

on to fight, the result is RUIN.

[Wang Hsi's note is: "This means, the general is angry without cause, and at the same time does not appreciate the ability of his subordinate officers; thus he arouses fierce resentment and brings an avalanche of ruin upon his head."]

18. When the general is weak and without authority; when his orders are not clear and distinct;

[Wei Liao Tzu (ch. 4) says: "If the commander gives his orders with decision, the soldiers will not wait to hear them twice; if his moves are made without vacillation, the soldiers will not be in two minds about doing their duty." General Baden-Powell says, italicizing the words: "The secret of getting successful work out of your trained men lies in one nutshell--in the clearness of the instructions they receive." [3] Cf. also Wu Tzu ch. 3: "the most fatal defect in a military leader is difference; the worst calamities that befall an army arise from hesitation."]

when there are no fixed duties assigned to officers and men,

[Tu Mu says: "Neither officers nor men have any regular routine."]

and the ranks are formed in a slovenly haphazard manner, the result is utter DISORGANIZATION.

19. When a general, unable to estimate the enemy's strength, allows an inferior force to engage a larger one, or hurls a weak detachment against a powerful one, and neglects to place picked soldiers in the front rank, the result must be ROUT.

[Chang Yu paraphrases the latter part of the sentence and continues: "Whenever there is fighting to be done, the keenest spirits should be appointed to serve in the front ranks, both in order to strengthen the resolution of our own men and to demoralize the enemy." Cf. the *primi ordines* of Caesar ("De Bello Gallico," V. 28, 44, et al.).]

20. These are six ways of courting defeat, which must be carefully noted by the general who has attained a responsible post.

[See *supra*, ss. 13.]

21. The natural formation of the country is the soldier's best ally;

[Ch'en Hao says: "The advantages of weather and season are not equal to those connected with ground."]

but a power of estimating the adversary, of controlling the forces of victory, and of shrewdly calculating difficulties, dangers and distances, constitutes the test of a great general.

22. He who knows these things, and in fighting puts his knowledge into practice, will win his battles. He who knows them not, nor practices them, will surely be defeated.

23. If fighting is sure to result in victory, then you must fight, even though the ruler forbid it; if fighting will not