

eat point with the Chinese.]

62. This is called ability to accomplish a thing by sheer cunning.

63. On the day that you take up your command, block the frontier passes, destroy the official tallies,

[These were tablets of bamboo or wood, one half of which was issued as a permit or passport by the official in charge of a gate. Cf. the "border-warden" of LUN YU III. 24, who may have had similar duties. When this half was returned to him, within a fixed period, he was authorized to open the gate and let the traveler through.]

and stop the passage of all emissaries.

[Either to or from the enemy's country.]

64. Be stern in the council-chamber,

[Show no weakness, and insist on your plans being ratified by the sovereign.]

so that you may control the situation.

[Mei Yao-ch'en understands the whole sentence to mean: Take the strictest precautions to ensure secrecy in your deliberations.]

65. If the enemy leaves a door open, you must rush in.

66. Forestall your opponent by seizing what he holds dear,

[Cf. supra, ss. 18.]

and subtly contrive to time his arrival on the ground.

[Ch'en Hao's explanation: "If I manage to seize a favorable position, but the enemy does not appear on the scene, the advantage thus obtained cannot be turned to any practical account. He who intends therefore, to occupy a position of importance to the enemy, must begin by making an artful appointment, so to speak, with his antagonist, and cajole him into going there as well." Mei Yao-ch'en explains that this "artful appointment" is to be made through the medium of the enemy's own spies, who will carry back just the amount of information that we choose to give them. Then, having cunningly disclosed our intentions, "we must manage, though starting after the enemy, to arrive before him (VII. ss. 4). We must start after him in order to ensure his marching thither; we must arrive before him in order to capture the place without trouble. Taken thus, the present passage lends some support to Mei Yao-ch'en's interpretation of ss. 47.]

67. Walk in the path defined by rule,

[Chia Lin says: "Victory is the only thing that matters, and this cannot be achieved by adhering to conventional canons." It is unfortunate that this variant rests on very slight authority, for the sense yielded is certainly much more satisfactory. Napoleon, as we know, according to the veterans of

the old school whom he defeated, won his battles by violating every accepted canon of warfare.]

and accommodate yourself to the enemy until you can