CHAPTER I

CHINESE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE MANCHUS

A. *Military.*

WHILE the Taiping rebellion was still in the process of incubation, when as yet small companies of prowling bandits or congregations of religious enthusiasts were too weak to threaten the empire or even upset a province, the authorities would be expected to bend every effort to check them. But they seemed to be completely paralysed. The imperial soldiery proved utterly incapable of checking the bands of lawless men that ravaged the countrysides of southern Hunan, Kwangtung, and Kwangsi at will. Yet on paper at least the viceroy of the Two Kwang had at his command eighty-nine thousand soldiers exclusive of officers, 22,532 in Kwangsi and 66,907 in Kwangtung. In fairness we must add that 55,401 were enrolled particularly for garrison or police duty; but even so almost 34,000 infantry and cavalry remained to form a field army—sufficient to drive out all the bandits that had appeared before 1849.[1]

The explanation of this weakness lies in the studied division of power which had been made by the reigning

[1] In the preparation of this account of the army I have relied chiefly on the articles of Thomas F. Wade in vol. XX of the *Chinese Repository*. Wade drew largely from Chinese sources, and at the very time the rebellion was breaking out. Parker in his *China* also has a good account of the army.

dynasty, both in the military establishment and the civil service. So far as the army is concerned this division began with the national organisation which consisted of two distinct sets of officers and soldiers, organised on altogether different principles and possessing different privileges, namely the Eight Banners and the Tents of the Green Standard.

Before the Manchus commenced their struggle against the Ming Dynasty, as early as 1614, their forces were organised into eight divisions of approximately 7,500 men each led by a *tut'ung*. This was the nucleus of the Eight Banners under which all the Manchus eventually came to be enrolled.[2] Each division was subdivided into regiments of 1,500 men each, and these into battalions of 300 men.[3]

In the actual conquest of the land, however, the Manchus were aided both by Mongolian and Chinese troops, many of whom were assimilated into the Eight Banners after the country was pacified. At first these were enrolled with the Manchus, but as their numbers increased it was deemed wiser to arrange them into separate groups. Accordingly, in 1635 the Mongols were organised into Eight Banner divisions, their number totalling 16,840 men, and seven years later the Chinese who had participated in the conquest from the beginning were similarly enrolled in Eight Banners.[4] Of the latter there were 24,050 men. The total Banner force was therefore about a hundred thousand at the end of the conquest. Thence-

[2] The Eight Banners were divided into two divisions, superior and inferior:

The three superior Banners:	The five inferior Banners:
Bordered yellow.	Bordered white.
Plain yellow.	Plain red.
Plain white.	Bordered red.
	Plain blue.
	Bordered blue.

[3] Article in *Journal* North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society, new style, XXII, 3-5.

[4] *Ibid.*

forth they became the nucleus of the army of occupation, being particularly necessary to guard the palace, the city of Peking, Chihli, and the northern and northwestern frontiers. Their numbers gradually swelled to more than two hundred thousand, an overwhelming proportion of which were in Manchuria, Turkestan, and Chihli.[5] They inherited their rights to enrollment.

The primary aim of holding firmly the imperial domain of Manchuria and the metropolitan province against attacks from Mongolia and Turkestan was apparent. The Chihli garrisons were so distributed as to form a cordon about the capital, while the large garrisons in the northwestern provinces of Shensi, Kansu, and Shansi were vital outposts. In the other parts of China garrisons were generally placed in the provinces where a viceroy lived, except in the distant Yunnan-Kweichow.[6] Kwangsi, Hunan, Kiangsi, and Anhui, having governors only, were

[5] The figures for 1850, based on the statistics of 1825, but approximately correct, give the following totals:

Grand divisions		*Officers*	*Privates**	*Supernumeraries†*	*Artificers*
Chihli,	16	7,919	131,493	31,694	2,538
Manchuria,	4	1,086	41,350	1,138	1,568
Turkestan,	1	289	13,576	504	128
Total		9,294	186,419	33,336	4,234
The other provinces of China proper		1,297	49,595	8,088	1,011
Grand total		10,591	236,014	41,424	5,245

* Privates: including non-commissioned officers.

† Supernumeraries: those eligible to active service, from whom promotions were made.

But of the numbers in China proper, Shensi (1 division), Kansu (6 divisions), and Shansi (3 divisions) had about half, leaving the other half for eight provinces. The above tables are from the *Chinese Repository*, XX.

[6] Owing possibly to the fact that this was originally given as a fief to Wu San-kwei, and was too far away, after the rebellion, to be held by a small force.

without Banner troops, while the garrisons in Honan, Shantung, and Ssuch'uan were relatively small. At K'aifeng the total was less than a thousand officers and men; in two camps in Shantung, one at Tsingchow and another at Tehchow, were stationed about 2,600, and the whole vast province of Ssuch'uan contained but 2,528 men and 222 officers in the camp at Chengtu.[7]

Along the Yangtse River it was somewhat different. Realising the need for controlling that great waterway, garrisons were placed in Hupeh at Kingchow, where the outlet from Ssuch'uan could be controlled and Hukwang overawed, at Nanking, and at Kingkow. The totals for these places were: Kingchow, 6,292 men and 516 officers, Nanking, 3,122 men and 369 officers, and Kingkow, 1,596 men and 147 officers.

The two coast provinces, Chekiang and Fukien, were under two Tartar generals, one at Kangchow with 1,970 men and 270 officers, supplemented by a marine garrison having 1,526 men and 104 officers at Chapu; the other similarly had a land garrison of 2,000 men with 209 officers and a small marine camp with 39 officers and 475 men. The province of Kwangtung had a total of 4,599 men and 249 officers, all of them at Canton.[8]

The command of all these Banner troops in the provinces was, except in the case of Shantung and Honan, lodged in the Tartar general who ranked above the viceroy and was directly responsible to the capital, although the support of his troops had to be furnished by the province in which they were stationed. The two provinces having no Tartar general, Honan and Shantung, had

[7] All these figures are those given by Wade, in 1850, from records of 1825.

[8] Parker in his *China* gives different totals: Honan, 820, Shantung, 2,926, Ssuch'uan, 1,500, Hupeh, 5,168, Kiangsu, 4,000, Chekiang, 5,700, Fukien, 3,060, and Kwangtung 6,400. Map opposite p. 256. He does not cite his authorities.

Bannermen with officers of the second grade under the governor. In Peking these Bannermen were under a special board of twenty-four *tut'ung* or lieutenant generals, each representing one of the twenty-four Banners, and subject to the Board of War.

The individuals composing the hereditary class from which this force was made up were further ranked into two classes, inner and outer, according to the relation they bore to the reigning family. The former were specially designated to service in the imperial and princely households, the latter were free to serve in the army or civil government outside. Practically every adult male Manchu was in some way enrolled under the Banners, either as a soldier or employee of the civil service. Every one enrolled in the superior three Banners received support whether he went into government service or not,[9] while those in the inferior received stipends only when actually serving in the active or supernumerary ranks.

We are now able to realise the nature of the Manchu force. Around the capital and in the regions where danger might be expected, it formed the chief imperial reliance. There it still had some bravery and virtue to its credit. In the interior provinces it served chiefly as an independent garrison of the ruling race, under separate control, ready to forestall or oppose any sign of usurpation on the part of the viceroy or governor at his own capital, but without value for warfare. In such places the Bannermen were "practically honourable prisoners, rigidly confined within the limits of the city walls in the midst of a hostile population, speaking a dialect which Bannermen must learn in addition to their own if they wish even to purchase a cabbage in the streets; and the Tartar General, who nominally outranks the Chinese Viceroy, is often sneeringly regarded as an 'old frump' or a

[9] Mayers, *Chinese Governments*, pp. 51 f.; *Chinese Repository*, XX, 252.

'drunken swab.' "[10] That this picture must be somewhat modified to admit some excellent Tartar generals and brave soldiers, Parker himself confesses, but contends that his indictment is true in the main.

We can, indeed, scarcely exaggerate their uselessness, not only as a fighting force, but even as a defensive arm. The most striking proof of their degeneracy is found in the behavior of the Manchus when the Taipings took Nanking in 1853.[11] The garrison of paid Manchu forces at that place amounted to 5,106, indicating a total adult population of twenty or thirty thousand. The Taipings stormed the outer walls and met with some resistance from Chinese soldiers, after which they proceeded to attack the Manchus in the Tartar city within. Of this attack Meadows records:[12]

These Manchus had to fight for all that is dear to man, for the Imperial family which had always treated them well, for the honour of their nation, for their own lives and for the lives of their wives and children. This they well knew, the Heavenly Prince having openly declared the first duty of his mission to be their extermination. It might have been expected, therefore, that they would have made a desperate fight in self-defense, yet they did not strike a blow. It would seem as if the irresistible progress and inveterate enmity of the insurgents had bereft them of all

[10] Parker, *China*, p. 247.

[11] The account here given is taken from Meadows, *The Chinese and their Rebellions*, pp. 168 ff. He took care to get the exact truth on his visit to Nanking, a few weeks after his capture, but his informers were probably rebels only.

[12] The chief imperialist account of this event, *P'ing-ting Yueh-fei Chi-lueh*, II, 26, says that the Tartar city was held for two days after the outer city had fallen, and that not soldiers alone, but also women stood on the walls at various points and aided in the defence. During the Opium War the Manchus at Chinkiang resisted the British in the same desperate fashion when attacked. Loch, *Narrative of Events*, p. 106. This tends to throw some doubt on the indictment quoted above from Meadows, but does not prove the usefulness of the Manchu garrisons, outside the Tartar city at any rate.

sense and strength, and of all manhood; for they threw themselves on the ground before their leaders and piteously implored for mercy with cries of Spare my life, Prince!—spare my life, Prince! . . . The insurgents who described their conduct declared that not one, old or young had been spared.

Whether those in Chihli were actually much better is very doubtful, for, when the comparatively small force of Taipings, sent north after the capture of Nanking, reached the borders of that province, the emperor had to send for Mongol tribesmen to hasten to the rescue of Tientsin under their formidable leader Senkolintsin.[13] Assuredly enough Bannermen were to be found in Chihli to rout the insurgents if they had been skilled in war. And, useless as it was, this Banner force was a serious drain on the provincial revenues. Careful tables by Wade[14] show that the pay and allowances of officers and men for the Banners in China proper amounted to a grand total of 13,785,020 *taels*[15] per annum, or, with Manchuria, Ili, and Turkestan included, just under sixteen million *taels*. If the tables of Parker are correct, this represents more than a third of the entire receipts for the pre-Taiping years and at least half of the expenditures which he includes.[16]

Considering now the Chinese army, we find at the outset one striking difference in the fact that this was drawn

[13] *Peking Gazette* for Nov. 7, 1853. [14] *Chinese Repository*, XX, 404.

[15] A *tael* is an ounce of silver, Chinese weight. The standards are local, but in general are about an ounce and a third. Here the standard is the Treasury *tael*.

[16] Parker, *China*, pp. 198 f. The receipts are given in this budget as *taels* 46,871,000 and expenditures as *taels* 31,522,800. He reckons the entire army expenditure at only *taels* 19,599,100 and believes that the Bannermen at Peking require only two or three millions. I am inclined to think that his budget only includes payments for Peking, Manchuria, Mongolia, and Turkestan, but not those for the provinces, which were paid by the provincial treasuries.

by voluntary enlistment from all parts of the empire. Officers might be Manchus or Chinese, but the rank and file were native, and it was evenly distributed through the eighteen provinces. When we think of it as a national army we are apt to be led astray. Peking did, indeed, have control of the appointment of officers of higher rank; but once established in his command, the officer had full charge of his own men and they formed practically an independent force, yet dependent, by an intricate system of checks and balances, on other officers and on civil rulers in the provinces. There was nothing to correspond to the unity of command found in national armies of the west.

This Chinese force, known as the Luh Ying, "Tents of the Green Standard," dates back to the pre-Manchu period when those invaders were struggling for power. Like the Banner troops its organisation was made on the basis of 7,500 men to a major division. Whether the minor divisions were in exact correspondence to those of the Banners is not clear, but is probable. When Shunchih established himself in Peking, we are told that there were at least three Chinese armies with no less than 150,000 men, fighting for him under native generals in the provinces.[17] Some of these were assimilated into the Banners, as we saw above, but many were left out and became the nucleus for the Green Standard. It may be recalled that the new dynasty in the beginning of its career, created four princes from the four chief Chinese generals who supported them, namely, Wu San-kwei, Kêng Chung-ming, Shang K'o-hsi, and K'ung Yu-teh, and granted them fiefs in the southern part of China, in Yunnan, Kwangtung, Fukien, and Kwangsi respectively.[18]

[17] *Chinese Repository*, XX, 252 f. *Journal* North China Branch Royal Asiatic Society, n. s. XXII, 3-5.

[18] Li Ung-bing, *Outlines of Chinese History*, pp. 358-368. *Cf.* J. Ross,

Under the leadership of Wu San-kwei and the two other surviving princes, Yunnan, Kwangtung, and Fukien broke out in revolt in 1673. They were successful for a time, and held most of southern and western China in their grasp, also some of the north; but met their match in the energetic young K'anghsi (1662-1722), who was destined to rank among the greatest rulers of China. A long war between the able General Wu and the powerful emperor raged until 1678, when Wu died while besieging Yunghsing, Hunan, and the rebellion gradually simmered down. But it left serious results behind. The Manchus henceforth reformed their plan of government in the Chinese territories by scattering the authority within the province between civil and military officials, and among different grades of officials within each group.[10]

The development of that policy in the reign of K'anghsi and of the succeeding emperors had portioned out the civil and military power in any province to at least two or three and at most to eight or ten different centers of authority. On the military side the viceroy and governor had indirect control of all the provincial troops through their control of the provincial treasury. But each had direct command only over the five or six thousand men in his guard.

The Tartar general stationed in or near the capital city of the viceroy checked the latter with a force of nearly equal size, and outranked him in the national capital. Similarly the governors were checked by the highest provincial military officer the *t'ituh*, who was nominally in command of all the provincial forces, and, in the military hierarchy, had the same grade as the

The Manchus, p. 453. The prince of Kwangsi died early, committing suicide, and left only a daughter who did not succeed to the principality. However, she married the Tartar general of that province and thus secured a measure of control.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 368 f.

governor. Occasionally the *t'ituh* was at the provincial capital, but oftener he was at a large city in another part of the province. These three independent commands, that of the viceroy or governor, that of the Tartar general, and that of the *t'ituh,* were the three major groups.

But in reality even the *t'ituh* found his power hampered by the officers below him, the *tsungping,* or commanders of divisions. Although the latter could communicate to the war department in Peking only through the *t'ituh,* and in theory accepted the latter's orders, they were actually urged rather than commanded. They formed, in fact, practically independent units, stationed at various places, from which they could be moved with great difficulty. For they were generally associated with civil officials of corresponding rank, the *taot'ai,* or intendants, and their forces were distributed here and there at strategic centers in the principal cities, towns, and market places. These small forces were of great value for the minor civil officials, but any attempt to collect them together into larger units would leave the regular authorities helpless, exposed to just such difficulties as the bandits raised in Kwangsi from 1847 to 1850. These authorities would be slow, therefore, to allow them to leave the walls of the city where they were stationed.

In the central provinces there were other complications in the army of the Green Standard. The director general of grain transport, controlling the Grand Canal, and the superintendents of the rivers, Yellow and Yangtse, all had soldiers of this force under their command.

From the standpoint of K'anghsi this was an ideal system. In practice it could only work out if the various commanders, civil and military, were in complete harmony. But this was contrary to human nature, and the various commands were never able to work together very well. In fact, K'anghsi had ordered it so that they never

could join together to rebel against Peking, and for this purpose it was admirable.

In practice, therefore, the Green Standard was only slightly less static than the Banners. We must abandon the idea that the governor or the *t'ituh* could call together a large force in any given emergency. The commands were so divided and scattered, that at most the capital and important cities could be defended. The Green Standard was far more useful for garrison duty than for service in the field. They might help in putting down mutiny in other commands, a viceroy's force, for example, helping to prevent mutiny in a *t'ituh's* or *tsungping's* command; or they might be used to put down minor disturbances in the country places. As against great bodies of rebels it was difficult, if not impossible, to bring together a force strong enough, except by recruiting new soldiers; and if that were done, coöperation among the different officers was even harder to secure.

The proportion of infantry, cavalry, and garrison troops differed from province to province, but in fourteen provinces the garrison forces outnumbered the other two combined. In 1850 the total for China was: cavalry, 87,100, infantry, 194,815, garrison, 336,404, in all 618,319. By provinces they were distributed as follows:

Province	*Divisions or Commands*	*Stations*	*Total cost, taels*	*Cavalry*	*Infantry*	*Garrison*	*Totals*
Chihli,	10	138	1,575,360	12,829	12,049	24,311	49,108
Shansi,	3	53	419,850	4,496	7,469	13,668	25,633
Shantung,	5	41	568,720	3,572	2,087	19,217	24,876
Honan,	3	35	315,660	2,563	.....	11,033	13,596
Kiangsu,	8		954,080				
Anhui,	2	89	113,470	4,126	10,433	31,251	45,810
Kiangsi,	3	38	262,150	982	2,010	7,787	10,779
Chekiang,	7	62	846,950	2,196	10,791	23,572	36,739
Fukien,	11	78	1,398,470	3,786	24,869	32,780	61,435

Province	Divisions or Commands	Stations	Total cost, taels	Cavalry	Infantry	Garrison	Totals
Kwangtung,	11	95	1,463,860	2,183	22,108	42,616	66,907
Kwangsi,	4	47	522,400	1,505	8,222	12,805	22,532
Ssuch'uan,	7	79	888,240	4,036	11,511	18,289	33,836
Hupeh,	5	42	533,450	2,572	5,218	14,262	22,052
Hunan,	4	53	608,720	2,262	7,065	16,477	25,804
Shensi,	7	92	1,023,407	12,390	17,589	12,085	42,065
Kansu (E & W),	9	116	1,395,110	22,493	23,358	10,829	56,680
Yunnan,	9	53	875,870	2,538	17,229	15,477	35,244
Kweichow,	6	67	728,330	2,571	12,807	29,765	45,143
			Extra 168,000				
Totals,	114	1,178	14,662,650	87,100	194,815	336,404	618,319

In order of precedence the cavalry stood highest, soldiers being promoted from one branch to the other.[20]

The military officers were recruited in the same way as civil officials, no distinction being made between army and navy. In addition to admission through the examinations, whereby military masters and doctors were eligible to appointments, claim to office might rest on four grounds: hereditary rank in the national nobility from the grade of duke down, including fifth official rank; sons of officers brevetted because of their father's rank; sons of officers brevetted because of the violent death of the father in the service of the country; and promotion from the lower ranks for efficiency.[21]

Claim to office and actual appointment were, however, two distinct matters. Three methods of making appointments were followed. In certain of the grades, especially from lieutenant up to lieutenant colonel, men who had been chosen in the regular way were sent out into the

[20] The tables are taken from the *Chinese Repository*, XX, the summary being on page 365. We must remember, of course, that this represents the number paid for. The rolls were heavily padded, without doubt.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 294 ff.

provinces to await vacancies. In certain of the provinces[22] a second method was for the viceroy, governor, or *t'ituh* to recommend men for promotion from the active lists, practically on the basis of seniority. In these provinces it was understood that for each time men were so promoted the other method should be used before making another promotion. A third method was to grant appointments by way of promotion for worth or merit alone. For the grades below lieutenant colonel the head of the provincial government might make the selection, for the higher ranks the appointment came from Peking on recommendation of these officers. Sometimes in the case of those engaged in warfare, promotion or promise of promotion came as a special reward for bravery in the field.

Military officials were graded exactly as their colleagues on the civil side, but were considered to be somewhat lower, grade for grade, because they represented merely physical prowess instead of learning and culture. The following list gives the name of the official, his grade and the number of men he commanded:

Grade	*Title*	*English equivalent*[23]	*Command*	*Number of men*
1 b	T'ituh	General or Admiral-in-chief	*piao*	7,500 in theory; actually 5,424 on the average
2 a	Tsungping	General or admiral of divisions.	*piao*	7,500 in theory; actually 5,424 on the average
2 a b	Fuchiang	Brigadier general or commodore	*hsieh*	uncertain number
3 a	Ts'anchiang	Colonel or captain	*ying*	525 on the average
3 b	Yuchi	Lieut. colonel	*ying*	
4 a	Tussu	Major or commander	*ying*	

[22] Hunan, Shensi, Kansuh, Ssuch'uan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, and Fukien.

[23] These tables and equivalents are from Wade's articles in the *Chinese Repository*, XX, 366-390. Mayers, *Chinese Government*, pp. 59-61, gives different equivalents, placing them one step lower in each case below brigadier general.

Grade	Title	English equivalent	Command	Number of men
5 a	Shoupei	Captain or lieutenant	*ying*	
6 a	Ch'ientsung	Lieutenant	*shao*	half a *ying*
7 a	Patsung	Sergeant or ensign	*shao*	half a *ying* or *ssu* (fifty to 100 men)
8 a	Wai-wei ch'ientsung	Second Sergeant	*shao*	half a *ying* or *ssu* (fifty to 100 men)
	Wai-wei patsung	Corporal	*shao*	half a *ying* or *ssu* (fifty to 100 men)
9 b	Er-wai wai-wei	Lance corporal		

Narrowing our consideration to the provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, where the Taiping rebellion arose, we find that there was an establishment of fourteen divisions, distributed in 142 encampments with a total complement of 3,688 cavalry, 30,330 infantry, and 55,421 garrison troops; but with so many divisions and encampments as to give an average of less than 240 cavalry and infantry and 390 garrison soldiers to each. If these small *ying*, each of less than 650 men all told, were scattered about throughout the two provinces—practically an immobile force, scarcely more than a constabulary—what wonder that the rebels had a chance to multiply and grow strong amongst the hills and mountains?

Its defects were chiefly revealed when emergencies required large bodies of men. Then the officials were unwilling to part with their feeble apportionment of the forces, while their superiors were anxious to avoid, if possible, the extreme outlays of money necessary to engage auxiliary troops, or fill up the complement even of men supposed to be enrolled. Each magistrate, whose tenure of office at best was precarious, would try, either by concealing the seriousness of a rising in his district, by buying off the bandits, or in some way by persuading them to move to some other district, to avoid reporting to the governor any such uprising till it was fairly out of hand. Similarly, the governor, hoping against hope that in some way it might be crushed or driven outside the

province to another jurisdiction, would also conceal its serious character from Peking.

Reasons for such concealment lay in the fear of dismissal for incompetence in letting a disturbance spring up under one's very eyes, and in the fear of financial loss. Every official, civil or military, had to make heavy outlays in connection with appointment and investiture. Naturally he regarded this outlay as capital invested from which he must secure the profits during his term of office. Dismissal or heavy expenditures for emergencies endangered his financial career, sometimes beyond repair.

In the armies a favorite method of corruption among the commanders was to charge to the provincial government the wages and allowances of a full quota of soldiers and horses, whilst actually keeping but a fraction of this number in service, and scaling down the legal allowances of those who remained to the lowest possible point. The three kinds of troops were therefore constantly undermanned and were largely composed of elderly and incapable men. When an inspection drew near or if the necessities of the case required larger armies, strong countrymen or laborers would be recruited for the occasion. With insufficient drill they took their places in the ranks as the actual fighting force.[24] Among the complaints raised by Chinese critics themselves, to show the central government why their soldiers could meet neither Taipings nor foreigners, the following counts appear. In the first place, the ranks are not kept full, officers reporting to their superiors only the numbers and not the names of the soldiers on their lists, thus making it impossible to check them. Pay was therefore drawn for soldiers who

[24] The article by Wade quotes from several of the censors to this effect, and these complaints are summarised in this paragraph. *Chinese Repository*, XX, 419 ff.

had no existence. In the second place, drill was neglected, making the men actually employed count for very little. Third, the officers used the men in the ranks as menials; they moreover filched from them some of their rightful pay and allowances, thus driving them into league with bandits and robbers. Fourth, they were often recruited from among the vagabonds, a circumstance that had the same effect as depriving them of their pay, or at least helps to account for their worthlessness and incapacity. Once more, many of them, owing to lack of drill, of knowledge of archery, or the use of firearms, or to their general incompetence, were cowards who ran from the enemy.[25] Moreover, substitutes were employed, who had little heart in the task and deserted at the first chance.

Allowing for exaggerations, this picture is gloomy enough. The war against the British had revealed the fatal defect of this force, yet no apparent effort had been made to remedy the evils of the system. Even the supernumeraries called in to augment the forces at Canton in 1839-1842 had been disbanded, and the government had no good troops to oppose to the well-drilled but poorly armed followers of the Taipings. Even when imperial commissioners were hurried to the scene as virtual dictators (but without power to raise revenues and hence deprived of one of the prime essentials of a dictator), or the Tartar general was ordered from Canton to take the field in person, they were without sufficient strength. An entirely new army had to be devised, and this was the work accomplished by Tsêng Kuo-fan.

B. *The Civil Government.*

If the military establishment thus failed to meet the need in a crisis, the civil government was not a whit

[25] In the early stages of the rebellion Chow T'ien-chioh wrote to this effect to the governor of Hupeh. His letter is given in chapter VI.

better. For it, too, was organised on the principle of dividing the power among many rather than concentrating it into the hands of a few.

In the capital two great bureaus shared the responsibility for administration. The grand secretariat which stood at the head in the Ming Dynasty was now the lesser of the two, having been transformed into an imperial court of archives with four secretaries, two Manchus and two Chinese, two assistant secretaries, a Manchu and a Chinese, and ten assistants. Its duty was to secure information of all that was happening throughout China that through it the head of the state might be in touch with the subordinate governing bodies.[1]

Above it stood the Manchu council of state. Originating as a military council, the latter had developed into a privy council which took precedence over the grand secretariat.[2] Daily, between the hours of four and six in the morning, its meetings were held to transact affairs of state. Its membership ordinarily consisted of five ministers who held office in some of the executive departments. While the grand secretariat was a means of communication, this body was the highest source of authority under the emperor.

The executive department consisted, as in the earlier dynasties, of six boards, each headed by two presidents and four vice presidents, half of them Manchus and half Chinese. In addition, the boards of revenue, war, and punishments had superintendents. These six boards were: (1) The Board of Civil Office, with four bureaus, directing the civil service of the empire; (2) The Board of Revenue, with fourteen departments, having control of the territorial government and the revenues; (3) The

[1] Mayers, *Chinese Government*, pp. 14 f.; Williams, *Middle Kingdom*, I, 417, 419.

[2] Mayers, pp. 12 f.

Board of Rites, with four departments, attached to which was the bureau of music; (4) The Board of War, with four departments, directing military affairs, and, until the end of the century, the navy and postal service; (5) The Board of Punishments, which coöperated with the Censorate and the Grand Court of Revision, to review the decisions of provincial judges, and (6) The Board of Works, with four departments, having general charge of public works all over China.[3]

Two special departments must be added to the above list. One of these, which arose out of the relations between China and Mongolia, was the Mongolian superintendency, organised like the six boards, but having only a single president. Prior to the separate organisation of a department of foreign affairs Chinese relations with Russia were under its jurisdiction, in addition to affairs of Mongolia, the Mohammedan Begs, and the tributary tribes beyond the borders of China.[4]

The second of these was the Censorate, which coöperated with the Board of Punishment and the Court of Revision, to revise criminal cases and consider appeals. But even more important than this was its service as a board of inspectors keeping close watch over the deeds of officials, both at the capital and in the provinces. It made recommendations to the throne concerning the punishment of those worthy of censure, holding over the heads of inefficient or corrupt officials degradation or even dismissal.[5] Suggestions for reforms of abuses also originated with this body.

Not until after the war with the allies did the need for a distinct foreign office make itself felt. Compelled then to open up the country to diplomatic intercourse, a special council rather than a department was organised.

[3] Mayers, p. 17; Williams, I, 421-428.

[4] Williams, I, 429 f.

[5] *Ibid.*, I, 431 f.

This was known as the Tsungli Yamen. Its members, ten in number at first, were taken from among the presidents and vice presidents of the various boards, including a majority of the Council of State. In a sense, therefore, it might be considered as a committee of that supreme body. Routine work was carried on by a staff of secretaries borrowed at first from the Council of State. Under this Council of Foreign Affairs the viceroys of Chihli and Nanking were designated as superintendents of trade.[c]

Thus the central government showed, instead of departments heading up in one responsible chief, boards, a cabinet, and a council each having a committee at the head. In all likelihood the actual power was exercised by a few men, but on paper at least it was widely scattered. On the whole this cumbersome machinery appears to have done its work fairly well.

In provincial government the Manchus appear to have adopted the arrangements of their predecessors with modifications. The great rulers of this foreign dynasty avoided the mistake of the Mongols in trying to rule directly, and worked with and through the Chinese. The fifteen provinces of the Ming period were increased to eighteen by dividing Shensi into Shensi and Kansuh, Kiangnan into Kiangsu and Anhui, and Hukwang into Hupeh and Hunan, but their former unity was somewhat preserved by placing these divided areas under the same viceroy. Manchuria was also divided into three divisions, which, at the time we are considering, were all on a military basis. Fêngtien, the first to become organised into a regular province, did not receive this new government until 1876.

Over the eighteen provinces of China proper were eight viceroys and sixteen governors. The eight viceregal domains were: 1. Chihli. 2. The two Kiang, com-

[c] Mayers, pp. 15 f.

prising Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Anhui—the name arose when as yet Kiangnan was undivided. 3. The two Kwang, Kwangtung and Kwangsi. 4. Hukwang, Hupeh and Hunan. 5. Ssuch'uan. 6. Minche, Fukien and Chekiang. 7. Shenkan, consisting of Shensi and Kansuh. 8. Yunkwei, the provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow. In Chihli and Ssuch'uan the viceroy ruled directly, while in Shantung, Shansi, and Honan the governor ruled without being associated with a viceroy.

The viceroy or governor general held honorary position as a president of the Board of War *ex officio,* and as a junior president of the Board of Censors. The highest civil authority in the province was vested in him and he had special power over the military forces. In the period of struggle with the foreigners preceding the Opium War, he was sometimes superseded by a special official called an imperial commissioner, who had no administrative power within the province, but who represented the emperor for specific purposes and ranked above the viceroy. Sometimes—it was frequent during the Taiping rebellion—a viceroy would be granted the additional title of imperial commissioner in order to strengthen his position.

The executive duties of the office were shared by two staffs, one civil and one military. They furnished employment for the numerous expectant officials. These expectant officials were men who had gone through the routine of qualifying for office, many of them already having paid the fees for nomination, and were ranked as expectant magistrates, prefects, or intendants already designated to the province where they were to serve and put on waiting lists from which actual appointments were to be made. But some of them had to wait many months or many years without actually receiving an office, and from these expectant officials the viceroys and governors, and

even lower officials, recruited their chief secretaries. While direction of civil matters rested chiefly on the viceroy there was a special military secretariat having charge of the purely military functions of the office.[7]

One step below the viceroy in rank was the governor. At Peking he held honorary position as vice president of the Board of War *ex officio,* and a similar position in the Censorate. His actual duties are hard to distinguish from those of the viceroy. Where the two existed side by side in the same province they did not, apparently, stand in the relation of superior and subordinate, but rather in that of junior and senior partners. Like the viceroy, the governor had the power of life and death; he reviewed criminal cases. He was expected to oversee the conduct of the lower officials. All communications with the capital must be sent by lower officials through the governor, who with the viceroy, or separately, had the right to memorialise the throne.[8]

As we have already noted above, a military official, the Tartar general, shared high rank with these two officers in some of the provinces. If he was present with the governor and viceroy the three formed a special provincial council which deliberated on matters arising in connection with the provincial administration, to which council subordinate officials might be summoned.[9]

Below these highest officials were three, and in some cases four, provincial officials residing at the capital. They were the treasurer, judge, grain intendant, and salt controller.

Of these the treasurer ranked as a lieutenant governor, generally taking over the seals of office in case of a temporary vacancy. In the early part of the Ming Dynasty he

[7] See Williams, I, 438.
[8] Mayers, p. 33.
[9] Williams, I, 440.

had been the civil governor,[10] but now his duties were altogether financial.

The provincial judge exercised the chief judicial functions of the province, reviewing the decisions of the magistrates' courts. Together with the treasurer, the judge was supposed to be consulted on matters of civil appointment. But the limitation of the right of memorialising the throne brought it about that the viceroy and governor usually decided on all appointments and dismissals and only secured the consent of these two lower officers *pro forma*. In routine matters they made recommendations to the governor or viceroy. It is perhaps not altogether inappropriate to say that the four formed a provincial council of administration, holding in their hands the entire executive, legislative, judicial, and deliberative power. They composed, in fact, "the government."[11]

The salt controller was found in all the provinces, because the operation of the salt gabelle was universal. His duties were not territorial, but purely fiscal.[12]

In twelve of the provinces a grain intendant had charge of the taxes received in grain and forwarded to Peking. In the other provinces his duties fell to the treasurer.

One other important provincial officer, usually a man of very high rank, was the literary chancellor. He had general charge of educational matters and examinations in the province, being assisted in the M.A. examinations by special examiners sent from Peking to hold them at the provincial capital.

In general we may agree with Parker that each province was a complete satrapy, "in no way dependent upon any other state, except in so far that the poor ones dun the rich ones for the money which the central govern-

10 Mayers, p. 33.

11 Parker, *China*, p. 164.

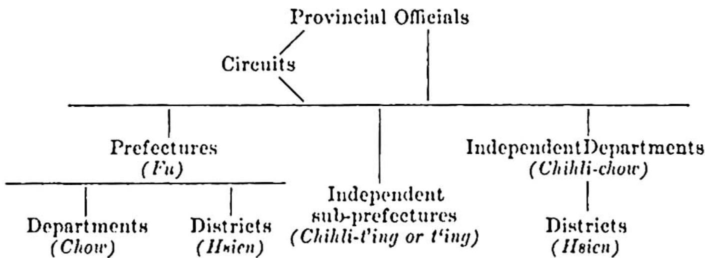
12 Mayers, pp. 38 f.

ment 'appropriates to them.' Each province has its own army, navy, system of taxation and its own social customs. It is only in connection with the salt trade and the navy that mutual concessions have to be made under a certain modicum of imperial control. In nearly all other matters the viceroys or governors 'move' each other; and occasionally different provinces jointly, interested in special questions, after thus 'moving' to a preliminary understanding, address the Emperor or the Board together.'' Under the necessities of the menacing foreign relations and of the needs of the navy, more unity was secured towards the end of the century than during the Taiping days.

While they possessed this amount of independence, the officials were checked in two directions. On the one hand, men from the central government were in the provinces keeping quiet watch over the higher officials, while they in turn had men similarly observing the lower officials in the districts. On the other hand, the gentry at the capital and in the larger towns, aided by the various popular organisations in villages and country districts, prevented the officials from becoming despotic or encroaching upon the customary rights of the people. None of the officials of the grade of district magistrate or above were permitted to serve in their own provinces. This rule, aimed to prevent the consolidation of official and popular interests to the detriment of the reigning house, carried out its purpose to some extent, but at the same time introduced into the civil government the same fatal weakness that characterised the military service, disunity and impotence. In times of great disturbance such as we are now studying, it effectually prevented the concentration of the national resources on the support of the armies in the field.

Within the province there was the same division of

power that obtained between provinces. There were six subdivisions of a province, one of them fiscal, the others territorial: (1) circuits, chiefly fiscal; (2) prefectures; (3) independent sub-prefectures; (4) independent departments; (5) departments subject to a prefecture; and (6) districts subject to a prefecture or independent department. A diagram may make their relationships clear.



The chief official of the circuit, generally known as the *taot'ai*, was officially known as the intendant of the circuit. He had a slight amount of control over two or more prefectures and was granted extensive military authority within his jurisdiction (whence the alternate title *ping pei tao*). Whenever he was located at a port of entry the administration of the maritime customs usually fell into his hands and in this connection he was styled the *hai-kwan chien-tuh*. His rank was usually assimilated to that of a foreign consul and, where no special bureau of foreign affairs existed, the *taot'ai* at a treaty port had general oversight of foreign affairs, subject to review by the governor or viceroy on more important issues.

The chief officer of the prefecture was called the *chih fu* or prefect. His duties are not clearly outlined, but he had some power in matters of judicial review. He is perhaps best described as a supervisor and means of communica-

tion between the higher provincial authorities on the one hand and the *chow* and *hsien* districts on the other.

Over the *t'ing* or independent sub-prefecture was placed the *t'ung chih.* The same term was also applied to the official subordinate to the prefect, and several special officers also bore the title. Some of these were given military power, others were in charge of water communications, and still others were placed over districts inhabited by aboriginal tribes. There were also revenue-police sub-prefects and police sub-prefects.[13] Ranking with these independent sub-prefectures were the independent departments; but the ordinary department, though different in name, was in reality practically the same as the district or *hsien.*

The presiding officials of the *chow* and *hsien* were the lowest functionaries appointed directly from Peking, and they were the ones who actually presided over the affairs of the common people and came in contact with them. They were the centers both of imperial and of local government—the lowest imperial officer and the "father and mother" of the people. Professor Parker well summarises their duties thus, speaking of the *hsien:* "He is judge in the first instance in all matters whatsoever, civil or criminal, and also governor of the gaol, coroner, sheriff, mayor, head surveyor, civil service examiner, tax collector, registrar, lord-lieutenant, oedile, chief bailiff, interceder with the gods; and in short, what the people always call him, 'father and mother' officer.'"[14]

Of the various ways in which he secured office we cannot speak here. Purchase was one of the commonest methods. Tsêng Kuo-fan in one of his letters speaks about a friend who had purchased a *hsien* magistracy at a cost of 7,000 strings of cash and a *chow* magistracy for

[13] Mayers, pp. 35 f.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

about 8,000.[15] Theoretically he was appointed on the basis of the examinations. In the performance of his multifarious duties he was surrounded by four classes of subordinates, having charge respectively of matters of general administration, secretarial duties, inspection and revenue, and the maintenance of order. Below them were those harpies, the *yamen* runners, who brought misery into the lives of all those who were so unfortunate as to fall into their hands.

The chief sources of income in a district were the profits which the magistrate could squeeze out of the taxes and the administration of justice. There were pickings in the way of "inquests (blind eyes), licenses, permits, presents from gentry, transfers of land, posts, storage of official grain, purveyances, etc."[16]

While local government thus headed up in the magistrate, the actual power was very largely in the hands of the people themselves, or, perhaps more correctly, of the local gentry. The police functions of a countryside were under the care of the *t'uan-tsung* or *lien-tsung*. The peace and well-being of a village or countryside were largely in the hands of a *ti-pao* or *pao-cheng*. This person, who, together with the *t'uan-tsung*, represented the people, was not an official, but had great importance in local government. He endeavored to prevent cases from reaching the regular officials by attempting to settle "out of court" matters involving trespass, financial disputes, divorces, and other difficulties where mediation could be accepted. In connection with other village heads the *ti-pao* could exercise many of the minor duties of government which the Chinese system left to local enterprise.[17] It was possible for him to exercise much influence for

[15] A string of cash, or one thousand cash, varied in exchange value, but was in general equivalent to a dollar or more.

[16] Parker, pp. 173-175.

[17] Douglas, *Society in China*, pp. 111-113.

good, but if his own standard of conduct was not high his power for evil was considerable. He could easily use his position to levy blackmail on and shield vice.[18] The *ti-pao* served as buffers between the populace on the one hand and the officials on the other; without doubt they have had much influence throughout the long history of China to prevent despotism and too great encroachment on the rights of the people.

This slight sketch possibly helps to make clear how difficult it was to bring the resources of the whole province or of a group of provinces together against a formidable rebellion. Each viceroy or governor was left measureably independent, yet carefully watched. Similarly the districts and departments through the prefectures were separately kept under slight control from the provincial capital. All through China we find authority separately delegated, and little interference was tolerated in the actual administration. The power of removal was the chief weapon of the higher source of authority. None of the districts or departments could work together except in roundabout ways through the provincial capital, there being little or no direct communication between magistrates or between prefects. On the side of the people most matters of daily life and of neighborhood life were settled without reference to the officials, and every magistrate was compelled to limit his actions by this ancient customary practice. Thus civil government, admirably devised to scatter power and insure imperial supremacy, worked well only when profound peace reigned. It broke down in times of war because coöperation and combination were too difficult.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 16.