

with a will and mind of his own. So far he has never had a fair chance, as when in power only a limited part of the Province acknowledged his rule ; but if he succeeds in reasserting himself, as seems at present possible, I hope he will be given the chance of proving that he is an efficient ruler, and capable of re-establishing order in this distracted Province.

Szechwan is so broken up by the number of contending factions that a return for it to a state of peace and prosperity seems at the moment remote. Possibly Hsiung K'o-wu may decide to return to political life. He appears to be the most popular figure in the Province, is still young (35), has a reputation for capacity and might develop into a strong man.

To sum up, poor China, torn by contending parties, in which everybody is fighting for his own hand, overwhelmed by an unexampled series of catastrophes in the shape of famines, earthquakes and floods, has never been in such hopeless straits before. The honest, law-abiding Chinese, as represented by the bulk of its population, and also by the merchant, longs for peace and security, whilst the soldiers (a term at present synonymous with brigands), whose numbers are far in excess of all legitimate requirements, see they have the upper hand, and make use of their power to tyrannise over the wretched people. At the same time the students, seeing the weakness generally of their officials, and particularly of the foreigners with whom they come most in contact, are daily becoming more anti-foreign. History may be repeated, as in the case of the Boxer Movement in