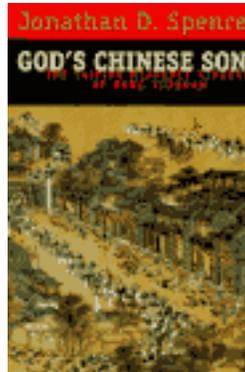


HUNG HSIU CHUAN 洪秀全



**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1814



January 1, Saturday: On the New York side of the [Niagara River](#), Youngstown, Lewiston, Manchester, Schlosser, Black Rock, and Buffalo had been put to the torch. By holding [Fort Niagara](#) the British were in control not only of the mouth of the river but also of a safe haven for their warships and supply vessels.

The Emperor [Napoléon I](#) replied favorably to the allied offer of December 15th.

[Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 was born. After being disappointed in the Confucian civil service examinations, he would have visions and come to the conclusion that he must be [Jesus Christ](#)'s younger brother on a mission to redeem China (don't laugh, 25,000,000 [Chinese](#) are going to die rancid deaths on account of this fantasizing).¹

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

Friend [Stephen Wanton Gould](#) wrote in his journal:

7th day 1st of 1st M 1814 / Recd this eveng a leter from my beloved friend Micajah Collins Dated 12 M 23rd - which was a very agreeable NewYears gift.—²

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1. For all that he was JC's little brother, this guy wouldn't actually have much use for anything peculiar to the New Testament — such as for instance kindness, or forgiveness, or redemption. Instead his [Christianity](#) was going to be long on obedience, and proper worshipfulness, and his dad was to be construed as a God of vengeance. But the *Tai-p'ings* did have a useful list of prohibitions: there was to be no prostitution in their Kingdom of Heaven, or even divorce, there was to be no enslavement or even foot-binding, there was to be no recreational use of [opium](#) or [wine](#) or [tobacco](#) — and of course there was to be no gambling! Both the Chinese Communists of the PRC (People's Republic of China, on the mainland) and the Chinese Nationalists of the ROC (Republic of China, on Taiwan) now claim that they originated as this nativist resistance movement against the Manchu overlords in Beijing.

2. Stephen Wanton Gould Diary, 1812-1815: The Gould family papers are stored under control number 2033 at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections of Cornell University Library, Box 7 Folder 11 for July 1, 1812-August 20, 1815; also on microfilm, see Series 7



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1827

➡ In South [China](#), the young Confucian scholar-wannabee [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 failed the government Mandarin examinations the 1st time he took them — as was ordinarily to be expected.

Iu-kiao-li: OR, THE TWO FAIR COUSINS. A [CHINESE](#) NOVEL (玉嬌梨). FROM THE FRENCH VERSION OF [M. ABEL REMUSAT](#). IN TWO VOLUMES (London: Hunt and Clarke, York-Street, Covent-Garden).



THE TWO FAIR COUSINS

This would be examined by [Thomas Carlyle](#), [Waldo Emerson](#), [Henry David Thoreau](#), [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#), and [Stendhal](#).

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT





HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1836

➡ At about this point it was published that [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) had dismissed the idea that [China](#) was involved in world civilization. Johann Peter Eckermann, [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#)'s conversational partner, pointed out that the lightness of wicker furniture might be the most appropriate symbolic representation for the import of [Chinese](#) culture.

In Canton in South [China](#), the budding scholar [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 encountered a fortune-teller who soothed him with "You will attain the highest rank. Do not be anxious about it for anxiety will make you ill. I congratulate your virtuous father!" Then the next day, some [Christian](#) missionary or other gave him a treatise which described the basic elements of Christianity: *QUANSHI LIANGYAN* or GOOD WORDS TO EXHORT THE AGES. The young man did not look at this point look at the gift book at all carefully, being a whole lot more interested at that point in doing well than in doing good — but of course books were valuable items and thus he didn't just throw it away.³

➡ March: In his home county of Hua in South [China](#), [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 passed the rural qualifying exams for the Confucian state exams to be held in Canton. —On to the big time, and to big-time dreams.



3. This book had been written in 1832 ➡ by Liang Afa, who had been the very 1st convert, in 1828, ➡ of the Dr. Robert Morrison who had in 1807 ➡ been sent to Canton by the London Missionary Society in an American ship with a letter of introduction provided by then Secretary of State [James Madison](#). What goes around comes around!

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

 Early Spring: In South China, Hung Hsiu Ch'üan 洪秀全 went for the Confucian state exams in Canton, and failed.



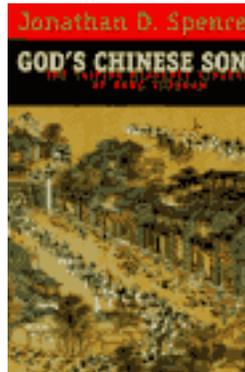


HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1837

The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#), a Tennessee [Baptist](#) fresh off the boat in [China](#), brought ashore with him a printed volume containing the Four Gospels in Chinese characters, purchased during a stopover at Batavia in Java. Taking the name [Lo Hsiao-ch'üan](#) or [Lo Heáou-tsun](#), he would be preaching for some five years in a [Macao](#) leper colony (evidently himself contracting the disease). He would need to work as a saddler in this Portuguese colony, since he was unaffiliated with any missionary society. Meanwhile, in [Canton](#), [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) was for the 3d time taking and for the 3d time failing in his all-important government Mandarin examinations. When he collapsed in delirium an old man with a golden beard explained to him that this world was overrun by demons. There could be but one more attempt at the examination.



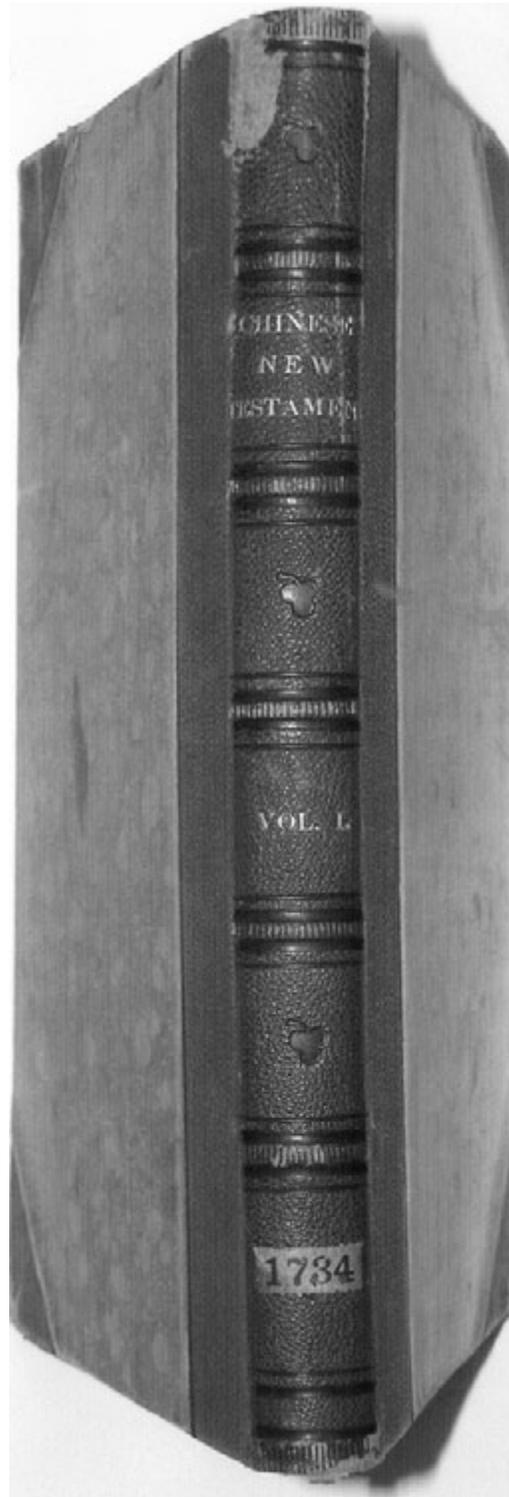
THE TAEPING REBELLION

The young scholar-wannabee had at this point already attained his full altitude and was not by further thought going to be able to add cubits unto his stature (see below). Well then, was the “uncouth” Reverend Roberts going to be able to help this Hung heathen in need? Stay tuned!



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN





HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

Table of Altitudes



Yoda	2' 0 "
Lavinia Warren	2' 8 "
Tom Thumb, Jr.	3' 4 "
Lucy (Australopithecus Afarensis)	3' 8 "
Hervé Villechaize ("Fantasy Island")	3' 11"
Charles Proteus Steinmetz	4' 0 "
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (1)	4' 3 "
Alexander Pope	4' 6 "
Benjamin Lay	4' 7 "
Gary Coleman ("Arnold Jackson")	4' 8 "
Queen Victoria with osteoporosis	4' 8 "
Queen Victoria as adult	4' 10 "
Margaret Mitchell	4' 10 "
length of newer military musket	4' 10"
Charlotte Brontë	4' 10-11"
Harriet Beecher Stowe	4' 11"
Laura Ingalls Wilder	4' 11"
a rather tall adult Pygmy male	4' 11"
John Keats	5' 0 "
Clara Barton	5' 0 "
Isambard Kingdom Brunel	5' 0 "
Andrew Carnegie	5' 0 "
Thomas de Quincey	5' 0 "
Stephen A. Douglas	5' 0 "
Danny DeVito	5' 0 "
Immanuel Kant	5' 0 "
William Wilberforce	5' 0 "
Mae West	5' 0 "
Mother Teresa	5' 0 "
Deng Xiaoping	5' 0 "
Dred Scott	5' 0 " (±)
Captain William Bligh of HMS <i>Bounty</i>	5' 0 " (±)
Harriet Tubman	5' 0 " (±)
Mary Moody Emerson per FBS (2)	5' 0 " (±)
John Brown of Providence, Rhode Island	5' 0 " (+)
Bette Midler	5' 1 "
Jemmy Button	5' 2 "



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

Margaret Mead	5' 2"
R. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller	5' 2"
Yuri Gagarin the astronaut	5' 2"
William Walker	5' 2"
Horatio Alger, Jr.	5' 2"
length of older military musket	5' 2"
the artist formerly known as Prince	5' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
typical female of Thoreau's period	5' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
Francis of Assisi	5' 3"
Voltaire	5' 3"
Mohandas Gandhi	5' 3"
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3"
Kahlil Gibran	5' 3"
Friend Daniel Ricketson	5' 3"
The Reverend Gilbert White	5' 3"
Nikita Khrushchev	5' 3"
Sammy Davis, Jr.	5' 3"
Truman Capote	5' 3"
Kim Jong Il (North Korea)	5' 3"
Stephen A. "Little Giant" Douglas	5' 4"
Francisco Franco	5' 4"
President James Madison	5' 4"
Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili "Stalin"	5' 4"
Alan Ladd	5' 4"
Pablo Picasso	5' 4"
Truman Capote	5' 4"
Queen Elizabeth	5' 4"
Ludwig van Beethoven	5' 4"
Typical Homo Erectus	5' 4"
typical Neanderthal adult male	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
Alan Ladd	5' 4 ¹ / ₂ "
<i>comte de Buffon</i>	5' 5" (-)
Captain Nathaniel Gordon	5' 5"
Charles Manson	5' 5"
Audie Murphy	5' 5"
Harry Houdini	5' 5"
Hung Hsiu-ch'üan 洪秀全	5' 5"
Marilyn Monroe	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "



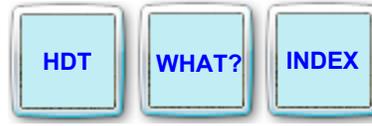


HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia"	5' 5 ¹ / ₂ "
average runaway male American slave	5' 5-6 "
Charles Dickens	5' 6? "
President Benjamin Harrison	5' 6 "
President Martin Van Buren	5' 6 "
James Smithson	5' 6 "
Louisa May Alcott	5' 6 "
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Napoleon Bonaparte	5' 6 ¹ / ₂ "
Emily Brontë	5' 6-7 "
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	5' ? "
average height, seaman of 1812	5' 6.85 "
Oliver Reed Smoot, Jr.	5' 7 "
minimum height, British soldier	5' 7 "
President John Adams	5' 7 "
President John Quincy Adams	5' 7 "
President William McKinley	5' 7 "
"Charley" Parkhurst (a female)	5' 7 "
Ulysses S. Grant	5' 7 "
Henry Thoreau	5' 7 "
the average male of Thoreau's period	5' 7 ¹ / ₂ "
Edgar Allan Poe	5' 8 "
President Ulysses S. Grant	5' 8 "
President William H. Harrison	5' 8 "
President James Polk	5' 8 "
President Zachary Taylor	5' 8 "
average height, soldier of 1812	5' 8.35 "
President Rutherford B. Hayes	5' 8 ¹ / ₂ "
President Millard Fillmore	5' 9 "
President Harry S Truman	5' 9 "
President Jimmy Carter	5' 9 ¹ / ₂ "
Herman Melville	5' 9 ³ / ₄ "
Calvin Coolidge	5' 10"
Andrew Johnson	5' 10"
Theodore Roosevelt	5' 10"
Thomas Paine	5' 10"
Franklin Pierce	5' 10"
Abby May Alcott	5' 10"





HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

Reverend Henry C. Wright	5' 10"
Nathaniel Hawthorne	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Louis "Deerfoot" Bennett	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Friend John Greenleaf Whittier	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
President Dwight D. Eisenhower	5' 10 ¹ / ₂ "
Sojourner Truth	5' 11"
President Grover Cleveland	5' 11"
President Herbert Hoover	5' 11"
President Woodrow Wilson	5' 11"
President Jefferson Davis	5' 11"
President Richard M. Nixon	5' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
Robert Voorhis the hermit of Rhode Island	< 6'
Frederick Douglass	6' (-)
Anthony Burns	6' 0"
Waldo Emerson	6' 0"
Joseph Smith, Jr.	6' 0"
David Walker	6' 0"
Sarah F. Wakefield	6' 0"
Thomas Wentworth Higginson	6' 0"
President James Buchanan	6' 0"
President Gerald R. Ford	6' 0"
President James Garfield	6' 0"
President Warren Harding	6' 0"
President John F. Kennedy	6' 0"
President James Monroe	6' 0"
President William H. Taft	6' 0"
President John Tyler	6' 0"
John Brown	6' 0 (+)"
President Andrew Jackson	6' 1"
Alfred Russel Wallace	6' 1"
President Ronald Reagan	6' 1"
Venture Smith	6' 1 ¹ / ₂ "
John Camel Heenan	6' 2"
Crispus Attucks	6' 2"
President Chester A. Arthur	6' 2"
President George Bush, Senior	6' 2"
President Franklin D. Roosevelt	6' 2"
President George Washington	6' 2"



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

Gabriel Prosser	6' 2"
Dangerfield Newby	6' 2"
Charles Augustus Lindbergh	6' 2"
President Bill Clinton	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Thomas Jefferson	6' 2 ¹ / ₂ "
President Lyndon B. Johnson	6' 3"
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.	6' 3"
Richard "King Dick" Seaver	6' 3 ¹ / ₄ "
President Abraham Lincoln	6' 4"
Marion Morrison (AKA John Wayne)	6' 4"
Elisha Reynolds Potter, Senior	6' 4"
Thomas Cholmondeley	6' 4" (?)
Franklin Benjamin Sanborn	6' 5"
Peter the Great of Russia	6' 7"
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	6' 7"
Thomas Jefferson (the statue)	7' 6"
Jefferson Davis (the statue)	7' 7"
Martin Van Buren Bates	7' 11 ¹ / ₂ "
M. Bihin, a Belgian exhibited in Boston in 1840	8'
Anna Haining Swan	8' 1"





HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1840

David Livingston graduated from the University of Glasgow as a doctor of medicine and a minister of the gospel simultaneously, and was seized upon by the London Missionary Society. Since he preferred [China](#) they consigned him to Africa.⁴

THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



“Stack of the Artist of Kouroo” Project

Hung Hsiu Chuan

4. But of what earthly use might a white Christian leader from elsewhere have been in China, a nation that already had its own homegrown yellow Christian leaders such as [Hung Hsiu Ch'uan](#) 洪秀全 the Heavenly King of the *Tai-p'ing* longhairs?



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

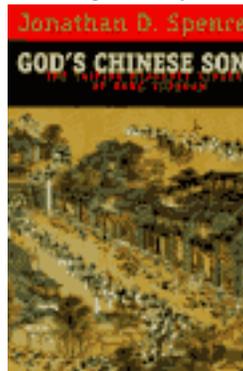
HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1843

US sailors and marines from the USS *St. Louis* were landed in [Canton](#) after a clash between Americans and [Chinese](#) at the trading post there.

US MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

In [Canton](#), [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 for the 4th and final time attempted, and flunked, his all-important government Mandarin examinations. When a friend pulled a forgotten book on Christianity off his bookshelf and was looking at it, the book *QUANSHI LIANGYAN* or GOOD WORDS TO EXHORT THE AGES describing the basic elements of Christianity, by Liang Afa, which had been given him by some [Christian](#) missionary or other, the distraught Hung decided that the book explained the experience which he had had under delirium in 1837,  when he had failed his examinations for the 3d time. An old man with a golden beard had spoken to him in his dream, telling him that this world was overrun by demons. That old man must have been the Christian God. Then in the dream he had met a middle-aged man. That must have been [Jesus](#) Christ. Instead of being a failure in life, a reject, a retard, Hung actually had been selected for a most unique greatness!



Most impressed by the self-servingness of this sort of thinking, Hung proceeded to baptize himself (although, just between you and me and that lamppost over there, I would have preferred that he had proceeded to hang himself).

The [New York State Mechanic](#) failed, putting [Ephraim George Squier](#) out of a paycheck. He got a job as the editor of the [Whig Daily Journal](#) of Hartford, Connecticut. He prepared for publication George Tradescant



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

Lay's THE [CHINESE](#) AS THEY ARE; THEIR MORAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTER, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, LANGUAGE: WITH REMARKS ON THEIR ARTS AND SCIENCES, MEDICAL SKILL, THE EXTENT OF MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE, ETC. BY G. TRADESCENT LAY, ESQ., NATURALIST IN BEECHY'S EXPEDITION, LATE RESIDENT AT CANTON, AUTHOR OF "THE VOYAGE OF THE HIMMALEH," ETC. CONTAINING ALSO, ILLUSTRATIVE AND CORROBORATIVE NOTES, ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS ON THE ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY, ANCIENT AND MODERN INTERCOURSE, POPULATION-GOVERNMENT-CIVILIZATION-EDUCATION-LITERATURE-ETC. OF THE CHINESE. COMPILED FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES. BY [E.G. SQUIER](#). ALBANY: PUBLISHED BY GEORGE JONES, MUSEUM BUILDING. BURGESS AND STRINGER, AND M.Y. BEACH, NEW YORK: REDDING AND CO. BOSTON: G.B. ZEIBER, PHILADELPHIA: WM. TAYLOR, BALTIMORE.

THE CHINESE AS THEY ARE

The volume contained many illuminations, such as the following:

The head of a [Chinese](#) is broad behind and narrow in front, when compared with the general standard of Europeans. If, according to a very general opinion, the forepart of the head represents intellectual capability, the advantage is in our favor; a conclusion which is warranted by everything that research brings to light.



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1844

In South [China](#), the newly self-baptized “[Christian](#)” [Hung Hsiu Ch’üan](#) 洪秀全 and those of his persuasion were destroying the tablets to [Confucius](#) in the village schools in which they were teaching, and were of course as a consequence of this being terminated, whereupon he and his buddy [Feng Yün-shan](#) 馮雲山 went off together on a preaching mission into the province of Kwangsi. Hung eventually would make himself the *T’ien-wang*, the Heavenly King, of the Chinese Christian movement that had been nurtured there by Feng, while Feng would remain the movement’s *Nan-wang* or Southern King and general of the advance guard. Setting out to do good, they would indeed do well, including the accumulation of quite sizeable harems.⁵

In “Character” in the collection of essays which [Waldo Emerson](#) published in this year, he commented that he found it more credible “that one man should *know heaven*, as the Chinese say, than that so many men should know the world” (whatever that may mean), and then went on to cite the context in which he had discovered this supposedly [Chinese](#) “knows heaven” idiom:

“The virtuous prince confronts the gods, without any misgiving. He waits a hundred ages till a sage comes, and does not doubt. He who confronts the gods, without any misgiving, knows heaven; he who waits a hundred ages until a sage comes, without doubting, knows men. Hence the virtuous prince moves, and for ages shows empire the way.”

EMERSON AND CHINA

5. The harems did not constitute the offensiveness which the white missionaries to China found so utterly offensive. The abomination committed by the [Chinese Christian](#) movement was that instead of remaining under the paternal guidance of the kindly white fathers from the other side of the planet, they began to provide themselves with yellow ministers of the gospel of their own local manufacture. You see, white overlordship wasn’t an incidental and temporary artifact of the missionary position, it was its essential element. It wasn’t the Apostles’ Creed which was the whole banana, it wasn’t the Lord’s Prayer which was the whole banana, it wasn’t the Sermon on the Mount which was the whole banana, and it wasn’t who got or who didn’t get a harem which was the whole banana. The missionary position, which is to say, white overlordship, was the whole banana.



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1847

March: [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 went with a cousin to [Canton](#) and while there paid a visit to the [Baptist](#) missionary Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全.⁶

April: [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 the scholar-manque would study Christianity for a couple of months under the tutelage of a Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全, a Tennessee [Baptist](#) who had been in [China](#) since 1837,  and then (upon being belatedly informed that his new status in the Christian community would definitely not include his being the recipient of any pecuniary compensation whatever) joined the movement known as the *Pai Shang-ti Hui* or The God Worshipers' Society which had been initiated among the peasantry of Kwangsi province by his friend [Feng Yün-shan](#) 馮雲山. He would become successful beyond the wildest dreams of any Tennessee Baptist, as the *T'ien-wang* –the Heavenly King– of a far-flung [Chinese Christian](#) movement. He would be able to plot an entire galaxy of stars in his heavenly crown right up to the point at which, at the unfortunate conclusion of the largest and bloodiest civil war our planet has ever known, he would need to off himself.



THE TAEPING REBELLION

Andrew Twombly Foss became an agent of the [Baptist](#) Church North. He would later serve the American Anti-Slavery Society and the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society as an agent, lecturing widely in the North and West till the US Civil War. (There is an article by Guy S. Rix on his life, at The New England Historic Genealogical Society.)

6. A Hakka like Hung could ordinarily make out what a Cantonese was saying, pretty well, but Roberts would definitely not have been able to understand any word of what a Hakka would have to offer. His linguistic skills were so limited that he failed to grasp the tonal system of spoken Chinese and, when he shopped, was reduced to pointing at things. When he preached, his listeners commented to other missionaries that they understood less than half of what he said. These two, in particular, because of the difference in spoken dialect, would therefore in communicating with one another have needed to make frequently resort to writing down this or that Chinese character on a scrap of paper, or forming the character in the air with a finger.

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HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1850

July: In South [China](#), there began what would prove to be the longest and bloodiest [Civil War](#) of which we have ever had any information: [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 the younger brother of Jesus H. Christ and his friend [Feng Yün-shan](#) 馮雲山 led their *Pai Shang-ti Hui* or God Worshipers' Society of impoverished [Chinese Christian](#) peasants of mountainous Kwangsi province into what we would come to term, untranslated, the [Taiping](#) rebellion or [Chinese Civil War](#):



Many of the first Taiping converts were of the mountain tribes of Kwangsi, whom the Chinese call Miao-tze.... These Miao-tze tribes of the Kwangsi, whom ethnologists suppose to be of Caucasian race, had never completely submitted to Manchu rule. They wore the ancient Chinese national dress and had long hair.

The Miao people do not make use of Chinese ideograms but inscribe their language in the Latin alphabet. Because of these "Caucasians" with their long hair and standoffish ways, the resulting civil war would also be known in China as the "Longhair Rebellion."



These Chinese Christians were not the sort of people you'd want to meet in a dark alley. They took their holiness very seriously. On the next screen –as action figures which you can purchase to enable the imagination of your child– they are dealing with somebody whom they have decided had done wrong, or was believing wrong, or had maybe been insufficiently sincere.

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HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN



August: Things were getting stranger and stranger. An alliance was being arranged between the [Taiping](#) or [Chinese Christian](#) Longhairs and another grouping in South [China](#), known as the Triad Society. This secret group of freedom fighters was to be accepted into the Christian ranks on condition that they would conform to the worship of God, and so [Hung Hsiu Ch'uan](#) 洪秀全 sent out two teachers to each of the eight subdivisions of the Triads, to instruct them in the true faith. Unfortunately, shortly afterward, the younger brother of [Jesus Christ](#) ordered that one of these sixteen Christian teachers of his, who had proved to be of lower than expected moral fiber, be publicly beheaded as an Ananias-style warning to all in the *Pai Shang-ti Hui* God Worshipers' Society. Now, the Triads had had a rule of long standing in among their "Words of Exhortation," a rule of great forgiveness. The Triad rule had been "If people insult you, injure you, revile you, — how ought you to take it? You ought to bear it, suffer it, endure it, and forgive it." When the Triads saw this man being beheaded for

what they considered a minor offense, they saw that these Christians were not going to abide by this rule of forgiveness of theirs, or anything remotely resembling it, and so they abandoned their hopes of an affiliation and allied themselves instead with the *Ch'ing* authorities out of Beijing.



These scary Christians, even the gangsters can't cope with them! After recording a long list of the various peasant messiahs that had beset China down through the millennia, Ian Buruma, a modern author, cites this particular little brother of Jesus of the middle of the 19th Century as the one whose "crusade left 20 million dead. Mao Zedong fitted quite neatly in this long line of peasant messiahs. Like his predecessors, he led a rural revolt to expel the barbarians, punish evildoers, and unite the empire. He abhorred superstition, but his version of "scientific socialism" would reach the same degree of religious frenzy as Hong's Heavenly Kingdom" (page xiv, Ian Buruma. BAD ELEMENTS: CHINESE REBELS FROM LOS ANGELES TO BEIJING. NY: Random House, 2001).

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT

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HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1851

January 1, Wednesday: The *Pai shang-ti hui* or Christian “Association of the Worshipers of God” was founded among the group known as *Hakka* or “guest settlers,” by [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 and his executive organizer [Feng Yün-shan](#) 冯云山. There would soon be a dust-up between this *Han* grouping which was migrating out of Central [China](#) into Kwantung and Kwangsi provinces and the primary inhabitants of South China.



This dust-up would be similar in many respects to the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland later in the 19th Century, except that it would be happening between the [Taiping](#) or [Chinese Christian](#) Longhairs and Confucian Buddhist Chinese.



HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

The great [Chinese Civil War](#) between South China and North China was beginning and would become the longest and bloodiest such civil war of which we have any record — our own long and bloody civil war of 1861-1865 not excepted. Some 25,000,000 Chinese would be slaughtered and the destruction of the [Chinese Christian](#) culture in South China would be so thorough that now we “here in Christendom”

- a.) are generally not aware that such a Chinese Christian community ever existed, or
- b.) presume that because the people involved were Chinese (Christians are normatively, of course, as we are all perfectly well aware, decent white people!), simply could not have been of the “actual” or “real” Christian faith as we know it and love it “here in Christendom.”

Instead of referring to them as [Christians](#) we adopt untranslated their term for Jesus’s “Kingdom of God,” their ideal condition of being, *Tai-p’ing T’ien-kuo* or “Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace,” 太平天國 and designate them merely as “the [Taipings](#).” They were millennialist fundamentalists who, like primitive Christians in the Mediterranean area, practiced communalism —and this made them disrespectful of the general Chinese cultural tradition— but they were also ethnically Han and vigorously opposed to such foreigners as the Manchu emperor in Beijing.



MILLENNIALISM

The Buddhist and Confucian forces of Beijing would use the motto “Honor the Emperor by Resisting Barbarians” (*Zun Wang Rang Yi* 尊王攘夷).⁷

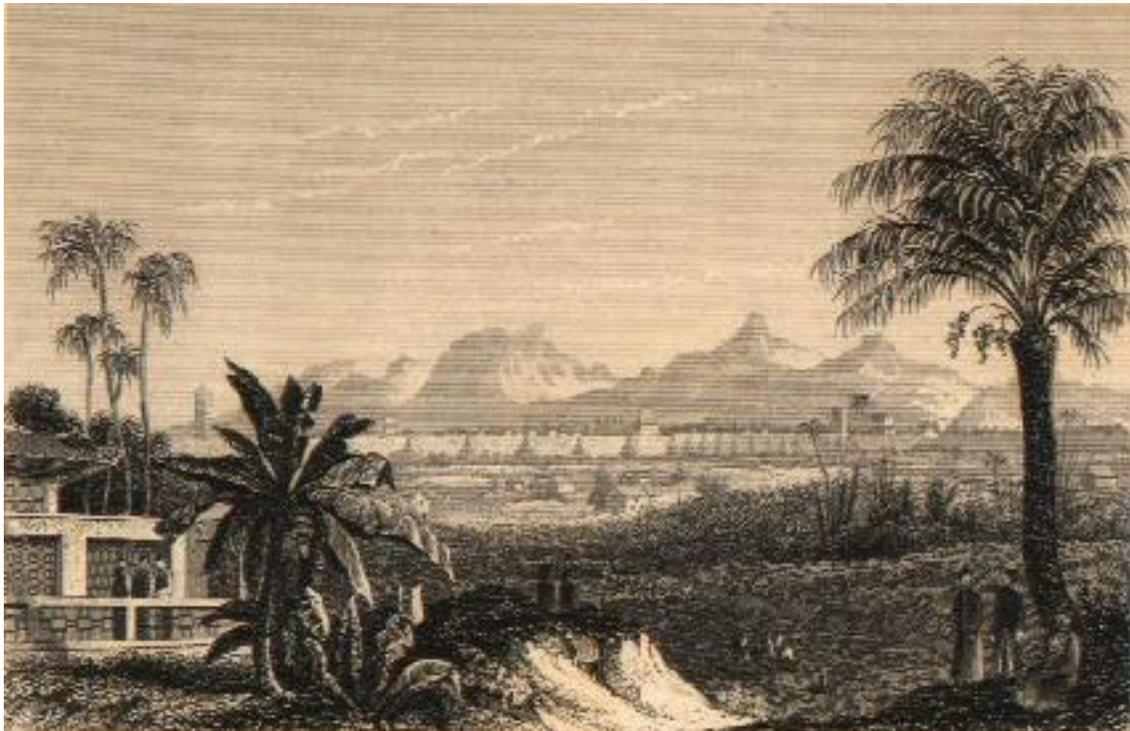
7. The motto that would be used against Christians during the Boxer rebellion of the early 20th Century would be similar, “Revive the Qing and Destroy the Foreigners” (*Fu Qing Mie Yang* 扶清灭洋).



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This chap who was considering himself the younger brother of Jesus Christ had thirty concubines and wives but was not the only person being designated to rule over the Chinese, in this critical year of 1851. In North China, the young lady who would for half a century rule over the Central Kingdom from one suite of the Forbidden City in Beijing was being selected as 1 imperial concubine of a total of 11, effective as soon as the new emperor Hsien Feng had completed his obligatory period of sexless mourning for his father Tao Kuan. As an economy measure due to the financial straits of the Central Kingdom, the new emperor was to have but 1 empress rather than the traditional complete set of 3, but 2 consorts of the 2d class rather than the traditional complete set of 9, and but 11 concubines such as this particular young lady rather than the traditional complete set of 81.



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September 25, Thursday: His troops having invested his first real city, the city of Yongan in Guangxi province, the [Chinese](#) younger brother of Jesus Christ, [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, declared his new 太平天國 [Chinese Christian](#) dynasty for the Celestial Kingdom.^o

Shades of the Little Red Book of the Red Guards of the 20th Century: every new recruit in this outfit was being checked three weeks after their acceptance into the group, for his or her ability to recite the Ten Commandments — and the penalty for hesitation or error was specified as death.



8. Western histories, inexplicably, as if they were struggling to obstruct communication rather than facilitate it, rather than referring to this group as Christians, tend instead to adopt untranslated their term for Jesus's "Kingdom of God," their ideal condition of being, *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or "Central Kingdom of Great Peace," designating these folks merely as "the [Taipings](#)."

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The Christians were immediately besieged in this city by the Confucian Buddhist army of the Beijing-based *Ch'ing* 清 emperor of [China](#).



October 1, Wednesday: In [China](#), the [Chinese Christian](#) leader [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 entered his newly conquered city of Yongan in the Guangxi province and of course issued a stern warning that all booty was to be turned over to the central authority.

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November 17: [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, the leader of the [Chinese Christian Army](#), a most dedicated disciplinarian, declared that henceforward each of the sergeants of his army would be keeping a written record of the individual performance of each of the soldiers assigned to him, and marking a "0" for each satisfactory performance or a "+" for an unsatisfactory performance. Presumably those Christian warriors who accumulated the sign of the cross eventually were taken to be executed.



On about this day, Herman Melville wrote to [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#):

My Dear Hawthorne, -
People think that if a man has undergone any hardship, he should have a reward; but for my part, if I have done the hardest possible day's work, and then come to sit down in a corner and



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eat my supper comfortably – why, then I don't think I deserve any reward for my hard day's work – for am I not now at peace? Is not my supper good? My peace and my supper are my reward, my dear Hawthorne. So your joy-giving and exultation-breeding letter is not my reward for my ditcher's work with that book, but is the good goddess's bonus over and above what was stipulated – for not one man in five cycles, who is wise, will expect appreciative recognition from his fellows, or any one of them. Appreciation! Recognition! Is love appreciated? Why, ever since Adam, who has got to the meaning of this great allegory – the world? Then we pygmies must be content to have our paper allegories but ill comprehended. I say your appreciation is my glorious gratuity. In my proud, humble way, – a shepherd-king, – I was lord of a little vale in the solitary Crimea; but you have now given me the crown of India. But on trying it on my head, I found it fell down on my ears, notwithstanding their asinine length – for it's only such ears that sustain such crowns. Your letter was handed me last night on the road going to Mr. Morewood's, and I read it there. Had I been at home, I would have sat down at once and answered it. In me divine maganimities are spontaneous and instantaneous – catch them while you can. The world goes round, and the other side comes up. So now I can't write what I felt. But I felt pantheistic then – your heart beat in my ribs and mine in yours, and both in God's. A sense of unspeakable security is in me this moment, on account of your having understood the book. I have written a wicked book, and feel spotless as the lamb. Ineffable socialities are in me. I would sit down and dine with you and all the gods in old Rome's Pantheon. It is a strange feeling – no hopefulness is in it, no despair. Content – that is it; and irresponsibility; but without licentious inclination. I speak now of my profoundest sense of being, not of an incidental feeling. Whence come you, Hawthorne? By what right do you drink from my flagon of life? And when I put it to my lips – lo, they are yours and not mine. I feel that the Godhead is broken up like the bread at the Supper, and that we are the pieces. Hence this infinite fraternity of feeling. Now, sympathizing with the paper, my angel turns over another page. you did not care a penny for the book. But, now and then as you read, you understood the pervading thought that impelled the book – and that you praised. Was it not so? You were archangel enough to despise the imperfect body, and embrace the soul. Once you hugged the ugly Socrates because you saw the flame in the mouth, and heard the rushing of the demon, – the familiar, – and recognized the sound; for you have heard it in your own solitudes. My dear Hawthorne, the atmospheric skepticisms steal into me now, and make me doubtful of my sanity in writing you thus. But, believe me, I am not mad, most noble Festus! But truth is ever incoherent, and when the big hearts strike together, the concussion is a little stunning. Farewell. Don't write a word about the book. That would be robbing me of my miserly delight. I am heartily sorry I ever wrote anything about you – it was paltry. Lord, when shall we



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be done growing? As long as we have anything more to do, we have done nothing. So, now, let us add Moby Dick to our blessing, and step from that. Leviathan is not the biggest fish; – I have heard of Krakens. This is a long letter, but you are not at all bound to answer it. Possibly, if you do answer it, and direct it to Herman Melville, you will missend it – for the very fingers that now guide this pen are not precisely the same that just took it up and put it on this paper. Lord, when shall we be done changing? Ah! it's a long stage, and no inn in sight, and night coming, and the body cold. But with you for a passenger, I am content and can be happy. I shall leave the world, I feel, with more satisfaction for having come to know you. Knowing you persuades me more than the Bible of our immortality. What a pity, that, for your plain, bluff letter, you should get such gibberish! Mention me to Mrs. Hawthorne and to the children, and so, good-by to you, with my blessing. Herman. P.S. I can't stop yet. If the world was entirely made up of Magians, I'll tell you what I should do. I should have a paper-mill established at one end of the house, and so have an endless riband of foolscap rolling in upon my desk; and upon that endless riband I should write a thousand – a million – billion thoughts, all under the form of a letter to you. The divine magnet is on you, and my magnet responds. Which is the biggest? A foolish question – they are One. H.

P.P.S. Don't think that by writing me a letter, you shall always be bored with an immediate reply to it – and so keep both of us delving over a writing-desk eternally. No such thing! I sh'n't always answer your letters, and you may do just as you please.

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December 4: The [Chinese Christian](#) ruler [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, invested in his newly conquered city of Yongnan in the Guangxi province of [China](#), created an entire set of highly imaginative hereditary titles for his [Taiping](#) officers and officials. There were not only going to be brutal physical punishments in the [太平天國](#) Kingdom of Heaven on earth, there were going to be flowery verbal rewards as well.



CHINESE CIVIL WAR
MILLENNIALISM



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1852

June 3, Thursday: [Feng Yün-shan](#) 馮雲山 died of battle wounds during the conquest of Quanzhou in the Guangxi province of [China](#). At this point the Christian group had morphed from a bunch of ragged peasants attracted by a notion of communal ownership into a group capable of fielding a totally disciplined army of more than 1,000,000 zealot soldiers of Christ divided according to gender into men's and women's divisions.⁹ In this army, married couples were not allowed sexual intercourse at all, but the [太平天國](#) [Taiping](#) leaders, including [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, were allowed enormous harems.¹⁰

CHINESE CIVIL WAR

9. Were you wondering why it happens to be the case that in the 1990s, the Communists of the PRC consider the proper place for a Chinese Christian to be in a prison labor camp for life without the possibility of parole? —The Central Committee has reason to know what Christians are like when they begin to become obstreperous. —They consider that they themselves had their origination as these peasant *Han* Chinese Christian chauvinists of the 19th Century!

10. They were taking the attitude toward sex that President George W. Bush would take toward money: It's for rich people only.

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1853

March: The Emperor [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 sent his trusted courier Yeh to Canton to invite the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 to visit the grand new capital of 30 millions of [Christian Chinese](#) at Nanjing on the Yangzi River. (Roberts would make it as far as the lower reaches of the Yangzi River of [China](#), but there he would be intercepted and turned back by a *Qing* patrol boat.)



Though it is so long since we parted, yet I constantly cherish a remembrance of you. Now that the grateful breezes of spring salute men, while distant, I have thought of you, my venerated elder brother. It is indeed praiseworthy that you have traversed myriads of leagues of ocean to publish the true doctrine of the



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Redeemer, and that you, with all your heart, serve the Lord. I respectfully make known to you that, notwithstanding my unworthiness and incapacity, the Heavenly Father has not cast me off; but, in the fulness of his grace, has enabled me to obtain possession of the extensive region embraced in the Liang-hu and Kiang-nan (Hoo-nan, Hoo-peh, Ngan-hwui, and Kiang-su). I have written to you several times, but have yet received no answer to my letters.

In consequence of the multiplicity of public affairs engaging my attention, I have not had leisure to instruct [the people] morning and evening. But I have promulgated the Ten Commandments to the army and to the rest of the population, and have taught them all to pray morning and evening. Still, those who understand the Gospel are not many. Therefore I deem it right to send the messenger ... in person to wish you peace, and to request you, my elder brother, if you are not disposed to abandon me, to [come and] bring with you many brethren to help to propagate the Gospel and administer the ordinance of baptism. So shall we obtain the true doctrine. Hereafter, when my enterprise is successfully terminated, I will disseminate the doctrine throughout the whole empire, that all may return to the one Lord, and worship only the true God. This is what my heart truly desires. I refrain from alluding to other matters than the above, and say no more at present. Wishing you happiness, your ignorant younger brother, Hung-siu-tsuen, salutes you.

THE TAEPING REBELLION

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March 29, Tuesday: The [Chinese Christian](#) ruler [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 entered his new capital city of Nanjing, followed by his 32 main women, each of them carrying an imperial yellow parasol (this would have been his way to indicate himself to be not only the possessor of a California-kingsize bed but also — the true emperor of [China](#)).



(The [Taipings](#) were deleting the last eight verses of Genesis 19 from their Bible. They just couldn't deal with Lot's daughters having gotten themselves PG by their father.)

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May: The [Chinese Christian](#) forces of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” launched a major offensive into North [China](#), a column of 70,000 aimed directly at the “demon’s den” of Beijing and the control there of the foreign *Qing* emperor. This expedition would not succeed, the demon *Qing* armies retreating before them following a careful and thorough scorched-earth policy — else the history of China would be most radically different from what it has been during our lifetimes.

This was Zheng Guo-fan, the loyalist general:



Meanwhile, in Canton, a messenger presented to the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 the letter from [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 inviting him to come to the new capital city of Nanjing to propagate the [Baptist](#) gospel.

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1854

May 27, Saturday: US Commissioner Robert McLane visited the rebel kingdom at Nanjing in his warship, the *Susquehanna*. The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 had asked to be taken along to respond to his standing invitation from his old friend [Hung Hsiu Ch'uan](#) 洪秀全 who had proclaimed himself the real emperor, but the Commissioner had refused this.



Meanwhile, the [Chinese Christian Army](#) invading North China had been encircled by *Qing* troops loyal to the emperor of Beijing, and by mobilized corvee labor of peasants an entire river had been redirected into their camp to swamp them, and they had elected to make a last stand in the city of Lianzhen — where in a siege that

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would last fully eight months they were being slowly annihilated.

THE TAEPING REBELLION

This was Zheng Guo-fan, the loyalist general:





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1856

Leaving his family in the United States, the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 returned early in this year to [Canton](#) by way of the isthmus of Panama and San Francisco. “Old Roberts” would need to wait four years in Canton and Hong Kong before way would open for him to pay his anticipated influential visit to the Taiping “Heavenly King” in Nanking, [Hung Hsiu Ch’üan](#) 洪秀全.

In Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)’s report of his expedition to open [Japan](#) he opined that “the people of America” would be able “in some form or other” eventually to “extend their dominion and their power” until they have “placed the Saxon race upon the Eastern shores of Asia.”¹¹

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.

Hung Hsiu Chuan

“Stack of the Artist of Kouroo” Project

11. This attitude of Commodore [Matthew Calbraith Perry](#)’s would be repeatedly referred to, with approval, in the 1940s and early 1950s, by the intelligence sidekick General Douglas MacArthur referred to as “my little fascist,” General Charles A. Willoughby (“Willoughby” was an Englishing of the Junker family name “von Tschepp-Weidenbach,” and this intelligence chief was not only a racist but also an unequivocal and exceedingly vocal Antisemite.)

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September 2, Tuesday: [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 had one of his generals, Yang, murdered by another, Wei, because this general had had the temerity to remonstrate with the little [Chinese](#) brother of Jesus Christ for kicking one of his concubines. (Later, Hung would have General Wei murdered in his turn.)¹²



Five Foot Five and Born to Kill

[Henry Thoreau](#) wrote to [Friend Daniel Ricketson](#).

Concord Sep 2nd '56

Friend Ricketson,

My father & mother regret that your indisposition is likely to prevent your coming to Concord at present. It is as well that you do not, if you depend on seeing me, for I expect to go to New Hampshire the latter part of the week. I shall be glad to see you afterward, if you are prepared for & can endure my unsocial habits.

I would suggest that you have one or two of the teeth — which you can best spare, extracted at once — for the sake of your general no less than particular health. This is the advice of one who has had quite his share of toothache in this world. — I am a trifle stouter than when I saw you last, yet far — far short of my best estate. I thank you for two newspapers which you have sent me — am glad to see that you have studied out the history of the ponds, got the Indian names straightened — which means made more crooked. — &c &c — I re-

12. Lest we speculate that this is mere Oriental barbarism, we should reflect on the fact that Hung's behavior seems remarkably similar to that of John "The Prophet" of Leyden, leader of a sect of Anabaptists, who in about 1535 or 1536 cut off the head of a wife who had spoken disrespectfully to him — cut off her head in the presence of his other wives. In that incident in Germany, the religious leader and his remaining wives then danced around the dead body.



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member them with great satisfaction. They are all the more interesting to me for the lean & sandy soil that surrounds them. Heaven is not one your fertile Ohio bottoms, you may depend on it. Ah, the Middleboro Ponds! — Great Platte Lakes! Remember me to the perch in them. I trust that I may have some better craft than that oarless pumpkin-seed the next time I navigate them.— From the size of your family I infer that Mrs Ricketson & your daughters have returned from Franconia. Please remember me to them, & also to Arthur & Walton, & tell the latter that if in the course of his fishing he should chance to come across the shell of a terrapin & will save it for me, I shall be exceedingly obliged to him.

Channing dropped in on us the other day, but soon dropped out again.

Yrs

Henry D. Thoreau.



Sept. 2: P.M. — To Painted Cup Meadow.

Clear bright days of late, with a peculiar sheen on the leaves, — light reflected from the surface of each one, for they are grown and worn and washed smooth at last, no infantile downiness on them. This, say ever since August 26th, and we have had no true dog-day weather since the copious rains began, or three or four weeks. A sheeny light reflected from the burnished leaves as so many polished shields, and a steady creak from the locusts these days. Frank Harding has caught a dog-day locust which lit on the bottom of my boat, in which he was sitting, and z-ed there. When you hear him you have got to the end of the alphabet and may imagine the &. It has a mark somewhat like a small writing *w* on the top of its thorax.

A few pigeons [**American Passenger Pigeon**  *Ectopistes migratorius*] were seen a fortnight ago. I have noticed none in all walks, but G. Minott, whose mind runs to them so much, but whose age and infirmities confine him to his woodshed on the hillside, saw a small flock a fortnight ago. I rarely pass at any season of the year but he asks if I have seen any pigeons. One man's mind running on pigeons, [he] will sit thus in the midst of a village, many of whose inhabitants never see nor dream of a pigeon except in the pot, and where even naturalists do not observe [them], and he, looking out with expectation and faith from morning till night, will surely see them.

I think we may detect that some sort of preparation and faint expectation preceded every discovery we have made. We blunder into no discovery but it will appear that we have prayed and disciplined ourselves for it. Some years ago I sought for Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*) hereabouts in vain, and concluded that it did not grow here. A month or two ago I read again, as many times before, that its blossoms were very small, scarcely a third as large as those of the common species, and for some unaccountable reason this distinction kept recurring to me, and I regarded the size of the flowers I saw, though I did not believe that it grew here; and in a day or two my eyes fell on [it], aye, in three different places, and different varieties of it. Also, a short time ago, I was satisfied that there was but one kind of sunflower (*divaricatus*) indigenous here. Hearing that one had found another kind, it occurred to me that I had seen a taller one than usual lately, but not so distinctly did I remember this as to name it to him or even fully remember it myself. (I rather remembered it afterward.) But within that hour my genius conducted me to where I had seen the tall plants, and it was the other man's new kind. The next day I found a third kind, miles from there, and, a few days after, a fourth in another direction.

It commonly chances that I make my most interesting botanical discoveries when I [am] in a thrilled and expectant mood, perhaps wading in some remote swamp where I have just found something novel and feel more than usually remote from the town. Or some rare plant which for some reason has occupied a strangely prominent place in my thoughts for some time will present itself. My expectation ripens to discovery. I am prepared for strange things. My father asked John Legross if he took an interest in politics and did his duty to his country at this crisis. He said he did. He went into the wood-shed and read the newspaper Sundays. Such is the dawn of the literary taste, the first seed of literature that is planted in the new country. His grandson may be

GEORGE MINOTT



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the author of a Bhagvat-Geeta.

I see bright-yellow blossoms on perfectly crimson *Hypericum angulosum* in the *S. lanceolata* path. By the Indian hemp at the stone bridge, am surprised to see the *Salix lucida*, a small tree with very marked and handsome leaves, on the sand, water's edge, at the great eddy. The branches of an inch in diameter are smooth and ash-colored, maple-like; the recent shoots stout and yellowish-green, very brittle at base. The leaves are the largest of any willow I have seen, ovate-oblong or ovate-lanceolate, with a long, narrow, tapering point (cuspidate), some on vigorous shoots, two and a half by seven inches wide in the blade, glandular-serrate, with pedicellate glands at the rounded base, thick, smooth, and glossy above, smooth and green beneath, with broad crescent-shaped, glandular-toothed stipules at base of petioles, five eighths to one inch long. According to Emerson, "Sir W.J. Hooker says it is one of the most generally diffused of all the willows in British North America."

Captain Hubbard said on Sunday that he had plowed up an Indian gouge, but how little impression that had made on him compared with the rotting of his cranberries or the loss of meadow-grass! It seemed to me that it made an inadequate impression compared with many trivial events. Suppose he had plowed up five dollars!

The botanist refers you, for wild [*sic*] and we presume wild plants, further inland or westward to so many miles from Boston, as if Nature or the Indians had any such preferences. Perchance the ocean seemed wilder to them than the woods. As if there were primarily and essentially any more wildness in a western acre than an eastern one!

The *S. lucida* makes about the eleventh willow that I have distinguished. When I find a new and rare plant in Concord I seem to think it has but just sprung up here, — that it is, and not I am, the newcomer, — while it has grown here for ages before I was born. It transports me in imagination to the Saskatchewan. It grows alike on the bank of the Concord and of the Mackenzie River, proving them a kindred soil. I see their broad and glossy leaves reflecting the autumn light this moment all along those rivers. Through this leaf I communicate with the Indians who roam the boundless Northwest. It tastes the same nutriment in sand of the Assabet and its water as in that of the Saskatchewan and Jasper Lake, suggesting that a short time ago the shores of this river were as wild as the shores of those.

We are dwelling amid these wild plants still, we are eating the huckleberries which lately only the Indian ate and dried, we are raising and eating his wild and nutritive maize, and if we have imported wheat, it is but our wild rice, which we annually gather with grateful awe, like Chippewas. Potatoes are our groundnuts.

Spiranthes cernua, apparently some days at least, though not yet generally; a cool, late flower, growing with fringed gentian. I cannot yet even find the leaves of the latter — at the house-leek brook. I had come to the Assabet, but could not wade the river, it was so deep and swift. The very meadow, poke-logan, was a quarter of a mile long and as deep as the river before. So I had come round over the bridge.

In Painted-Cup Meadow the ferns are yellowing, imbrowned, and crisped, as if touched by frost (?), yet it may be owing to the rains. It is evident that, at this season, excessive rain will ripen and kill the leaves as much as a drought does earlier. I think our strawberries recently set out have died, partly in consequence. Perhaps they need some dryness as well as warmth it this season. Plainly dog-days and rain have had the most to do as yet with the changing and falling of the leaves. So trees by water change earliest, sassafras at Cardinal Shore, for example, while those on hill are not turned red at all. These ferns I see, with here and there a single maple bough turned scarlet, — this quite rare.

Some of the small early blueberry bushes are a clear red (*Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum*), and the lingering clusters of blueberries contrast strangely with the red leaves of the *V. vacillans*. Smooth sumachs show quite red on dry, warm hillsides.

While I am plucking the almost spicy blueberries amid the crimson leaves there on the springy slope, the cows gather toward the outlet of their pastures and low for the herdsman, reminding me that the day is drawing to a close.

Centaurea will apparently be entirely done in a week.

How deceptive these maps of western rivers! Methought they were scattered according to the fancy of the map-maker, — were dry channels at best, — but it turns out that the Missouri at Nebraska City is three times as wide as the Mississippi at Burlington, and Grasshopper Creek, perhaps, will turn out to be as big as the Thames or Hudson.

There was an old gentleman here to-day who lived in Concord when he was young and remembers how Dr. Ripley talked to him and other little boys from the pulpit, as they came into church with their hands full of lilies, saying that those lilies looked so fresh that they must have been gathered that morning! Therefore they must have committed the sin of bathing this morning! Why, this is as sacred a river as the Ganges, sir.

I feel this difference between great poetry and small: that in the one, the sense outruns and overflows the words; in the other, the words the sense.

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(Lakota women gathering wild rice — by Captain Seth Eastman)

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1858

November 20/21: James Bruce, Lord Elgin, visited the capital of the [Chinese Christian](#) kingdom, Nanjing on the Yangzi River, as the special plenipotentiary of Her Britannic Majesty, in her warship, the *Shannon*. There was a certain amount of unauthorized cannon fire from the [Chinese](#) shoreline, to which the vessel of course responded devastatingly. The rebel emperor [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 made inquiry, on a scroll of yellow silk with brush characters in vermilion, as to whether the Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 was aboard the vessel, but the British lord made no reply to this message.

Here is the Great Seal of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or "Central Kingdom of Great Peace," which presumably was impressed upon this disregarded communication:



THE TAEPING REBELLION

By these years the Christian king had become so much the victim of his own paranoid delusions that when, at one point, he proved willing listen to a suggestion from a minister, this event was recorded by one near to him as "the luck of the Kingdom."

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1860

September: At the capital of the [Chinese Christian](#) empire, Nanjing on the Yangzi River, the rebel emperor [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 was being fascinated by a Chinese edition of [John Bunyan's](#) [THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS](#). Such materials were equal to the BIBLE!



October 13, Saturday: The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 arrived finally at the capital of the [Chinese Christian](#) empire, [Nanking](#) on the Yangtze River, after having been delayed in Shanghai for some 15 months, and after a day or two of waiting would be given a proper set of colorful silk court clothing and be allowed his audience with his dear old friend the *T'ien Wang* Heavenly King [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全. After a bit of difficulty when the missionary was unwilling to go down on both his knees before the monarch, the monarch would relent slightly on this ceremonial detail¹³ and offer the missionary life-and-death authority over the affairs of all individual foreigners visiting this Peaceable Kingdom, and an opportunity to become spiritual father over 30,000,000 [Chinese](#) souls. However, it was soon to become unavoidable that the rebel emperor in addition to sponsoring a version of Christianity was directly channeling God, and frequently saying things such as "I am the one savior of the chosen people."

THE TAEPING REBELLION

At one point during the conversation the king offered the missionary three Chinese wives. He proposed that

13. What happened was that as the missionary was waiting with a group of other dignitaries, the prime minister, standing near the monarch, suddenly cried out: "Mr. Roberts, worship the Heavenly Father." The group of dignitaries fell to their knees, Roberts included, and a Christian prayer was offered. During the prayer the missionary managed to turn his body away from the monarch. When all rose from their knees, with the exception of Roberts they genuflected in the direction of the monarch.



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the missionary return to the foreign world to inform Christians of details of the Taiping faith such as, for instance, that this Chinese monarch was Jesus Christ's younger brother. The missionary was disturbed to note that these Chinese Christians were worshiping God when the Jews did, on a Saturday, rather than as proper Christians did, on the Sunday holy day of rest.

It was also soon to be noticed that court etiquette was going to require the foreign minister to kneel repeatedly before the emperor while doing him worship as the younger brother of Jesus Christ. The relationship between the emperor and the minister was clearly to be identical to the relationship that had been established in England between King Henry VIII and his Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer, in which the monarch did double duty as chief theologian while the cleric did double duty as primary loyal flunky and bottle washer and apologist and executioner. Roberts had brought with him new translations of books of the BIBLE, commented by [Baptist](#) scholars. But in his palace, Hung had for some time been busily making corrections in the margins of the translations already in his possession, corrections such as deleting the modifier "only" in the phrase "only begotten son." No, this just wasn't going to work!

MILLENNIALISM

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN





HUNG HSIU CHUAN

HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1862

January 20, Monday: The Reverend [Issachar J. Roberts](#) 罗孝全 fled finally from the Nanjing capital of the rebel [Chinese Christian](#) emperor [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全 (where a number of Taiping leaders were hoping to be rid of him and “the sooner the better”), to a British vessel moored nearby on the Yangtze River (and from thence back to Canton by way of Shanghai).



Hung was a crazy man, entirely unfit to rule without any organized government; nor is he, with his coolie kings, capable of organizing a government of equal benefit to the people with even the old imperial government. He is violent in his temper, and lets his wrath fall heavily upon his people, making a man or woman “an offender for a word,” and ordering such instantly to be murdered without judge or jury. He is opposed to commerce, having had more than a dozen of his own people murdered since I have been here, for no other crime than trading in the city, and has promptly repelled every foreign effort to establish lawful commerce here among them, whether inside of the city or not. His religious toleration, and multiplicity of chapels, turn out to be a farce, of no avail in the spread of Christianity – worse than useless.

THE TAEPING REBELLION

This change of heart about the “Christians” of [China](#) would be producing ripples in the missionary world:



The Christian world has had high hopes from the prospective success of the rebel arms in China, but late accounts show them to be void of foundation. Reverend I.J. Roberts ... has been compelled to flee from his celestial neophytes [*sic*] in order to save his life, and now denounces them as sham religionists and bloodthirsty usurpers.

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HUNG HSIU CHUAN

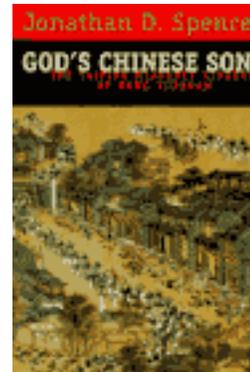
HUNG HSIU CHUAN

1864

June 30, Thursday: In besieged Nanjing, the ailing younger-brother-of-[Jesus-Christ](#) leader of the [Chinese Christian Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo](#) or “Central Kingdom of Great Peace” movement, [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, who had repeatedly refused to provision his capitol against siege and had repeatedly refused to exit while he still could, at this point killed himself by swallowing gold leaf.¹⁴



MILLENNIALISM



洪秀全

CHINA

14. Or so the sources say. But I simply do not understand. I do not understand how one might kill oneself with such a substance as gold, which I was supposing would be quite biologically inert. In a healthy young person, I would suppose off the top of my gourd, the ingestion of quantities of gold leaf would merely cause a balling up of the leaf in the intestines, and any quantity of this would pass through the body as pellets. –Perhaps, in an ailing, elderly person, if the gold leaf were accompanied by quantities of [opium](#), an opium coma might result, and in addition to the constipation which is a normal concomitant of opium consumption, one's absorption of nutrients might be somewhat retarded? I don't know, I'm clueless, and I remain clueless after interrogating any number of knowledgeable Chinese on this topic. In such a case, I would suppose, the OD of opium would be what would be doing the real work of suicide, and the primary function of the gold leaf, it would seem, would be to mark the death as an important death? –Obviously, I'm guessing here.

(Here's a thought. Sterling Seagrave suggests that causing someone to swallow gold leaf was a common enough method for murder in China at this time, but, he states, the gold did its work slowly and the process was agonizing. He indicates that the gold leaf method was thus not a good one for purposes of suicide, that for suicide the overdose of opium was much to be preferred. Does Seagrave know what he is talking about or is he merely blowing smoke up our butts?)

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July 19, Tuesday: The longest and bloodiest [Civil War](#) of which we have ever had any information, the rebellion that had begun in [China](#) in 1850, reached a culmination as the Confucian and Buddhist forces of the *Ch'ing* emperor in Beijing recaptured Nanking, capital of the *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or "Central Kingdom of Great Peace." The ailing leader [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, younger brother of [Jesus](#) Christ or not, had already offed himself, and now some 100,000 of his fellow [Chinese Christian](#) were following him to the grave. Approximately 10,000 Christians were alive as of the fall of the city, so many that it would require the following three days, July 20, July 21, and July 22, for the Beijing forces to exterminate them all.¹⁵



15. By way of contrast, during WWII the city, again a capital, would be just chockablock with refugees when the Japanese Army arrived, and so in the re-rape of Nanjing during the 20th Century approximately twice as many civilians would be put to the bayonet.

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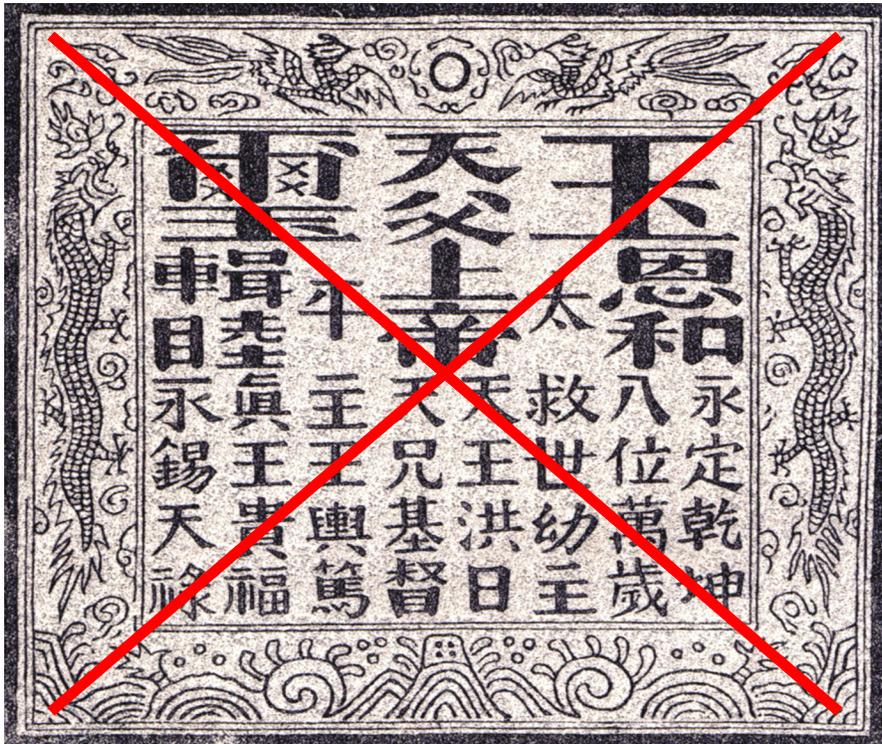
HUNG HSIU CHUAN

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July 30, Saturday: As the colonel of Holcombe's legion [Stephen Elliott](#) had been ordered to Petersburg, Virginia, where he was soon promoted to Brigadier-General and assigned to the command of N.G. Evans's old brigade, which included that legion. He served actively in the defense of Petersburg, his brigade, a part of Bushrod Johnson's division, holding that important part of the line selected by the Federals as the point to be mined, and carried by an assaulting party. Two of his regiments, the 18th and 22d, occupied the works blown up on this morning, and the immense displacement of earth which formed the crater maimed and buried many of the men of his command. While fighting to defend the breach, General Elliott was seriously wounded.¹⁶

[US CIVIL WAR](#)

Meanwhile, in liberated Nanjing, the body of the leader of the [Chinese Christian](#) *Tai-p'ing T'ien-kuo* or "Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace" 太平天國 movement, [Hung Hsiu Ch'üan](#) 洪秀全, was being discovered in a sewer attired in imperial yellow satin embroidered with dragons (both this particular color and this particular figure were of course in [China](#) reserved to the emperor). The head, bald, with gray mustache, was detached, and then the remainder of the corpse was cut into pieces and burned.¹⁷



16. This is not the Professor [Stephen Elliott](#) of South Carolina whose botany textbook Henry Thoreau consulted, but his grandson.
 17. Presumably this would have served a variety of purposes. The head could go to Beijing to certify to this rebel's actual demise. The skull might at some point surface in the collectors' market as having been preserved as a memento by one or another general. The body of course would need to be disposed of in such a manner as to ensure that there would be no sacred relics, and also, presumably, in such manner as to recover the gold leaf from the interior of the corpse.



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“NARRATIVE HISTORY” IS FABULATION, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY

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“It’s all now you see. Yesterday won’t be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago.”

– Remark by character “Garin Stevens”
in William Faulkner’s INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: January 7, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.