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FOREIGN OFFICE, September 30, 1864.

THE Despatch dated July 29, 1864, of which the following is an Extract, has been received by Earl Russell, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from Mr Adkins, Acting British Consul at Chinkiang:—

"I HAVE the honour to inform you that the city of Nankin, so long the centre of disaffection in China and the point from which so many bands of ruthless plunderers have started on their raids upon the peaceful and wealthy cities of Central China, has been captured by the Imperialist Army under the command of Tseng-kwo-chuen, the Governor of Chekiang, and brother of the Viceroy of the provinces of Kiang Nan and Kiang Su.

"The city was stormed on the 19th of this month through a breach caused by a mine sprung under the wall, near the east gate. Rumours of its capture reached me on the day following the assault, but I paid no attention to them, having been so often deceived by reports of Chinese victories. On the 24th of this month, however, I obtained a copy of the memorial to the Throne, formally announcing the capture.

"On the following day I started for Nankin in Her Majesty's ship 'Slaney,' intending to congratulate the Chinese Commander-in-Chief on the auspicious termination of his two years' siege. I found His Excellency at his camp outside the south gate of the city.

"When the Imperialists made good their entrance into the city, they found that the palace of the Tien Wang, the leader of the rebellion, and the claimant for many years past of Divine honours and attributes, had been burnt to the ground. It is said that the impostor and his immediate attendants lie buried in its ruins. I am inclined to credit the rumour, for the city has been closely blockaded since January last, and I think that nothing but a desperate sortie would have enabled him to get clear.

"But the most important fact of all is the capture of Chung Wang. This person has for many years been the most restless and determined of all the desperadoes Tai-ping-dom has sent forth. He it was who threatened Shanghai in 1860; he was Admiral Hope's antagonist in his operations near

Shanghai; he fought against Colonel Gordon at Soochow; he tried to introduce the foreign element into his levies, and was said by rebel sympathisers to be the main hope of the Tai-ping cause in its declining days. After the assault he managed to leave the city with a few followers, but he was captured three days subsequently by a party of cavalry. I was much pressed to visit the Chung Wang in his confinement, but declined, as I had no personal acquaintance with him.

"On the day following my interview with the Commander-in-Chief I rode into the city and visited the breach. Words cannot describe the utter desolation of everything within the walls. The main thoroughfares traversed by me were the streets between the south-west and east gates, and those between the south-west and south gates. On either hand, the houses left standing had the appearance of having been tenantless for years, while the gaudy gateways, denoting the residences of the wangs or princes, opened in most instances on to courts full of brick-bats and charred timbers. As for the side streets they were many of them overgrown with jungle four feet high.

"During my ride through the city I saw a great number of unburied bodies, and in many places the smell was so offensive that both myself, and Lieutenant Lee who accompanied me, were almost overpowered. But on the whole I came to the conclusion that the rebel force in the city at the time of its capture could not have been very large. The Imperialists, according to their own account, spared very few able-bodied males, so that the dead lying in the streets would be a fair criterion of the strength of the garrison. I estimate it at 10,000 men, against 50,000 under the Imperialist Commanders.

"I think a ride through the streets of Nankin, as they are at present, would satisfy the most ardent advocate of the rebel cause of the dreadful hollow ness of the system they support. Some eleven years ago the Tai-pings took Nankin, then one of the finest cities in China. Ever since its capture it has been their head-quarters. In it the chiefs of the movement built their tawdry houses, and from it they dispatched their plumes in all directions. Meanwhile the government and social organization are entirely neglected, and when the city is retaken it is to be a wilderness of empty houses.

