedness from an unexpected quarter.

With regard to war in foreign lands. When strangers in a far country the soldiers are united and are proof against defeat. Plunder fertile plains so that the army is fed; be careful of the health of the soldiers; do not tire them uselessly; unite their minds; store up strength; plan well and secretly. If there be no refuge the soldiers will not fly from death.

If there be no alternative but death, the soldiers exert themselves to the utmost.

In desperate places, soldiers lose the sense of fear.

If there be no place of refuge, there will be no wavering.

If deeply involved in the enemy's country, there is unity.

If it be unavoidable, the soldiers will fight their hardest. Even without warnings they are vigilant; they comply without insistence; without stipulations they are tractable; without explicit instructions they will trust the general and obey him.

Prohibit the discussion of signs and omens, and remove the soldiers' doubts; then to the moment of death they will be undistracted.

Riches are denied the soldiers, not because money is a bad thing; old age is forbidden them, but not because long life is evil. Hardships and danger are the proper lot of the soldier.

When the order for attack is given, the collars of those who are sitting may be wet with tears; tears may roll down the cheeks of those reclining; yet these men, in a desperate place, will fight with the courage of Chu and Kuei.

Soldiers should be used like the snakes on Mt. Chang; which, if you hit on the head, the tail will strike you; if you hit the tail, the head will strike you; if you strike its middle, head and tail will strike you together.

Should any one ask me whether men can be made to move like these snakes, I say, yes. The men of Wu and Yueh hate each other; yet, if they cross a river in the same boat and a storm overtake them, they help each other like the two hands.

The horses may be tied, and the chariot wheels sunk in the mud; but that does not prevent flight.

Universal courage and unity depend on good management.

The best results from both the weak and strong are obtained by a proper use of the ground.

The skilful warrior can lead his army, as a man leads another by the hand, because he places it in a desperate position.

The general should be calm, inscrutable, just and prudent. He should keep his officers and men in ignorance of his plans, and inform no one of any changes or fresh departures. By changing his camps, and taking devious and unexpected routes, his plans cannot be guessed.

As one taking away the ladder from under those mounted upon the roof, so acts the general when his men are assembled to fight. He penetrates into the heart of the enemy's country and then divulges his plans. He drives the army hither and thither like a flock of sheep, knowing not whither they go.

Therefore the general should assemble the armies, and place them in a desperate

position.

The different natures of the Nine Grounds; the suiting of the means to the occasion; the hearts of men: these are things that must be studied.

When deep in the interior of a hostile country, there is cohesion; if only on the borders, there is distraction. To leave home and cross the borders is to be free from interference.

On distracting ground, unite the soldiers' minds.

On disturbing ground, keep together.

On disputed ground, try to take the enemy in rear.

On intersecting ground, look well to the defences.

On path-ridden ground, cultivate intercourse.

On deeply-involved ground be careful of supplies.

On difficult ground, do not linger.

On enclosed ground, close the path of escape.

On death ground, show the soldiers that there is no chance of survival.

It is the nature of soldiers to defend when surrounded, to fight with energy when compelled thereto, to pursue the enemy if he retreat.

He cannot treat with other rulers who knows not their ambitions.

He who knows not mountain and forest; cliffs; ravines; lakes and marshes; cannot conduct an army.

He who does not use guides, cannot take advantage of the ground.

He who has not a complete knowledge of the Nine Grounds, cannot gain military dominion.

The great general, when attacking a powerful nation, prevents the enemy from concentrating his hosts.

He overawes the enemy so that other states cannot join against him.

He does not struggle for the favour of other states; nor is he careful of their rights. He has confidence in himself, and awes the enemy.

Therefore he easily takes the fortress, or reduces the country to subjection.

In the bestowal of rewards, or in his orders, he is not bound by ancient rule.

He manages his forces as though they were one man.

Orders should direct the soldiers; but while what is advantageous should be made known, what is disadvantageous should be concealed.

If the forces be plunged into danger, there is survival; from death ground there is retrieval; for the force in danger gains the victory.

Discover the enemy's intentions by conforming to his movements. When these are discovered, then, with one stroke, the general may be killed, even though he be one hundred leagues distant.

When war is declared, close the barriers; destroy passports; prevent the passage of the enemy's spies; conduct the business of the government with vigilance.

Take immediate advantage of the enemy's weakness; discover what he most values, and plan to seize it.

Shape your plans according to rule, and the circumstances of the enemy.

At first behave with the discretion of a maiden; then, when the enemy gives an opening, dart in like a rabbit.

The enemy cannot defend himself.



XII

ASSAULT BY FIRE

Sun the Master said:—

There are five ways of attack by fire:

The first is called barrack burning; the second, commissariat burning; the third, equipment burning; the fourth, store burning; the fifth, the company burning.

The moment for the fire assault must be suitable. Further, appliances must always be kept at hand.

There is a time and day proper for the setting and carrying out of the fire assault; namely: such time as the weather is dry; and a day when the moon is in the quarters of the stars Chi, Pi, I, Chen: for these are days of wind.

Regard well the developments that will certainly arise from the fire, and act upon them. When fire breaks out inside the enemy's camp, thrust upon him with all speed from without; but if his soldiers be quiet, wait, and do not attack.

When the fire is at its height, attack or not, as opportunity may arise.

If the opportunity be favourable, set fire to the enemy's camp, and do not wait for it to break out from within.

When fire breaks out on the windward side, do not attack from the leeward.

Wind that rises in the day lasts long. Wind that rises in the night time quickly passes away.

The peculiarities of the five burnings must be known, and the calendar studied, and, if the attack is to be assisted, the fire must be unquenchable.

If water is to assist the attack, the flood must be overwhelming.

Water may isolate or divide the enemy; fire may consume his camp; but unless victory or possession be obtained, the enemy quickly recovers, and misfortunes arise. The war drags on, and money is spent.

Let the enlightened lord consider well; and the good general keep the main object in view. If no advantage is to be gained thereby, do not move; without prospect of victory, do not use the soldiers; do not fight unless the state be in danger.

War should not be undertaken because the lord is in a moment of passion. The general must not fight because there is anger in his heart.

Do not make war unless victory may be gained thereby; if there be prospect of victory, move; if there be no prospect, do not move.

For passion may change to gladness, anger passes away; but a country, once overturned, cannot be restored; the dead cannot be brought to life.

Wherefore it is written, the enlightened lord is circumspect, and the good general takes heed; then is the state secure, and the army victorious in battle.



XIII

THE EMPLOYMENT OF SPIES

Sun the Master said:—

Calling 100,000 men to arms, and transporting them a hundred leagues, is such an undertaking that in one day 1,000 taels of the citizens' and nobles' money are spent; commotions arise within and without the state; carriers fall down exhausted on the line of march of the army; and the occupations of 700,000^[14] homes are upset.

Again, for years the armies may face each other; yet the issue may depend on a single day's victory.

Wherefore, by grudging slight expense in titles and salaries to spies, to remain in ignorance of the enemy's circumstances, is to be without humanity. Such a person is no general; he is no assistance to his lord; he is no master of victory.

The enlightened ruler and the wise general who act, win, and are distinguished beyond the common, are informed beforehand.

This knowledge is not to be got by calling on gods and demons; nor does it come of past experience nor calculation. It is through men that knowledge of the enemy is gained.

Now the five kinds of spies are these: village spies, inner spies, converted spies, death spies, living spies.

If these five means be employed simultaneously, none can discover their working. This is called the Mysterious Thread: it is the Lord's Treasure.

Village spies are such people of the country as give information.

Inner spies are those of the enemy's officials employed by us.

Converted spies are those of the enemy's spies in our pay.

Death^[15] spies are sent to misinform the enemy, and to spread false reports through our spies already in the enemy's lines.

Living spies^[16] return to report.

In connection with the armies, spies should be treated with the greatest kindness; and in dealing out reward, they should receive the most generous treatment. All matters relating to spies are secret.

Without infinite capacity in the general, the employment of spies is impossible. Their treatment requires benevolence and uprightness. Except they be observed with the closest attention, the truth will not be obtained from them.

Wonderful indeed is the power of spies.

There is no occasion when they cannot be used.

If a secret matter be spoken of before the time is ripe, the spy who told the matter, and the man who repeated the same, should be put to death.

If desirous of attacking an army; of besieging a fortress; or of killing a certain person; first of all, learn the names of the general in charge; of his right-hand^[17] men; of those who introduce visitors to the Presence; of the gate keeper and the sentries. Then set the spies to watch them.

Seek out the enemy's spies who come to spy on us; give them money; cause them to be lodged and cared for; and convert them to the service. Through them we are enabled to obtain spies among the enemy's villagers and officials.

By means of the converted spy, we can construct a false story for the death spy to carry to the enemy.

It is through the converted spy that we are able to use the five varieties, to their utmost advantage; therefore he must be liberally treated.

In ancient times the rise to power of the province of Yin was due to Ichih, who was sent to the country of Hsia. Likewise during the foundation of the state of Chu, Luya lived among the people of Shang.

Wherefore, intelligent rulers and wise generals use the cleverest men as spies, and invariably acquire great merit. The spy is a necessity to the army. Upon him the movement of the army depends.



THE SAYINGS OF WUTZU

INTRODUCTION

Now Wu, albeit clothed in the raiment of a scholar, was a man skilled in the art of war.

And Wen, Lord of Wei, came unto him and said:—

“I am a man of peace, caring not for military affairs.”

And Wu said:—

“Your actions are witnesses of your mind; why do your words say not what is in your heart?

“You do prepare and dress hides and leather through the four seasons, ornamenting them with red lacquer and the figures of panthers and elephants; which give not warmth in winter, neither in summer, coolness. Moreover, you make halberds, 24^[18] feet long, and pikes 12 feet long, and leather (covered) chariots so large as to fill up the gateways, wheels with ornament, and naves capped with leather. Now, these are neither beautiful to the eye nor light in the chase; I know not for what use my lord makes these things.

“But, although provided with these instruments of war, if the leader be not competent, a brooding hen might as well strike a badger, or a dog with young challenge the tiger: the spirit of encounter may be present, but there is no end but death.

“In ancient times, the Prince Chengsang cultivated virtue, and put away military things, and his kingdom fell.

“The Prince Yuhu put his trust in numbers, and delighted in war and was driven from the throne.

“Therefore the enlightened ruler should ponder over these things; encourage learning and virtue in the kingdom, and be prepared against war from without.

“To hesitate before the enemy is not a cause for righteousness; remorse for the fallen is not true humanity.”

And when Lord Wen heard these words, he himself spread a seat, and his wife

offered up a cup, and Wu was appointed general before the altar.

Now, in the defence of Hsihe against different states there were fought seventy-six great fights, of which sixty-four were complete victories, and the remainder undecided. And the kingdom grew and stretched 1,000 leagues on every side, which was all due to the virtue of Wu.



I

THE GOVERNMENT OF A COUNTRY

And Wu the Master said:—

The mighty rulers of old first trained their retainers, and then extended their regard to their outlying feudatories.

There are four discords:—

Discord in the state: then never make war.

Discord in the army: then do not strike camp.

Discord in the camp: then do not advance to attack.

Discord in the battle array: then seek not to decide the issue.

Therefore, wise rulers who would employ their subjects in great endeavours, should first establish harmony among them.

Lend not a ready ear to human counsellors, but lay the matter before the altar; seek inside the turtle,^[19] and consider well the time and season. Then, if all be well, commit ourselves to the undertaking.

If the people know that their lord is careful of their lives, and laments their death beyond all else; then, in the time of danger, the soldiers advance, and, advancing, find glory in death; and in survival after retreat, dishonour.

The Master said:—

The Way must follow the only true path: righteousness lies at the root of achievement and merit.

The object of stratagem is to avoid loss and gain advantage.

The object of government is to guard enterprise and to preserve the state.

If conduct depart from the Way, and the undertaking accord not with righteousness, then disaster befalls the mighty.

Therefore, wise men maintain order by keeping in the Way, and governing with righteousness; they move with discretion, and with benevolence they make the people amenable.

If these four virtues be practised, there is prosperity; if they be neglected, there is decay.

For, when Lord Tang of Cheng defeated Lord Chieh, the people of Hsia rejoiced, and when Wu of Chou defeated Lord Chou, the people of Yin were not discomfited. And this was because it was ordained by Providence and human desire.

The Master said:—

In the government of a country and command of an army, the inculcation of propriety, stimulation of righteousness, and the promotion of a sense of shame are required.

When men possess a sense of shame, they will attack with resolution when in strength, and when few in number defend to the last.

But while victory is easy in attack, it is difficult in defence.

Now, of the fighting races below heaven; those who gained five victories have been worn out; those who have won four victories have been impoverished; three victories have given dominion; two victories have founded a kingdom; and upon one victory an empire has been established.

For those who have gained power on earth by many victories are few; and those who have lost it, many.

The Master said:—

The causes of war are five:—

First, ambition; second, profit; third, overburdened hate; fourth, internal disorder; fifth, famine.

Again, the natures of war are five:—

First, a righteous war; second, a war of might; third, a war of revenge; fourth, a war of tyranny; fifth, an unrighteous war.

The prevention of tyranny and the restoration of order is just; to strike in reliance

on numbers is oppression; to raise the standard for reasons of anger is a war of revenge; to quit propriety, and seize advantage is tyranny; when the state is disordered and the people worn out, to harbour designs, and set a multitude in motion, is a war of unrighteousness.

There is a way of overcoming each of these five.

Righteousness is overcome by propriety; might by humanity; revenge by words; tyranny by deception; unrighteousness by strategy.

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“I would know the way to control an army, to measure men, and make the country strong.”

Wu answered and said:—

“The enlightened rulers of antiquity respected propriety between sovereign and people; established etiquette between high and low; settled officials and citizens in close accord; gave instruction in accordance with custom; selected men of ability, and thereby provided against what should come to pass.

“In ancient times, Prince Huan of Chi assembled 50,000 men at arms, and became chief among the princes; Prince Wen of Chin put 40,000 mighty men in the van, and gained his ambition; Prince Mu of Chin gathered together 30,000 invincibles, and subdued his neighbouring foes. Wherefore, the princes of powerful states must consider their people, and assemble the valiant and spirited men by companies.

“Those who delight to attack, and to display their valour and fealty should be formed in companies.

“Those skilful in scaling heights, or covering long distances, and who are quick and light of foot must be collected in companies.

“Retainers who have lost their rank, and who are desirous of displaying their prowess before their superiors should be gathered into companies.

“Those who have abandoned a castle, or deserted their trust, and are desirous of atoning for their misconduct, should be collected and formed into companies.

“These five bodies form the flower of the army. With 3,000 of such troops, if they issue from within, an encompassing enemy can be burst asunder; if they

enter from without, a castle can be overthrown.”

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“I desire to know how to fix the battle array, render defence secure, and attack with certainty of victory.”

Wu answered and said:—

“To see with the eye is better than ready words. Yet, I say, if the wise men be put in authority and the ignorant in low places, then the army is already arranged.

“If the people be free from anxiety about their estates, and love their officials, then defence is already secure.

“If all the lieges be proud of their lord, and think ill of neighbouring states, then is the battle already won.”

The Lord Wen once assembled a number of his subjects to discuss affairs of state: and none could equal him in wisdom, and when he left the council chamber his face was pleased.

Then Wu advanced and said:—

In ancient times, Lord Chuang of Chu once consulted with his lieges, and none were like unto him in wisdom; and when the Lord left the council chamber his countenance was troubled. Then the Duke Shen asked and said: “Why is my Lord troubled?” And he answered: “I have heard that the world is never without sages, and that in every country there are wise men; that good advisers are the foundation of an empire; and friends of dominion. Now, if I, lacking wisdom, have no equal among the multitude of my officers, dangerous indeed is the state of Chu. It grieves me that whereas Prince Chuang of Chu was troubled in a like case my Lord should be pleased.”

And hearing this Lord Wen was inwardly troubled.

II

ESTIMATION OF THE ENEMY

And Lord Wen said to Wu:—

“Chin threatens us on the west; Chu surrounds us on the south; Chao presses us in the north; Chi watches us in the east; Yen stops our rear, and Han is posted in our front. Thus, the armies of six nations encompass us on every side, and our condition is very unpropitious. Canst thou relieve my anxiety?”

Wu answered and said:—

“The path of safety of a state lies first of all in vigilance. Now my Lord has already taken warning, wherefore misfortunes are yet distant.

“Let me state the habits of these six countries. The forces of Chi are weighty but without solidity; the soldiers of Chin are scattered, and fight each of his own accord: the army of Chu is well ordered, but cannot endure: the soldiers of Yen defend well, but are without dash: the armies of the three Chins are well governed, but cannot be used.

“The nature of Chi is stubborn and the country rich, but prince and officials are proud and luxurious, and neglectful of the common people; government is loose and rewards not impartial; in one camp there are two minds; the front is heavy, but the rear is light. Therefore it is ponderous without stability. To attack it, the force must be divided into three parts, and, by threatening it on three sides, its front can be broken.

“The nature of Chin is strong, the country rugged, and the government firm; rewards and punishments just, the people indomitable, and all have the fighting spirit; wherefore, when separated, each fights of his own accord.

“To defeat this people, they must first be tempted by gain to leave their cause, so that the soldiers, greedy of profit, desert their general: then, taking advantage of their disobedience, their scattered forces can be chased, ambushes laid, favourable opportunities taken, and their general captured.

“The nature of Chu is weak, its territory wide, the government weak, and the

people exhausted; the troops are well ordered but of short endurance.

“The way to defeat them is to assault their camp, throw it into confusion and crush their spirit, advance softly, and retire quickly; tire them out, avoid a serious encounter, and they may be defeated.

“The nature of Yen is straightforward; its people are cautious, loving courage and righteousness, and without guile; wherefore they defend but are not daring.

“The way to defeat them is to draw close and press them; tease them and pass to a distance; move quickly, and appear in the rear, thus causing bewilderment to their officers and fear in their ranks. Our chariots and horsemen will act with circumspection and avoid encounter. Thus their general can be captured.

“The three Chins are the middle kingdom: their nature is peaceful and their rule just. Their people are tired of war; their troops are trained, but their leaders are despised; pay is small, and the soldiers lack the spirit of sacrifice, thus they are well governed but cannot be used.

“The way to defeat them is to threaten them from afar. If a multitude attack—defend; if they retreat—pursue, and tire them out.

“In every army there are mighty warriors with strength to lift the Censer, swifter of foot than the war horse; who can take the enemy’s standard, or slay his general. If such men be selected, and set apart, cared for and honoured, they are the life of the army.

“Those who use the five arms^[20] with skill, who are clever, strong and quick, and careless of the enemy, should be given rank and decoration, and used to decide the victory. Their parents and families should be cared for, encouraged by rewards, and kept in fear of punishment. These men consolidate the battle array; their presence causes endurance.

“If these men be well selected, double their number can be defeated.”

And Lord Wen said:—

“It is good!”

Wu the Master said:—

“In the estimation of the enemy there are eight cases when, without consulting the oracles, he may be attacked.

“First, an enemy who, in great wind and cold, has risen early, started forth across ice and rivers, and braved stress and hardships.

“Second, an enemy who, in the height of summer, and in great heat, has risen early, has travelled incessantly, is hungry and without water, and is striving to reach a distance.

“Third, an enemy who has been encamped long in one place, who is without provisions, when the farmers are vexed and indignant, who has suffered frequent calamities, and whose officers are unable to establish confidence.

“Fourth, when the enemy’s funds are exhausted, fuel and fodder scarce; when the heavens have been overcast by long continued rain; when there is the desire to loot, but no place to loot withal.

“Fifth, when their numbers are few; when water is scarce; when men and horses are scourged by pestilence, and from no quarter is succour at hand.

“Sixth, when night falls, and the way is yet far; when officers and men are worn out and fearful, weary and without food, and have laid aside their armour and are resting.

“Seventh, when the general’s authority is weak, the officials false, and the soldiers unsettled; when their army has been alarmed, and no help is forthcoming.

“Eighth, when the battle formation is not yet fixed, or camp pitched; when climbing a hill, or passing through a difficult place; when half is hidden and half exposed.

“An enemy in these situations may be smitten without hesitation.

“There are six enemies, that, without consulting oracles, should be avoided.

“First, wide and vast territories, and a large and rich population.

“Second, where the officials care for the people, and bestow bountiful favours and rewards.

“Third, where rewards are well deserved, punishment accurately apportioned, and operations undertaken only when the time is fitting.

“Fourth, where merit is recognised and given rank, wise men appointed, and

ability employed.

“Fifth, where the troops are many and their weapons excellent.

“Sixth, when help is at hand on every side, or from a powerful ally.

“For, if the enemy excel in the foregoing, he must be avoided without hesitation. As it is written, if it be judged good, advance; if it be known to be difficult, retreat.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“I desire to know how the interior of the enemy can be known from his outer appearance; the form of his camp by observing his advance, and how victory may be determined?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“If the coming of the enemy be reckless like roaring waters, his banners and pennons disordered, and horses and men frequently looking behind, then ten can be struck with one. Panic will certainly seize them.

“Before the various princes have assembled, before harmony has been established between lord and lieges, before ditches have been dug, or regulations established, and the army is alarmed; wishing to advance, but unable; wishing to retreat, but unable: then the force can strike twice their numbers, and in a hundred fights there is no fear of retreat.”

Lord Wen asked:—

“How can the enemy be certainly defeated?”

Wu answered and said:—

“Make certain of the enemy’s real condition and quickly strike his weak point; strike an enemy who has just arrived from afar, before his ranks are arranged; or one who has eaten and has not completed his dispositions; or an enemy who is hurrying about, or is busily occupied; or has not made favourable use of the ground, or has let pass the opportunity; or one who has come a long distance, and those in rear are late and have not rested.

“Strike an enemy who is half across waters; or who is on a difficult or narrow road; or whose flags and banners are in confusion; or who is frequently changing

position; or whose general is not in accord with the soldiers; or who is fearful.

“All such should be assaulted by the picked men; and the remainder of the army should be divided, and follow after them. They may be attacked at once without hesitation.”



III

CONTROL OF THE ARMY

Lord Wen said:—

“What is of first importance in operations of war?”

Wu answered and said:—

“Lightness, of which there are four natures, Weight, of which there are two natures, and Confidence must be clearly comprehended.”

And Wen said:—

“What are these?”

And Wu answered:—

“If the way be easy, the horses are light of foot; if the horses be light of foot, the chariots travel freely; if the chariots travel easily, men can ride in them without difficulty; if the men be free to move, the fight prospers. If the difficult and easy ways be known, the horses are lightened; if the horses be fed at proper intervals, the chariots are swift; if there be plenty of oil on the axles of the chariots, the riders are quickly conveyed; if the spears be sharp and the armour strong, the men make the fight easy.

“Large rewards in advance, heavy punishment in retreat, and impartiality in their bestowal are required.

“He who well understands these things is the master of victory.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“By what means can the army gain the victory?”

And Wu answered:—

“The foundation of victory is good government.”

Again, Wen asked and said:—

“Is it not determined by numbers?”

And Wu replied:—

“If laws and orders be not clear; if rewards and punishments be not just; if the bell be sounded and they halt not, or drum be beaten and men do not advance; even if there be a hundred thousand men at arms, they are of no avail.

“Where there is order, then there is propriety at rest, and dignity in motion; none can withstand the attack, and retreat forbids pursuit; motion is regulated, and movements to right and left are made in answer to the signal; if the ranks be cut asunder, formation is preserved; if scattered, they are maintained; in fortune or in danger, there is unity; if a number be collected, they cannot be separated; they may be used but not wearied; in whatever situation they are placed, nothing under heaven can withstand them. The army may be called a father and his children.”

And Wu said:—

“In marching, movements and halts must be properly adjusted, suitable occasions for rationing not missed; the strength of men and horses not exhausted. If these three things be observed, the commands of the superior can be carried out; if the commands of the superior be carried out, order is maintained. If advances and halts be without method, victualling unsuitable, horses and men tired and weary—neither unsaddled or housed—it is because the orders cannot be obeyed; if the orders be set aside, there is disorder in the camp, and in battle—defeat.”

Wu the Master said:—

“On that depository of corpses, the battlefield, if there be certain expectation of death, there is life; if there be happy expectation of life, there is death. The good general is like unto one sitting in a leaking ship, or lying under a burning roof; the wisest man cannot contrive against him; the strongest man cannot destroy his composure; and the enemy’s onslaught can be withstood. For procrastination is the greatest enemy of the general; disasters to the army are born of indecision.”

Wu the Master said:—

“Men meet their death from lack of ability or unskilfulness. Wherefore training is the first requirement of war. One man with a knowledge of war can teach ten; ten men skilled in war can teach one hundred; one hundred can teach one

thousand; one thousand can teach ten thousand; and ten thousand men can train an army.

“An enemy from a distance should be awaited, and struck at short range; an enemy that is tired should be met in good order; hunger should be opposed by full bellies; the battle formation should be round or square, the men should kneel or stand; go or remain; move to the right or left; advance or retire; concentrate or disperse; close or extend when the signal is given.

“All these changes must be learnt, and the weapons distributed. This is the business of the general.”

Wu the Master said:—

“In the teaching of war, spears are given to the short; bows and catapults to the tall; banners and standards to the strong; the bell and drum to the bold; fodder and provisions to the feeble; the arrangement of the plan to the wise. Men of the same district should be united; and groups and squads should help each other. At one beat of the drum the ranks are put in order; at two beats of the drum, formation will be made; at three beats of the drum, food will be issued; at four beats of the drum, the men will prepare to march; at five beats of the drum, ranks will be formed; when the drums beat together, then the standards will be raised.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“What is the way of marching and halting an army?”

And Wu answered:—

“Natural ovens and dragons’ heads should be avoided. Natural ovens are the mouths of large valleys. Dragons’ heads are the extremities of large mountains. The green dragons (banners) should be placed on the left, and the white tigers on the right; the red sparrows in front; the snakes and tortoises behind; the pole star (standard) above; and the soldiers will look to the standard.

“When going forth to battle, the direction of the wind must be studied; if blowing in the direction of the enemy, the soldiers will be assembled and follow the wind; if a head wind, the position will be strengthened, and a wait made for the wind to change.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“In what way should horses be treated?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“The places where they are kept should be made comfortable; fodder should be suitable and timely. In winter their stables should be warmed, and in summer sheltered from the heat; their coats clipped, their feet carefully pared, their attention directed so that they be not alarmed, their paces regulated, and their going and halting trained; horses and men should be in accord, and then the horses can be used. The harness, the saddle, bit, bridle, and reins must be strong; if the horse be without vice at the beginning, he can be used to the end; if the horse be hungry it is good; if his belly be full, his value decreases; if the sun be falling and the way still long, dismount frequently. For it is proper that the men be worked, but the horses must be used with discretion, so that they may be prepared should the enemy suddenly attack us.

“If these things be well known, then there is free passage under heaven.”



IV

QUALITIES OF THE GENERAL

Wu the Master said:—

“The leader of the army is one who is master of both arms and letters. He who is both brave and tender can be entrusted with troops.

“In the popular estimation of generals, courage alone is regarded; nevertheless, courage is but one of the qualifications of the leader. Courage is heedless in encounter; and rash encounter, which is ignorant of the consequences, cannot be called good.

“There are five matters which leaders must carefully consider.

“First, reason; second, preparation; third, determination; fourth, vigilance; fifth, simplicity.

“With reason, a multitude can be controlled like a small number.

“Preparedness sees an enemy outside the gate.

“Determination before the enemy has no thought of life.

“Even after a victory, vigilance behaves as before the first encounter.

“Simplicity ensures few regulations, and preserves order.

“When the leader receives his orders, he forthwith departs. Not until the enemy has been vanquished does he speak of return. This is the duty of the general.

“Wherefore, from the day of departure of the army, the general seeks glory in death, and dreams not of return in dishonour.”

Wu the Master said:—

“In war there are four important influences.

“First, spirit; second, ground; third, opportunity; fourth, force.

“The military value of the nation’s forces—of one hundred times ten thousand

fighting men—depends upon the personality of one man alone; this is called the influence of spirit.

“When the road is steep and narrow, when there are famous mountains and fastnesses where ten men can defend and one thousand cannot pass them by; such is the influence of ground.

“When spies have been skilfully sown, and mounted men pass to and from the enemy’s camp, so that his masses are divided, his sovereign and ministers vexed with each other, and superiors and inferiors mutually censorious; this is the moment of opportunity.

“When the linch-pins are secure, the oars and sweeps ready for use in the boats, the armed men trained for war, and the horses exercised, we have what is called the influence of force.

“He who understands these four matters has the qualifications of a general. Furthermore, dignity, virtue, benevolence, courage, are needed to lead the troops, to calm the multitude, to put fear in the enemy, to remove doubts. When orders are issued, the subordinates do not defy them. Wheresoever the army is, that place the enemy avoids. If these four virtues be present, the country is strong; if they be not present, the country is overthrown.

“Of such is the good general.”

Wu the Master said:—

“The use of drums and bells is to attract the ear; of flags, standards, and banners to strike the eye; of laws and penalties to put fear in the heart.

“To attract the ear the sound must be clear; to strike the eye the colours must be bright. The heart is awed by punishment, therefore punishment must be strict.

“If these three matters be not ordered, the state may, peradventure, be preserved, but defeat by the enemy is certain. Therefore, as it has been said (if these three things be present), there is no departing from the commands of the general; when he orders, there is no going back from death.”

Wu the Master said:—

“The secret of war is, first, to know who is the enemy’s general, and to judge his ability. If our plans depend on his dispositions, then success will be achieved

without toil.

“If their general be stupid, and heedlessly trustful, he may be enticed by fraud; if he be avaricious and careless of his fame, he may be bribed with gifts. If he make unconsidered movements without plan, he should be tired out and placed in difficulties. If the superiors be wealthy and proud, and the inferiors avaricious and resentful, they should be set against each other. An enemy that is undetermined, now advancing and then retreating, whose soldiers have nought wherein to put their trust, should be alarmed, and put to flight.

“When an enemy thinks lightly of the general, and desires to return home, the easy roads should be blocked, and the difficult and narrow roads opened; await their coming and capture them.

“If their advance be easy and retreat difficult, await their coming and then advance against them.

“If their advance be difficult and retreat easy, then press and strike them.

“An army that is camped in marshy ground, where there are no water-courses, and long and frequent rains, should be inundated.

“An army that is camped in wild marshes, covered with dark and overhanging grass and brambles, and swept by frequent high winds, should be overthrown by fire.

“An army that has halted long without moving; whose general and soldiers have grown careless, and neglect precautions, should be approached by stealth, and taken by surprise.”

Lord Wen asked, saying:—

“If the two armies be facing each other, and the name of the enemy’s general unknown, in what manner can we discover it?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“A brave man of low degree, lightly but well equipped, should be employed. He should think only of flight and naught of advantage. Then, if he observe the enemy’s pursuit, if there be first a halt and then an advance, order is established. If we retreat and the enemy pursue, but pretend not to be able to overtake us, see an advantage but pretend not to be aware of it, then their general may be called a

wise general, and conflict with him must be avoided. If their army be full of uproar; their banners and standards disordered, their soldiers going about or remaining of their own accord, some in line, others in column; if such an enemy be eager to pursue, and see an advantage which they are desperate to seize, then their general is a fool: even if there be a host, they may be taken.”



V SUITING THE OCCASION

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If strong chariots, good horses, strong and valiant soldiers suddenly meet the enemy, and are thrown into confusion, and ranks broken, what should be done?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“In general, the method of fighting is to effect order in daylight by means of flags and banners, pennons and batons; at night by gongs and drums, whistles and flutes. If a signal be made to the left, the troops move to the left; if to the right, they move to the right. Advance is made at the sound of the drum; halt at the sound of the gong; one blast of the whistle is for advance, two for the rally. If those who disobey be cut down, the forces are subject to authority. If officers and soldiers carry out orders, a superior enemy cannot exist; no position is impregnable in the attack.”

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“What is to be done if the enemy be many and we be few?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“Avoid such an enemy on open ground, and meet him in the narrow way; for, as it is written, if 1 is to stand against 1,000, there is naught better than a pass; if 10 are to hold against 100, there is nothing better than a steep place; if 1,000 are to strike 10,000, there is nothing better than a difficult place. If a small force, with beat of gong and drum, suddenly arise in a narrow way, even a host will be upset. Wherefore it is written: ‘He who has a multitude seeks the plain, and he who has few seeks the narrow way.’”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“A mighty host, strong and courageous, which is on the defence with a mountain behind, a precipice between, high ground on the right, and a river on the left, with deep moats, and high walls, and which has artillery; whose retreat is like the removal of a mountain, advance like the hurricane, and whose supplies are in

abundance, is an enemy against whom long defence is difficult. In effect, what should be done in such a case?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“This indeed is a great question, whose issue depends, not upon the might of chariot and horse, but upon the schemes of a wise man.

“Let 1,000 chariots and 10,000 horse, well equipped and with foot-men added to them, be divided into five armies, and a road allotted to each army.

“Then if there be five armies, and each army take a different road, the enemy will be puzzled, and know not in what quarter to be prepared. If the enemy’s defence be strong and united, send envoys quickly to him to discover his intention. If he listen to our advices, he will strike camp and withdraw. But, if he listen not to our advice, but strikes down the messenger, and burns his papers, then divide and attack from five quarters. If victorious, do not pursue; if defeated, flee to a distance. If feigning retreat, proceed slowly, and, if the enemy approach, strike swiftly.

“One army will hold the enemy in front, with another cut his rear, two more with gags in their mouths^[21] will attack his weak point, whether on the right or on the left. If five armies thus make alternate onslaughts, success is certain.

“This is the way to strike strength.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If the enemy draw near and encompass us, and we would retreat, but there is no way, and in our multitude there is fear, what should be done?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“In such a case, if we be many and they be few, divide and fall upon them; if the enemy be many and we be few, use stratagem and act according to opportunity; and if opportunities be untiringly seized, even if the enemy be many, he will be reduced to subjection.”

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If, in a narrow valley with steep places on either side, the enemy be met, and they are many and we are few, what should be done?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“If they be met among hills, woods, in deep mountains, or wide fens, advance quickly, retire swiftly, and hesitate not. If the enemy be suddenly met among high mountains or deep valleys, be the first to strike the drum and fall upon them. Let bow and cross bow advance; shoot and capture; observe the state of their ranks; and, if there be confusion, do not hesitate to strike.”

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If the enemy be suddenly met in a narrow place with high mountains on either side, and advance and retreat are alike impossible, what should be done in such a case?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“This is called War in valleys where numbers are of no avail. The ablest officers should be collected, and set against the enemy. Men light of foot and well armed should be placed in front; the chariots divided; the horsemen drawn up, and placed in ambush on four sides, with many leagues between, and without showing their weapons. Then, the enemy will certainly make his defence firm, and neither advance or retreat. Whereupon, the standards will be raised, and the ranks of banners shown, the mountains left, and camp pitched in the plain.

“The enemy will then be fearful, and should be challenged by chariot and horse, and allowed no rest.

“This is the method of fighting in valleys.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If the enemy be met in a marsh where the water is out, so that the wheels of the chariots sink in, and the shafts be covered, and the chariots and horsemen overcome by the waters, when there are no boats or oars, and it is impossible either to advance or retreat, what should be done in such a case?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“This is called water fighting. Chariots and horsemen cannot be used, and they must be put for a time on one side. Go up to the top of a high place, and look out to the four quarters. Then the state of the waters will certainly be seen; their extent, and the deep places and shallows fully ascertained. Then, by stratagem,

the enemy may be defeated.

“If the enemy should cross the waters he should be engaged when half over.”

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If there has been long continued rain so that the horses sink, and the chariots cannot move; if the enemy appear from four quarters, and the forces are frightened, what is the course in such a case?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“When wet and overcast, the chariots should halt; when fine and dry, they should arise. Seek height, and avoid low places; drive the strong chariots, and choose well the road on which to advance or halt. If the enemy suddenly arise, immediately pursue them.”

Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If our fields and pastures be suddenly pillaged, and our oxen and sheep taken, what should be done?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“Lawless enemies that arise are to be feared; defend well and do not reply. When, at sunset, they seek to withdraw, they will certainly be overladen and fearful. Striving to return quickly to their homes, connection will be lost. Then if they be pursued and attacked, they can be overthrown.”

Wu the Master said:—

“The way of attacking the enemy and investing his castle is as follows:—

“When the outlying buildings have been taken, and the assaulting parties enter the innermost sanctuary, make use of the enemy’s officials, and take charge of their weapons. Let the army on no account fell trees or enter dwellings, cut the crops, slay the six domestic animals, or burn the barns; and show the people that there is no cruel desire. Those who wish to surrender, should be received and freed from anxiety.”

VI ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE TROOPS

And Lord Wen asked and said:—

“If punishment be just and reward impartial, is victory thereby gained?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“I cannot speak of all the things that concern justice and impartiality, but on these alone dependence cannot be placed.

“If the people hear the word of command, or listen to the order with rejoicing; if, when the army be raised, and a multitude assembled, they go forth gladly to the fight; if, in the tumult of the fight, when blade crosses blade, the soldiers gladly die; upon these three things can the lord of the people place his trust.”

And Lord Wen said:—

“How can this be brought about?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“Seek out merit, advance and reward it, and encourage those without fame.”

Accordingly Lord Wen set seats in the garden of the palace in three rows, and made a feast unto his chief retainers. In the first row were set those of chief merit, and on the table were placed the best meats and precious utensils. Those of medium merit were set in the middle row, and the utensils on the table were fewer in number. Those without merit were set in the last row, and utensils of no value were put before them. And when the feast was over, and they had all departed, the parents, wives, and children of those with merit were given presents outside the gates of the palace according to their degree.

Further, messengers were sent yearly with gifts to condole with the parents of those who had lost a son in the service of the state, and to show that they were had in remembrance.

And after this was carried out for three years, the people of Chin gathered an

army, and came as far as the Western River. And when the soldiers of Wei heard this, without waiting for orders, they armed themselves and fell upon them; and they that went forth were 10,000 in number.

And Lord Wen called Wu and said:—

“The words that you spoke unto me, have they not indeed been carried out?”

And Wu answered and said:—

“I have heard that there are men, great and small; souls, grand and feeble.

“As a trial, let 50,000 men, without merit, be collected, and placed under my command against the country of Chin. If we fail, the state will be the laughing-stock among the princes, and its power under heaven will be lost. If a desperate robber be hidden in a wide plain, and 1,000 men be pursuing him, their glances will be furtive like the owl, looking backward like the wolf, for they are in fear of harm from a sudden onslaught.

“One desperate man can put fear in the hearts of a thousand. Now, if this host of 50,000 men become as a desperate thief, and are led against Chin, there is nought to fear.”

On hearing these words Lord Wen agreed, and adding further 500 chariots and 3,000 horse, the hosts of Chin were overthrown, all being due to the encouragement of the troops.

On the day before the battle Wu gave orders to the forces, saying:—

“The army will attack the enemy’s chariots, horse and foot, in accordance with our commands. If the chariots do not capture the enemy’s chariots, or the horse those of the enemy’s, or the foot the enemy’s footmen, even if their army be overthrown, no merit will be gained.”

Therefore on the day of the battle, the orders were simple, and fear of Wei shook the heavens.

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] The five virtues of humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faith are known as The Way.

[2] The Yin and Yang are the two principles into which natural phenomena are divided in Chinese philosophy. Yin is the masculine, active, or light principle, and Yang is the feminine, passive, or dark principle. In this connection, day and night, rain, mist and wind are designated.

[3] The Chinese army consisted of 12,500, the “lu” of 500, “tsu” of 50, and the “wu” of 5 men.

[4] The “Chuyin” was a large tower or work constructed to give command over the interior of the enemy’s fortress.

High poles were also erected, from the top of which archers, each encased in an arrow-proof box and raised by a rope and pulley, shot at the besieged.

[5] Literally 9th heaven, and 9th earth. The Chinese divided the earth and sky each into 9 strata.

[6] An animal’s coat is thinnest in autumn.

[7] The drum was used to beat the assembly and in the advance, the bell as a signal to halt. Flags were of two kinds, signalling flags and distinguishing banners.

[8] The normal and the abnormal refer to what in modern phrase are termed the frontal or holding force and the flanking or surprise force.

[9] The five cardinal tastes are, acidity, bitterness, sourness, sweetness and saline taste.

[10] Sun, as has been said, was a man of Wu. Wu and Yueh were continually at war.

[11] Wood, fire, earth, metal and water.

[12] This passage was written on the standard of Takeda Shingen, one of Japan’s most famous generals.

[13] This and the following are so called because the men are continually thinking of, and slipping back to their homes.

[14] The population was divided, for military purposes, into groups of eight families. In time of war, each group sent one man into the field, furnished his wants, and provided for his family. Therefore if 100,000 men are taken, 700,000 homes are affected.

[15] So called because they are put to death when the enemy finds out that he has

been tricked.

[16] Messengers and others, who do not disguise their identity, are included under this heading.

[17] Literally, right and left men, *i.e.* they who sat on either side.

[18] All numbers connected with weapons were Yin, that is to say—even, or belonging to the negative principle of Chinese philosophy from their connection with death.

[19] The back of a turtle was burnt, and the answer was ascertained by the manner in which the shell split.

[20] Halberd, shield, javelin, pike, and short pike.

[21] Silently.

Transcriber's note:

The following is a list of changes made to the original. The first line is the original line, the second the corrected one.

Page 40:

reap advantage; the wrangles of a multitude are frought with peril.
reap advantage; the wrangles of a multitude are fraught with peril.

Page 92:

Chi answered and said:—
Wu answered and said:—

Page 95:

"By what means can the army gain the victory?
"By what means can the army gain the victory?"

Page 109:

And Lord Wu asked and said:--
And Lord Wen asked and said:--

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