NOTES ON FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF TAIPING LEADERS

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The Christian element in the Taiping rebellion has been of special interest to interpreters of the movement. It was this non-Chinese factor which made this rebellion different from all previous Chinese rebel movements. Through its Christian elements the rebels were expressing one aspect of the effect of increasing western influence on Chinese national life.

The precise relation of Christianity to the origin and development of the movement has been a matter of debate. One aspect of the problem is the relationship established between family members and friends of the originators of the movement and the missionaries.

On the one hand, there was a tendency for these relations and friends to seek out the missionary in the course of the disruption to their lives caused by their connection with the rebel leaders. They especially looked to the missionaries for financial assistance in their efforts to join the movement once it had been successfully established at Nanking.

On the other hand, the missionary vision and hope had been stimulated by the early, but confusing, reports of the Christian nature of the rebel movement. They welcomed the opportunity to learn more particulars about the movement from first-hand accounts. It was the small book written by the Rev. Theodore Hamberg in Hong Kong on The Visions of Hung Siu-Tschuen which first gave the outside world detailed knowledge of the Christian influence upon the rebels. Most of the subsequent accounts of the origins of the movement draw heavily upon the material recorded by Hamberg, who received it through Hung Hsiu-ch'uan's cousin Hung Jen-kan.

The missionaries were eager to use the refugees, who were physically cut off from the movement by the troops of the Imperial

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Government, for they hoped that through these converts, whom they financed in their efforts to reach the areas controlled by the Taiping government, they might influence the movement. Since they believed that these converts who had been under their instruction were better grounded in the fundamentals of the Christian faith than the Taiping leaders at Nanking, the missionaries expected their converts to strengthen the Christian element in the movement and correct some of its reported misconceptions in doctrine and aberrations in practice. They also hoped that through the good offices of these converts, once they had established themselves at Nanking, the missionary would, in time, be able to join them.

The most prominent of these individuals was Hung Jen-kan a distant cousin of the Taiping leader Hung Hsiu-ch’uan. He became the Kan Wang (Shield King) in the Taiping government at Nanking in 1859 and was executed in November, 1864, after the fall of Nanking.

He accompanied Hung Hsiu-ch’uan to Canton for Christian instruction under the Rev. Issachar Roberts in 1847. In an appendix to Dr. Margaret M. Coughlin’s unpublished doctoral thesis, Strangers in the House: J. Lewis Shuck and Issachar Roberts, First American Baptist Missionaries to China (University of Virginia, 1972), there is a letter of Roberts to Shuck, dated 27 March, 1847, giving details of Hsiu-ch’uan’s spiritual development. After a month’s instruction, they were sent out on a preaching tour in the course of which they returned to their home district, Hua-hsien, Kwangtung. Jen-kan did not return to Canton with Hsiu-ch’uan for further studies but remained at home to study medicine.

While Hung had been preaching near his home in Kwangtung and studying with Roberts at Canton, Feng Yün-shan, a friend of his who had also been influenced by Christian ideas, had been gathering a group of followers in Kwangsi. They adopted the name of “The Society of God Worshippers” and were the nucleus from which developed the Taiping movement. The usual accounts of the movement attribute its origins to the activity of Hung Hsiu-ch’uan. This interpretation rests heavily on the account given in Hamberg’s booklet The Visions of Hung Siu-Tschuen and Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection, published in Hong Kong in 1854, and on various documents of the movement which were written after the death of Feng Yün-shan. There are several contemporary references which
point to Feng as the more active leader in the movement's initial phases. An account given of him by a deserter from the Taiping army and a former member of Gützlaff's Chinese Christian Union, published in *The Hong Kong Register*, 27 September, 1853, states that when he met Feng in Kwangsi, they recognized each other as fellow members of the Union. According to the account, Feng had studied under Gützlaff. I have carefully gone over the rather detailed reports Gützlaff sent back to Germany reporting the activities of the Chinese Christian Union, hoping that he might have mentioned Feng, but I was unable to find him named. Gützlaff, however, does report trips made by his workers into Kwangsi, where they preached and distributed tracts. These reports were published in the *Calwer Missionsblatt* and *Gaihan's Berichte*.

When Hung Hsiu-ch'uan left Roberts and Canton in the late spring of 1847, he travelled to Kwangsi in search of Feng, arriving there in August. In the *Journal of Roberts* published in the *Southern Baptist Missionary Journal*, vol. 2, no. 10 (March 1848), under date of 25 June, 1847, Roberts states that two of his followers were appointed to visit the inquirer Hung in a different province.

Several efforts were initiated to bring the families and followers of the Taiping leaders to Kwangsi from Kwangtung, but the plans were frustrated by the authorities. Some were caught and imprisoned, others scattered and fled. The friends and relatives of the leaders of the Taipings were rooted out of their native districts and at the same time cut off from the troops of the Rebellion as it advanced from Kwangsi to Nanking. Some appear to have had branches of their clan settled in Hsin-an District, adjacent to Hong Kong. Many of the people moved in and out of Hong Kong. These movements left traces in the reports and records of the Missions, but they are not complete enough to provide a comprehensive account.

The various adventures and travels of Hung Jen-kan before he reached Nanking in 1856 are documented in the writings of Jen Yu-wen. For an English language account see his *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement* (New Haven, 1973). A few additional details are provided by missionary archival sources.

In 1852, Hung Jen-kan was brought to Hong Kong by a young tailor from Lilong (Li-lang 李lang) in Hsin-an District. He was the grandson of a clansman of Hung, who had befriended Jen-kan in his wanderings. The grandson Fung (Hung?) Sen had been under
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the instruction of the Rev. Theodore Hamberg, preparatory to baptism. On 26 April, 1852, Fung Sen introduced Hung Jen-kan to Hamberg. Two days later, Fung was baptized with ten others at the small chapel of the Basel Missionary Society in Hong Kong. The entry in Hamberg's report lists him as "Fung Asen, aged 21 years, from Lilong, tailor's worker." When Hamberg left Hong Kong at the end of March, 1853 to establish a station at Pukak (Pu-kit, Hsin-an District), Fung Sen accompanied him. He was employed by the Mission as a watchman.

A biographical notice of one of the Taiping refugees, Li Tsin-kau (李正高), which was published in the missionary magazine of the Basel Society, Die Evangelischen Heidenboten, June, 1868, provides interesting sidelights on Hung Jen-kan's unsuccessful effort to reach Nanking in 1854. It also illustrates the connections established between missionaries and those who had been influenced by personal association with Hung Hsiu-ch'uan before he became the Taiping Wang.

Li Tsin-kau was a native of Wo Kuk Lyan, in the Ch'ing-yüan District, Kwangtung. Hung Hsiu-ch'uan had been a teacher in the household of the maternal grandfather of Li Tsin-kau, and Tsin-kau's father was a good friend of Hsiu-ch'uan. He had often heard his father tell of Hung and his visions. Was the father the Li Ching-fan who drew the attention of Hung to Liang A-fa's Christian tract? Hung himself often visited Wo Kuk Lyang. During these visits there would be discussions regarding the moral and political conditions of China and hopes expressed that these could be improved and the rule of Heaven (T'ien-kuo) established. Hung Hsiu-ch'uan and Li Tsin-kau discussed especially the benefits of fasting and abstaining from meats and the worship of idols. Tsin-kau remembered that Hung spoke often of the power of God to conquer the demons. He also spoke of Jesus as our Heavenly Brother who forgave men's sins, but this was not the main theme of Hung's thoughts, "It was though it had not much touched his heart ("Wenigstens sei es ihm nicht sehr zu Herzen gegangen").

Li Tsin-kau was caught up in the displacement of the former friends and relatives of the Taiping leaders. When the authorities frustrated the plan to join the Taiping movement in Kwangsi, he fled to Macao. He lost track of his brothers and father, and later believed that they were imprisoned. His mother was taken in and
cared for by friends of the family, and his wife and children fled to her parents’ home. Tsin-kau tried to make a living by travelling about the area between Macao and Canton offering his services as a *fung-shui* expert. After a time, he moved east to the districts of Kuei-shan and Po-lo. After more than a year, he ventured to return to his home district. Here he met up with Hung Jen-kan. The two of them, accompanied perhaps by other friends and relatives, came down to Hong Kong hoping that they could from here find a way to join Hung Hsiu-ch’uan at Nanking, the capital of the Taiping Kingdom. As Hakkas, they sought out the missionaries of the Basel Society, which had devoted itself to work among this dialect group. Jen-kan met the Rev. Theodore Hamberg for a second time at Pukit in Hsin-an District. Here he received further instruction in preparation for baptism and was baptized on 20 September, 1853. Hamberg reports six baptisms on this date. The first was “Fung or Hung, from Faheen, aged 31 years, teacher and doctor”, of whom he remarks that he was a relative and youthful friend of Hung Hsiu-ch’uan, the Taiping Wang. Four others were members of the Kong family of Lilong, and the sixth was “Fung Tet-schin, from Thatipun, aged 31 years, schoolteacher”.

Li Tsin-kau did not remain at Pukat with Jen-kan but continued on to Hong Kong with two friends Khi-sem and A-kap. Here they were welcomed by the missionaries and taken on as inquirers to receive instruction. The Rev. Rudolph Lechler had come down from his station in the country to await the arrival from Germany of his fiancé. He assisted Hamberg in the instruction of the new arrivals. The basis of the instruction was the Lutheran catechism. In the light of it, Li Tsin-kau confessed he previously had held a distorted view of the Christian faith. He had understood, under the influence of Hung Hsiu-ch’uan, “the discourses concerning the power of God and false idols, but had no understanding of sin and forgiveness through Christ”. His prayer had been patterned after a form taught by Hsiu-ch’uan. After three months instruction, he was baptized by Hamberg, although on the urging of Hung Jen-kan, he had some years previous been baptized by Hung Hsiu-ch’uan. The Day-book of the Rev. Lechler in the Archives of the Basel Missionary Society under date of 28th February, 1854, has the entry of the baptism of four who were instructed by Hamberg at Hong Kong: “Li Khi Lim, from Tseang ye, Li Hin Long, from Tseang ye, Li Chin Kau, from Tseang ye, and Fun Shen Fong from Tung
Kwun.” In September there is an entry for “Li Khi Sen, from Tseang ye”. This is probably the friend Khi-sem who was one of Tsin-kau’s travelling companions.

The Hong Kong missionaries were delighted with the arrival of these refugees who were willing to receive Christian instruction and baptism. They seized upon their desire to join their relatives and friends in Nanking as a God-given opportunity to put the Taiping movement upon a more solid Christian foundation. There had been much discussion regarding the type of religious belief held by the Taiping leaders, and serious doubt had arisen regarding their interpretation of Christianity. The Rev. Hamberg hoped to raise sufficient funds through his publication of The Visions of Hung Siu-Tschuen to finance Hung Jen-kan’s trip to Nanking. In reporting to the Mission Society he states:

I have spent much on Fung [the Hakka version of the surname Hung] and his friends, and in order not to put a burden on the Mission have translated into English the account of the first [i.e. Hung Jen-kan] and written a small book which is now ready to be printed. Fung and his two friends left today for Shanghai. I have furnished them with the three different translations of the Old and New Testaments, Barth’s Biblical History, Genahr’s Catechism, a calendar and other writings, also a map in Chinese of the world, a map of China and one of Palestine, a model of a steel punch, copper matrices and the usual types, in order to show how Chinese characters can be printed in the European manner. In addition a few trifles, such as telescope, compass, thermometer, knives, etc. I am often asked if I will go to Nanking, however I have decided, and will not change my mind, That I will not go until I have received a regular and definite invitation to go. I have sought to establish what my obligations and duties are in this matter. The people who were brought to me I have baptized, instructed and assisted them on the way insofar as I was able. I believe that Fung respected me and would like to see me in Nanking, as he so often said. However, we cannot be definite about it, because we do not yet know if he will be successful in arriving at Nanking, and further, we cannot be sure that his friend there will welcome the idea, or that no obstacle will be placed in the way of foreigners, or that they have a real desire to be led deeper into the truths of God’s words.
In a word, everything is very uncertain. We must lay the future of the whole mission, even as our own, into the hands of God. Hamberg’s earthly future was quite short for he died nine days after writing the above.

The fortunes of Hung Jen-kan and Li Tsin-kau in their efforts to reach Nanking by way of Shanghai were also unfortunate. Hamberg had given them a letter of recommendation to the London Missionary Society agent at Shanghai, the Rev. W. H. Medhurst. Medhurst housed them on their arrival in the Mission Hospital. In Shanghai they met a friend from Canton whom they invited to share these quarters. This friend smoked opium, and when Medhurst happened to come into the room and saw his opium pipe on the bed, they were all told to leave. A dispute arose between Jen-kan and Tsin-kau, with Jen-kan charging Tsin-kau with carelessness and sensuality. Tsin-kau remarks:

At that time, I was truly in distress, for I had no friend in the world and no money with which to return to Hong Kong. I felt I must certainly come to misfortune. But this was the point when a change occurred in my heart. I was altogether fallen into the depth, then God took me in judgment of my sins, and the Spirit of God did its powerful work in me. The Shepherd of my life took over and from now on I gave my life to him. The Lord changed Medhurst’s heart and he gave me money to return to Hong Kong.

Jen-kan also returned to Hong Kong, no way being open to pass through the Imperial lines to reach Nanking.

When Li Tsin-kau arrived back in Hong Kong, he immediately sought out the Rev. Lechler, who gave him two dollars to return to his home up-country. After visiting his family, he came down to the Basel Mission station at Pu-kit and was taken on as a helper. When hostilities broke out in 1856 over the Arrow-lorcha incident, Lechler had to leave Pu-kit and retire to Hong Kong. He brought with him Li Tsin-kau whom he placed in the newly opened hospital of the Berlin Missionary Society operated by Dr. Heinrich Gocking. Li served as an overseer and doctor’s assistant until the hospital was forced to close in 1859 for lack of funds.

Meanwhile his former travelling companion, Hung Jen-kan had made a second and successful effort to reach Nanking. Being estab-
lished there in a responsible position, he wrote to Li Tsin-kau inviting him to join him. Tsin-kau set off for Nanking but turned back before arriving there, because, as he claimed, he had heard alarming accounts of the religious and moral aberrations of Hung Hsiu-ch’uan. On his return to Hong Kong, he was taken on by Lechler as a helper in his ministry to the Hakka population in Hong Kong.

Li Tsin-kau continued as a valuable assistant in the Basel Mission in Hong Kong, serving as a catechist until his death in 1885. For some years in the 1860’s he was a travelling preacher, using Hong Kong as his home base. His mother, wife and children, and a younger brother joined him in Hong Kong and all of them became members of the Basel Society congregation on High Street, Saiyingpoon. In 1858, he mentions a brother, Schiu-siu, in California. The Eighth Report of the Berlin Society, for the years 1861 and 1862, mentions A-tat the unbaptized brother of the Basel Mission helper Lichenko.

Li Tsin-kau after his initial efforts to join the Taiping forces spent the remainder of his life serving the church in Hong Kong. However, his friend Hung Jen-kan became an important figure in the Taiping government under the title Kan Wang. Before assuming this political role, he also was a valued assistant in the Protestant Mission work in Hong Kong. While Li Tsin-kau worked among the Hakkas under the direction of the Rev. Rudolph Lechler, of the Basel Missionary Society, Hung Jen-kan worked with the Rev. Dr. James Legge, of the London Missionary Society, among the Cantonese speaking population.

Dr. Legge took an interest in the Taiping movement and saw within it a potential for providing a turning point in the relation of the Christian church with the whole of China. In the summer of 1853, he sent two of his assistants to Shanghai to open communication with the Taiping government so as to prepare the way for a missionary to enter Nanking. The delegation consisted of a long-time assistant in the London Missionary Society, Keuh A-gong, alias Wat Ngong 山內憎, and a young theological student of Dr. Legge’s school, Ng Mun-sow 巫文秀. Their efforts were unsuccessful, so after spending six months in Shanghai, they returned to Hong Kong.4

We have already noted the unsuccessful effort of Hung Jen-kan and Li Tsin-kau to reach Nanking by way of Shanghai in 1854. Upon returning to Hong Kong, Jen-kan became a language teacher
for the Rev. John Chalmers of the London Missionary Society, but soon he began to be used extensively in the various activities of the mission, preaching in their Lower Bazaar Chapel, visiting prisoners in the Goal, serving as an evangelist to the sick in the dispensary recently opened by Dr. Julius Hirschberg on Queen's Road West. Legge characterized him as “a man who has won my affection and esteem as few of his countrymen have done”, and he impressed Dr. Wong Foon, who had recently returned from Medical School at Edinburgh and was associated with Dr. Hirschberg in the dispensary, as “a man of great intelligence and considerable fluency of speech.”

In 1858, with the blessings of the Mission, Hung Jen-kan with a companion made another effort to reach Nanking, but this time travelling up through Canton and Kwangsi. In a letter dated 5 June 1858, the Rev. John Chalmers remarks on his and Jen-kan’s hopes:

“He has had a desire for a long time to reach his friends at Nanking and endeavour to impart to them the superior knowledge he has acquired, and I doubt not the fact that the present government is so hardly pressed from without had induced him to adventure upon the long and dangerous journey across the country from Canton in hopes that the Nanking party may be persuaded to seek an alliance with foreigners before it is too late. Of course his religious zeal is associated with patriotic feelings. We have always thought that if he could get among the Taiping people he might be the means of correcting many of their errors with regard to Christianity and to foreigners, from whom they have received it.”

The London Missionary Society at Hong Kong financed the trip and agreed to grant a monthly allowance of seven dollars to his family for ten months or until Jen-kan himself was able to provide for them.

In the course of his journey Jen-kan wrote five letters to the society at Hong Kong, but only three were received. One written from Hupei states that:

Unexpectantly on 16th October, I was seized and searched by Imperialist guards. They only found some medical books and money. On the 19th I made my escape to Yaou Chow and on the 14th of November eight officers who wished to leave the Imperial service took me to Lung Ping in the province of Hoo
Peh. I am safely lodged with two men of my own province Soo [Loo?] Keen and Seu [Leu?] Yuen, who are disgusted with the monstrous behavior of the Imperial soldiers and have been the means of saving a few long haired men from their hands. Some members of their family being in the Provincial city of Yean King (held by the rebels) they wished to give me several hundred thousand cash to take there for the purposes of trade. But just as I was about hiring a junk to go, the long haired men arrived at Hwang Me (in Hoo Peh) so I stayed a short time here to see whether I could go to Hwang Mei or not. However on the first of December, four steamers made their appearance, I was told they were English, French and American, I embrace this opportunity of writing to you.7

After arriving at Nanking there was little communication between Jen-kan and his former patrons. The monthly allowance to his family guaranteed by the Mission Society ceased in September, 1859, but Legge and Chalmers agreed to continue the support on their own to the end of the year, when his wife returned with her children to her home village in Fu-yüan, in Kwangtung.

Although Hung Jen-kan did try to interpret the West to the Taiping movement, he soon became caught up in its internal power struggle and found that it was not expedient to push the missionary interests. This added to the growing disillusionment of missionary circles who had been looking to the rebel movement as the golden opportunity for the Christianization of China. In August, 1860, Legge comments regarding Hung Jen-kan that he was “sorry to see that he has given up his principles on the subject of polygamy. It does not appear whether he has become a polygamist himself, but he keeps silence among the other chiefs on the subject”, and again in January, 1861, Legge states that the Rev. Dr. Griffith John had had an interview with Hung Jen-kan which led him to conclude that “he is sacrificing what he knows to be right and true to a miserable expediency”. Legge comments, “my own disappointment is great”.8

A brother of Hung Jen-kan named Sy-poe 世甫 was baptized by Legge in Hong Kong at the beginning of 1859.9 In August, 1860, Sy-poe went to Canton to bring down to Hong Kong his own family and that of his brother. They had a difficult time maintaining themselves in Hong Kong until Hung Jen-kan sent them $5,000 from Nanking. This enabled them to rent a house and live more in a
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style befitting relatives of one of the Taiping Kings. To celebrate his second marriage, Dr. Legge and his new wife entertained their Chinese friends and associates at a feast of twelve tables with some thirty courses. Mrs. Legge remarks in a letter dated 24 August, 1860, that “Sy-poe seemed very desirous I should honour his table . . . We had a letter from the Rebel King, he congratulates Dr. Legge on his marriage.” Sy-poe is not mentioned again by the missionaries, but in 1871, Dr. Legge states that his son came to the Mission house requesting a recommendation for the position of a watchman. Legge states, “He is an honest-looking lad — but alas, that the glory of the Taiping’s should thus have passed away”.10

Reports in the Archives of the Basel Missionary Society mention Fung Khui-syu, born in 1848, “son of a Taiping King”. He must be Hung K’uei-yüan 洪開元 alias K’uei-hsiu 洪秀, the son of Hung Jen-kan.11 He was employed by the Society as a teacher; first on the mainland, but then, because of the danger to him and his family created by his former association with the rebellion, he was removed to Hong Kong to teach in the mission’s Girl’s School at Sai Ying Poon.12 In 1873 a marriage was arranged by Mrs. Lechler between Fung Khui-syu, then teaching at Tshong-hang-kang 柘坑猛 in Hsin-an district, and one of the older girls in the Society’s boarding school at Hong Kong. The bride Tsen A-lin, alias En-min was an orphan. As a young girl she had been sold by her mother in Shanghai and had been brought to Hong Kong to work in a brothel; but she had been found wandering in the streets by a member of the Basel Society congregation and was brought to the Mission House. In 1865, at the age of twelve, she was enrolled as a student, and was baptized in 1870, when she received the name Lin 慈, meaning compassion, in place of Tchuy-khuyk (Ch’iu-chü 秋菊), meaning autumn chrysanthemum.13

In 1878 a large part of the congregation of the Basel Mission Church at Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong, emigrated to Demerara, British Guiana. Fung Khui-syu went with them. The 1885 Yearly Report of the Rev. Lechler states:

In Georgetown is a Chinese Church and one of our emigrants has been placed there as Pastor. He is the relative of the former rebel king Fung Syu-tshen, and himself, at the time of the Government of Taipings in Nanking, was made king. He found his way to Hong Kong and was received at our table. I sent him
later to Lilong, where he served under Brother Bellon in the boy's school. Because of his relation to the Rebel King, it was difficult on the mainland so he came to Hongkong until 1878, when he emigrated with those of Shaukiwan. A search of the records of British Guiana might provide details of his later career.

Lechler's Day Book under date 12 January, 1871, mentions a visit from Tsau-phoi, a member of the Fung family of Tsim Sha Tsui, and on 18 February, 1871, he notes that Fung A-lin from Tsim Sha Tsui returned to the Girl's School at Sai Ying Poon. It is probable that Fung Tsau-phoi and Fung A-lin were the son and daughter of "a former Rebel King", who is referred to in the records of the Girl's Boarding School of the Basel Mission at Sai Ying Poon. A report dated 10 July, 1866, lists as a student Lyu Tsya, aged eighteen years, "betrothed to a son of a former Rebel King, who long has put away the crown, baptized by the Berlin Missionary Hanspach in her home." Also listed is Fung A-lin, the small sister of the young man. She had been enrolled in 1865, aged seven years. Her mother was a widow and a Christian.

Keeping in mind that the Hakka version of the surname Hung was written Fung, and that the entries in Lechler's Day Book were written in a very illegible script, it may be that Fung Tsau-phoi is the same as Hung Tsun Fooi mentioned in T'ai-p'ing t'ien-kuo shih-shih jih-chih 太平天国文事日錄 Appendix, p.24, as present in Hong Kong after the fall of the Taiping government.

Two relatives of Feng Yun-shan, a twenty-one year old nephew and his fourteen-year old cousin, accompanied the Rev. Issachar J. Roberts to Shanghai in 1853, in an attempt to reach Nanking. A-sou was baptized by Roberts at Shanghai. The Baptist Missionary Rev. Matthew T. Yates became acquainted with the two boys, but in his book The Tai Ping Rebellion, he mistakenly states that they were brothers of Feng Yun-shan.

Fung A-sou found it impossible to reach Nanking, so he came down to Hong Kong. From here he went up to Canton where he became a teacher to an American missionary. But he became ill, and returned to Hong Kong where he died on the 21 August, 1855.

These accounts of some of the events in the lives of friends and relatives of Taiping leaders and their association with the missionary
movement in China illustrate the impact of the Christian aspect of
the Taiping ideology had on individuals connected with it in a
peripheral way. The Taiping rebellion upset the even tenor of their
former village life. They became refugees. Most had an objective,
evertheless, they wished to join their former village clansmen and
neighbours at the Taiping capital, Nanking. A few were successful;
more, perhaps, were not.

Having been previously influenced by the confused Christian
ideas as promulgated by Hung Hsiu-ch’uan and Feng Yun-shan
during the period before the outbreak of open hostilities between
the Imperial forces and the Taiping revolutionaries, it was natural
for them to seek out the missionaries for assistance and employ­
ment and also to be receptive to more thorough training in the
Christian faith. The missionaries welcomed them as a means of
relating to the Taiping movement with its promise of establishing
a new dynasty on Christian principles. The promise was never rea­
alyzed and the missionaries eventually were disillusioned, but not
before forming close relations with these refugees, some of whom
became valuable assistants and contributed to the growth of the
Chinese Christian Church.

The Taiping Kingdom had within it, from the Christian point of
view, the seeds of a transformation of China, but the end result was
largely disastrous for China, and its fall left behind those who had
dreamed of a glory that had passed them by. Some, as this article
suggests, adjusted to a life devoted to the Christian Church, while
others went other ways. But the missionaries maintained a nostalgic
interest in those who had been closely connected to the leaders of
the Taiping movement.

NOTES

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1 When my sources have not given names in Chinese characters, I have
used the romanization of the original manuscript, except for Hung Hsiu-
ch’uan, Hung Jen-kan and Feng Yun-shan. There are particular difficulties
in determining the proper surname for individuals who appear in the sources
as Fung. This was the accepted Hakka form of the surname Hung 光, but
it was also the Cantonese spelling of the surname Fung 光.

2 Die Evangelischen Heidenboten, Oct., 1854, Letter of Hamberg, dated,
May 1854.

3 Ibid., June, 1868, p. 73.
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5. L.M.S.A., South China, Box 6, Folder 2, Jacket C, letter of Legge, 28 Jan., 1869, and Folder 1, Jacket A, letter of Wong Foon, 8 May, 1857. Another missionary estimate of Hung Jen-kan is the testimonial the Rev. John Chalmers sent to the Rev. Rudolph Lechler, Basel Missionary Society Archives (hereafter given as B.M.S.A.), Vol. IV, 1857-1862, letter dated, London Mission House, Hong Kong, 24 Dec., 1857: “I have great pleasure in giving my testimony to the Christian character of Hung Jin, the relative of Hung Sew Tsuen, who, since his return from Shanghai in the year 1854, has been in the employment of our mission; first as a Christian teacher, and afterwards as a preacher and assistant missionary. His general behaviour has been such as becomes the Gospel; the work which we have given him to do, he has always executed to our satisfaction and not only so, but his zeal for the promotion of the cause of Christ has been marked. He is a young man of superior abilities, and I hope he may yet be honoured to labour successfully in the preaching of the gospel to his countrymen for many years.”

6. L.M.S.A., South China, Box 6, Folder 1, Jacket B, letter of Chalmers, 5 June, 1858.

7. L.M.S.A., South China, Box 6, Folder 1, Jacket C, letter of Legge and Chalmers, 11 Jan., 1859, with enclosure of translation of letter of Hung Jan: “Translation of Hung Jan’s last letter, sent from Shanghai by Mr. Muirhead, who received it from a Chinaman who had been with Lord Elgin’s expedition up the Yangtze. He wrote in 170 or 180 miles on that river below Hakow.” Letters from “Shau Kwan, Nan Gan [both on the north boundary of Kwangtung], one from the capital of Keangse, one from imperialist camp at Yaou Chow [in north of Keangse]” are mentioned as having been written by Hung Jen-kan.


11. For identification of Hung K’uei Hsiu see Jen (Chien) Yu-wan “太平天國洪氏遺孤訪問記” (Record of Visit with Descendants of the Taiping Hung Family) 太平天國難記 (Taiping Kingdom Miscellany), No. 4, and 蕭香林 Lo Hsiang-lin, 客家史料概論 (Historical Sources for the Study of the Hakka), (Hong Kong, 1965), p. 409.

12. B.M.S.A., Hong Kong School Report, 14 Feb., 1875, “Teacher Schui Thin will shortly change places with Fung Khui-syu in Tschong Hang Kang, because the last as a son of a Tai Ping Rebellion King, cannot stay anymore in the mainland without danger to the life of himself and family.”


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CARL SMITH'S ADDITIONAL NOTE

Carl Smith has added to the text of the article appearing in Ching Feng the following note on the family of Li Tsin-kau and their services to the Hakka Church of the Basel Mission in Hong Kong and in Sabah.

Li Tsin-kau, otherwise known as Lee Sik-sam, died 8 April, 1885, aged sixty-two. On the letters of administration issued to his widow Ho Lai-yau, the value of his estate was estimated at $400. His assets consisted principally of a small house beside the Basel Society's Church and Mission House in Sai Ying Poon, which he had purchased in 1878 for $480. He sold a portion of the lot in 1878 for $370.

Li Tsin-kau's wife was baptized in Hong Kong in 1861 and died there 21 September, 1888, leaving four surviving children. The family property after her death was conveyed by Li A-cheung, an interpreter, Li Shin-en, a missionary and Li En-kyau, unmarried to their brother Li A-po, a trader.

The eldest son of Tsin-kau, A-lim, had died in 1864 "in trouble with the police". A-po, the second son was betrothed in 1865 to Kong Oi-fuk from Lilong. She was a student in the Basel Society Girl's Boarding School at Hong Kong, and he was a student of their Boy's School at Lilong.

The third son, A-cheung studied at Hong Kong Central School (Queen's College) and in 1871 was given the prize for best scholar. After leaving school, he entered Government service, beginning as a charge-room interpreter for the Police, but in 1875 was transferred to the Magistracy as a clerk. Three years later he was promoted to Second Interpreter in the Magistracy. In 1882 he was offered the position of Interpreter to the Kingdom of Hawaii. Like his brother he had married one of the students of the Girl's Boarding School in Hong Kong, Tshin Then-tet. She accompanied him to Hawaii.

In 1883, the Rev. Frank Damon, who was in charge of Chinese Christian work in Hawaii, visited Hong Kong. In a report of his visit published in The Friend (New Series, Vol. 33, No. 2, p. 9) he expresses his pleasure in meeting "the venerable and interesting father of our Government interpreter in Honolulu, Mr. Lee Cheong. A brother and sister are engaged in teaching here, while another brother is missionary to his countrymen".
The fourth son, Li Shen-en 李承恩 alias Li Syong-kong 李祥光 was baptized in Hong Kong in 1859. Following the foot-steps of his father, he served as Catechist in the Sai Ying Poon Hakka Congregation from 1883 to 1888. He then emigrated to Sabah, North Borneo, where, under the auspices of the Basel Missionary Society, he organized a congregation of Hakkas. He married Lin Loi-kyau, a daughter of Rev. Lin Khi-len. She was a teacher at the Girl’s Boarding School at Sai Ying Poon from 1882 to 1894.

Li Tsin-kau had one daughter, Li En Kyau 李恩嫣, born in 1860 and baptized as an infant. She attended the Sai Ying Poon School and also taught there from 1877 to 1902, in addition she did volunteer church work among the women.

The services rendered by the several generations of the Li family to the congregations and schools of the Basel Society well repaid the initial interest and attention given to the young Li Tsin-kau when he first turned up in Hong Kong in 1853 as one displaced because of his connection with the leader of the Tai Ping movement. Details of the family are largely taken from Archives of the Basel Society and a mimeographed Geschicte der Hongkonger Gemeinden kindly lent to me by Mr. James Hayes.

JEN YU-WEN’S ADDITIONAL NOTES

Professor Jen Yu-wen (簡又文), the eminent and life-long historian of the Taiping rebellion, has kindly added the following notes:

(1) Feng & Gützlaff

Aside from this account, [i.e. from the Hong Kong Register, 27th September 1853] there were a few others alleging that Feng, having been taught and baptized by Gützlaff, was a member of his Chinese Christian Union (福音會). Nevertheless, I find great difficulty in believing this story. First of all, there is no documentary evidence supporting it. Secondly, a careful checking on the time that Gützlaff founded and promoted the Union since 1844 does not permit Feng, who went to Kwangsi with Hung Hsiu-Ch’uan also in 1844, to come to Hong Kong to establish any relationship with Gützlaff, as Feng was at the same time busy in running the affairs and directing the activities of the God-worshippers’ Association in Kwangsi. There is no persuasive evidence that Feng and
Gützlaff ever met each other in 1848 when Feng returned from Kwangsi and stayed in his native place for a short period to wait for the return of Hung Hsiu-ch'üan. I cannot see how the fable started. It may be that some members of the Union did join the Taiping army and recognized superficially the similarity of the organizations of Feng and Gützlaff with practically the same contents in their teachings, thus misunderstanding the identity of the two groups; and thus, Feng was mistaken for a fellow-member of the Union. All in all, this problem needs further study and intensive research before a conclusive answer can be obtained.

(2) **Li Tsin-kau (李正高)**

According to Hamberg's account, Li Ching-fang (李敬芳) was Hung Hsiu-ch'üan's cousin who lived in Lien Hua T'ang (蓮花塘) in Hua-hsien where Hung taught. The Tai P'ing pamphlet *T'ai P'ing Tien Jih* (太平天日) identifies him. Hung first studied Liang Fa's pamphlets seriously with him.

W. Oehler, *Die Taiping-Bewegung* (1923), asserts that Ching-fang was the grand father of Li Tsin-kau. For certain reasons I believe Ching-fang was more likely the father, as Tsin-kau was seemingly too young to befriend and discuss such serious matters with Hung.

The late Rev. Chang Chu-ling (張祝齡) told me a very amusing anecdote about Li Tsin-kau. After establishing his capital in Nanking, Hung Hsiu-ch'üan ordered Tsin-kau to recruit followers in Kwangtung. Tsin-kau failed in this mission but went north personally. When he arrived at Shanghai on the way to Nanking, he heard that the God whom Hung saw in his visions years ago wore a black robe. He thought that God, the True God, should be dressed in white, and therefore what Hung had seen was really the Devil. The result was that he turned back to Hong Kong immediately without attempting to see Hung again. (See my *Taiping Tienkuo Chiüan-shih*, pp54-55, notes pp58-59) This story corroborates with the account Carl Smith found (p. 124), but the call to come to Nanking might be from Hung Jen-kau rather than from Hung Hsiu-ch'üan.

(3) **Hung Jen-kau (Shield King 鍮玉洪仁玕)**

At last, the question 'who financed Hung Jen-kau's trip to Nanking?' is solved with Carl Smith's finding that the London
Missionary Society did it. In one of Jen-kau's confessional statements, Chalmers was named the donor. Now it is clear that the money was given him only through Chalmers. Jen-kau probably did not know that Legge and Chalmers continued to support his family till the end of 1859.

With reference to Legge's belief in Jen-kau's compromising practice of polygamy, my view is that Legge was induced to such opinion by the allegation of Joseph Edkins, another missionary who had visited Jen-kau in Soochow and started to make such charge upon his return to Shanghai. R. J. Forest, a British vice-consul and a close associate of Jen-kau whose private life was well-known to him, made an emphatic refutation on this charge. (This apologia is quoted in my book *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, p358). Jen-kau was fully exonerated.

(4) Hung Kuei-yüan (洪啟元) (alias K'uei-shiu 棣秀)

I am personally grateful to Carl Smith who had finally found out, with documentary evidence, the whereabouts of Hung K'uei-shiu, the eldest son of Jen-kau. Years ago I was told that he had migrated to America (U.S.A.). I did not stop my long search for his descendants even as late as 1964-65 when I made my last trip to the U.S. Of course, I failed in my efforts because he and his family settled down in Demerara, British Guiana instead of North America, as ascertained by Mr. Smith. I wish some one would be interested enough to pick up the thread and look up his descendants there.