

Ch'ang-she, which was held by Huang-fu Sung. The garrison was very small, and a general feeling of nervousness pervaded the ranks; so Huang-fu Sung called his officers together and said: "In war, there are various indirect methods of attack, and numbers do not count for everything. [The commentator here quotes Sun Tzu, V. SS. 5, 6 and 10.] Now the rebels have pitched their camp in the midst of thick grass which will easily burn when the wind blows. If we set fire to it at night, they will be thrown into a panic, and we can make a sortie and attack them on all sides at once, thus emulating the achievement of T'ien Tan.' [See p. 90.] That same evening, a strong breeze sprang up; so Huang-fu Sung instructed his soldiers to bind reeds together into torches and mount guard on the city walls, after which he sent out a band of daring men, who stealthily made their way through the lines and started the fire with loud shouts and yells. Simultaneously, a glare of light shot up from the city walls, and Huang-fu Sung, sounding his drums, led a rapid charge, which threw the rebels into confusion and put them to headlong flight." [HOU HAN SHU, ch. 71.] ]

10. (5) When you start a fire, be to windward of it. Do not attack from the leeward.

[Chang Yu, following Tu Yu, says: "When you make a fire, the enemy will retreat away from it; if you oppose his retreat and attack him then, he will fight desperately, which will not conduce to your success." A rather more obvious explanation is given by Tu Mu: "If the wind is in the east, begin burning to the east of the enemy, and follow up the attack yourself from that side. If you start the fire on the east side, and then attack from the west, you will suffer in the same way as your enemy."]

11. A wind that rises in the daytime lasts long, but a night breeze soon falls.

[Cf. Lao Tzu's saying: "A violent wind does not last the space of a morning." (TAO TE CHING, chap. 23.) Mei Yao-ch'en and Wang Hsi say: "A day breeze dies down at nightfall, and a night breeze at daybreak. This is what happens as a general rule." The phenomenon observed may be correct enough, but how this sense is to be obtained is not apparent.]

12. In every army, the five developments connected with fire must be known, the movements of the stars calculated, and a watch kept for the proper days.

[Tu Mu says: "We must make calculations as to the paths of the stars, and watch for the days on which wind will rise, before making our attack with fire." Chang Yu seems to interpret the text differently: "We must not only know how to assail our