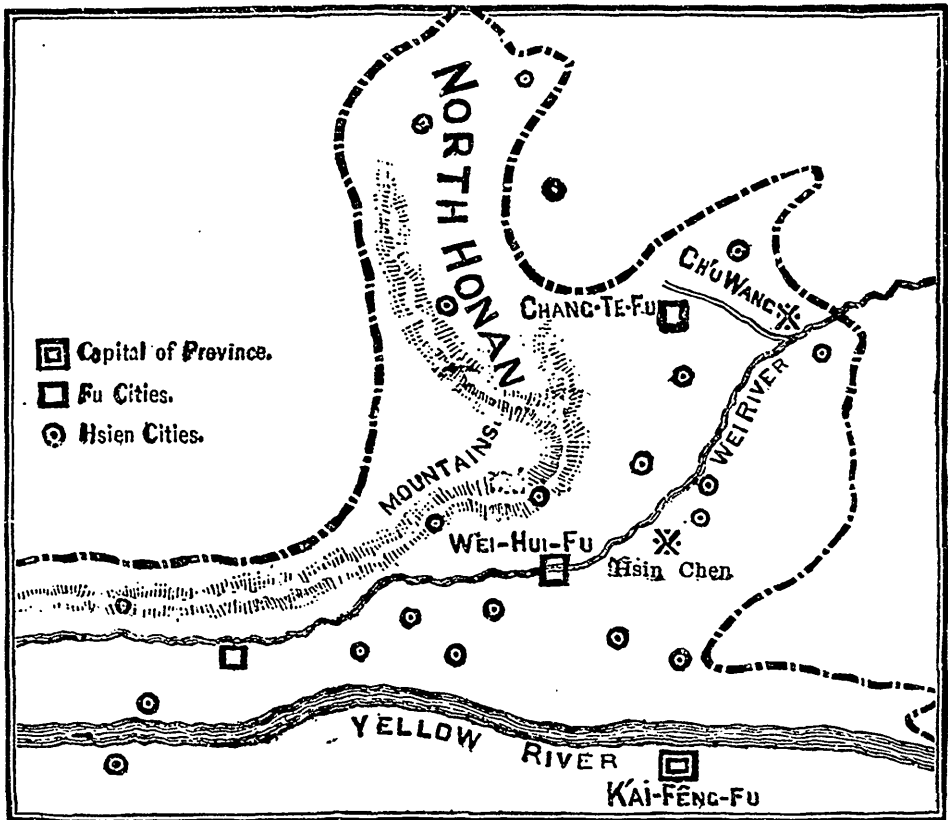


a pleasing effect to the otherwise treeless landscape. These trees are chiefly willow, sometimes elm and ash, and even pine.

Honan is very fertile. Cotton is largely cultivated. Wheat, barley, corn, millet and other cereals abound. The climate is a milder edition of the mildest parts of Ontario, "like that of Tennessee" says one. The rivers rarely freeze over, except for a short time in a specially severe season. The snow fall is light, and it does not often lie more than a few days at a time. In winter the temperature seldom drops to zero, while in summer it rises to over 90

troubles. The foreigners were blamed for keeping away the rain.

Most of the famines, however, have been caused by floods. During the rainy season, in July and August, every little stream becomes a rushing torrent. But specially dreaded is the overflow of the great river. Probably no other in the world has caused so much destruction as the Huang Ho. When it emerges from the hill country to the west, and reaches the level plains, its sluggish flow allows the mud to deposit and fill the river bed, and when the water rises it is driven out to seek new channels.



Map of Honan, North of the Yellow River.

degrees for days at a time, and even reaches 100 to 150 degrees.

Though fertile, it has frequent famines, sometimes caused, as in India, by drought, but more often by floods. From one or other of these causes there is almost always a famine in some part of the immense empire. There are no railways to carry the plenty of one district to the scarcity of another, and even if there were each district has enough to do to supply its own needs. Drought and threatened scarcity was one cause of unrest in Honan in the recent

For generations the people have tried to keep the river in its course by building dykes on either side of it, raising them gradually year by year as was found necessary, until in some places the river bed is higher than the surrounding country. When the floods come these embankments frequently give way, and the country is flooded perhaps for many miles, often with great loss of property and even life. On this account the river is called "China's Sorrow."

Thus, despite its fertility, famine has