

HONAN.

I.

Name.—The word Honan means south of the river, and the name was given to this Province because the greater part of the territory included in it lay to the south side of the *Huang Ho* or Yellow River.

Position.—Honan is one of the northern Provinces of China, situated on the western side of the Great Plain, and comprising some of the most fertile parts of that productive and densely settled portion of the Chinese Empire. On account of the central position it occupied, and the bountiful nature of its soil, the province received at an early date the name *Chung Hua Ti*, or the "Middle Flowery Land," afterwards enlarged into *Chung 'no*, or "Middle Kingdom." This last name the Chinese now apply to the Empire at large, desiring to indicate thereby that China is not only the geographical centre of the world, but also its centre of light and civilization. In form the province is somewhat like an irregular triangle. Its area is divided into three basins, that of the Yellow River on the north, the Huai river on the south, and the Han river on the southwest. Between the last named two rivers lies the Fuh-Niu-Shan range of mountains, about 300 miles in length. This mountain range has an elevation of 5,000 feet, and is crossed at Nan-Chaw by a remarkable pass about 30 miles long, which affords great facilities for trade and travel between the central and northern Provinces. Honan lies between the 32nd and 38th degrees of north latitude, and 112th and 121st degrees of east longitude.

Extent. The length of the province from north to south is 1,200 miles, and its breadth from east to west 1,190 miles. It embraces an area of 65,104 square miles, and contains about 41,666,560 acres.

Resources. The resources are extensive, but to a large extent undeveloped. This is unfortunately true of much of the mineral wealth of this vast Empire. The coal fields of the Province are reckoned at 10,000 square miles. Lime is plentiful in certain districts and iron in others. Cotton, silk and hemp are raised in considerable quantities throughout the Province. Among the fruits and vegetables grown in abundance may be mentioned