

that 'in river warfare we must not advance against the stream,' which is as much as to say that our fleet must not be anchored below that of the enemy, for then they would be able to take advantage of the current and make short work of us." There is also the danger, noted by other commentators, that the enemy may throw poison on the water to be carried down to us.]

So much for river warfare.

7. In crossing salt-marshes, your sole concern should be to get over them quickly, without any delay.

[Because of the lack of fresh water, the poor quality of the herbage, and last but not least, because they are low, flat, and exposed to attack.]

8. If forced to fight in a salt-marsh, you should have water and grass near you, and get your back to a clump of trees.

[Li Ch'uan remarks that the ground is less likely to be treacherous where there are trees, while Tu Mu says that they will serve to protect the rear.]

So much for operations in salt-marches.

9. In dry, level country, take up an easily accessible position with rising ground to your right and on your rear,

[Tu Mu quotes T'ai Kung as saying: "An army should have a stream or a marsh on its left, and a hill or tumulus on its right."]

so that the danger may be in front, and safety lie behind. So much for campaigning in flat country.

10. These are the four useful branches of military knowledge

[Those, namely, concerned with (1) mountains, (2) rivers, (3) marshes, and (4) plains. Compare Napoleon's "Military Maxims," no. 1.]

which enabled the Yellow Emperor to vanquish four several sovereigns.

[Regarding the "Yellow Emperor": Mei Yao-ch'en asks, with some plausibility, whether there is an error in the text as nothing is known of Huang Ti having conquered four other Emperors. The SHIH CHI (ch. 1 ad init.) speaks only of his victories over Yen Ti and Ch'ih Yu. In the LIU T'AO it is mentioned that he "fought seventy battles and pacified the Empire." Ts'ao Kung's explanation is, that the Yellow Emperor was the first to institute the feudal system of vassals princes, each of whom (to the number of four) originally bore the title of Emperor. Li Ch'uan tells us that the art of war originated under Huang Ti, who received it from his Minister Feng Hou.]

11. All armies prefer high ground to low.

["High Ground," says Mei Yao-ch'en, "is not only more agreement and salubrious, but more convenient from a military point of view; low ground is not only damp and unhealthy, but

also disadvantageous for fighting."]

and sunny places to dark.

12. If you are careful