

TRAIL OF THE "REDS" IN CHINA.

FIRE, MURDER, AND RAPINE.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

SHANGHAI, MARCH 8.

Reports of terrible outrages continue to come from all those places in which Communists still predominate. The excesses of the "Reds" at Swabue have been surpassed—if such a thing is possible—by the inhumanities of the Communist forces which Pei Chung-hsi, the commander of the Wuchang Nationalist forces, is gradually sweeping out of Hunan. The *Central China Post*, of Hankow, publishes a vivid description of the horrors of the city of Leiyang. The Communists began by selecting all the principal buildings, to which they set fire, after sprinkling them with kerosene and sulphur. They proceeded to do the like to the principal shops, first looting them thoroughly. The passion for burning which was thus excited ended by their practically burning the whole city. Tortures and murders were perpetrated on a corresponding scale. Not merely individuals but whole families were massacred. Three hundred priests were locked in the main temple and burnt alive. The correspondent of the *North China Daily News* at Siangtan, in South Hunan, in a similar report, says:—

"Burning, looting, and killing follow the Communists wherever they go. A refugee from Chenchow says that there is not a single shop of any consequence which has not been robbed, and many have been burned. The same propaganda is also heard as at Swabue—namely, that certain classes must die to make more room for others. Twenty-six different classes are specified as destined to death."

Wild and improbable as these reports sound, they are easily paralleled in the history of the Taiping Rebellion, and, like the Taipings, the Communists, beginning with a political crusade, have sunk into a mere welter of blood and cruelty.