

their zeal. With other Chinese he was the proselytizer, fearlessly exposing their errors, and exhorting them to repent and believe the gospel. Over young men his influence was peculiarly beneficial. In fact, whether the individuals were young or old, the case was, as was once observed by Mr. Chalmers,—‘Whenever you see any one having a long and frequent intercourse with Hung-Jin, you may be sure there is something good going on in him.’

“In 1855, the province of Canton was seething with insurrection, and different parties of rebels, who had become acquainted with Hung-Jin’s antecedents and whereabouts, made application to him, and begged him to head their movement, in the name of the Tai-ping dynasty. He would have nothing to do with them, however, partly because they professed no religious principles and were members of the Triad Society, and partly because his intercourse with the missionaries had shaken his confidence even in the rebellion directed by his relative. As it gradually came out that portentous and blasphemous errors were being mixed up by Hung sew tsuen, and the Eastern King, with doctrines which they had first put forward, his sorrow was profound and bitter.

“The writer recollects hearing him say, on one occasion, that success had turned their heads; that they had proved unequal to the work which they had undertaken; and that, indeed, he doubted whether the regeneration of China was likely to be promoted by any course of rebellion and violence. It was suggested to him that he should dismiss all thoughts of meddling with those who were given to change, and not merely content himself with, but find both the business and happiness of the remainder of his life in simply preaching the gospel to his countrymen. The counsel was seriously revolved by him, and it is believed he schooled his mind into an approval of it, and strove sincerely to adopt it as his rule. But it would not do. The old rebel feelings—and there was much of patriotism, and something higher than patriotism, in them—only slumbered.

“In the beginning of 1858, Hung-Jin went up to Canton, and assisted at the opening of a place for public worship, within the walls, on the third Sabbath in February. It was the first time the gospel had been publicly and formally preached in the Chinese language in that city.—He remained there, but as the missionaries returned, some were afraid that his antecedents would be discovered by the Mandarins, and connexion with him prove rather injurious to their cause. It was thought advisable, therefore that he should return to Hong-kong, and shortly after he determined to try and make his way to Nanking. He started for that place in disguise, in the beginning of June, passed through the Mei-ling pass, and gradually worked his way to Hoophi.

“It now appears that he got to Nanking in the third month of the last Chinese year, was kindly received by his old friend and patron, Tai-ping-wang, who gazetted him in the following month ‘as the King Kan, the skilful and loyal military counsellor, attached to the army of the right of the palace,’ and, in fact constituted him his minister-in-chief.”