

against the Manchu rule. Hung's converts were mostly among this people, who soon took a strong stand against the misrule of the Tartars. The movement grew rapidly. From all sides recruits came to the rebel ranks, among them two women chiefs, each at the head of about two thousand men. Hung now proclaimed himself as sent by Heaven to drive out the Tartars—whom he declared to be examples of all that was base and vile—and to place a Chinese emperor on his country's throne.

Putting his forces in march, Hung made a remarkable progress of about one thousand miles to Woo-chang on the Yang-tse-Kiang and down that stream, the army fighting its way through all opposition. When towns and cities submitted their people were spared. Slaughter awaited those who resisted. Food and clothing were obtained by requisition on the people. The imperial troops were hurled back in defeat wherever met. Before battle it was the custom of the insurgents to kneel down and invoke the protection of God, after which they would charge their enemies with resistless zeal. City after city fell before them, and the whole empire regarded their march with surprise and dismay.

The converts professed faith in the Christian Scriptures, of which an imperfect translation was distributed among them. Hung announced that in case of success the Bible would be substituted for the works of Confucius. The Sabbath was strictly observed among them, forms of prayer to the Supreme Being were in constant use, and Englishmen who came among them spoke in the highest terms of their