CHUN TI-KUNG: HIS LIFE AND ADVENTURES. A NOVEL

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Chun Ti-Kung: His Life and Adventures. A Novel by Claude A. Rees

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CLAUDE A. REES

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His Life and Adventures

A Novel

By Claude A. Rees

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1897

CONTENTS

PART I

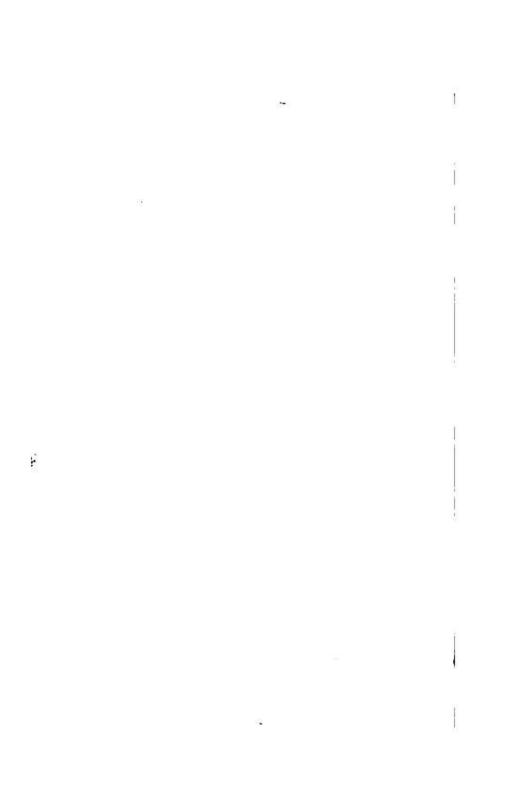
	775200000 E0			
Chapter I	The Ancestral Coffin-shop			Page 3
11	Country Mouse and Town Mouse.			12
111	Bridegroom and Sing-Song Girl .			27
IV	From Shanghai to Hoochow		٠	36
ν	His Uncle the Tao-tai			45
	A Son to worship at his Grave .			49
VII	Work and Play		*	55
	The Tao-tai tells Tales			61
IX	In pursuit of Pirates	٠	٠	73
X	A Bloodless Victory	়	٠	81
XI	Muh Wang's Treasure	×	٠	92
XII	Uncle and Nephew	়	÷	98
XIII	The Tao-tai adopts Chun	*	•	104
XIV	Murder and Suicide	ৢ	ě	ш
XV	Glory and Honour	*	•	119
XVI	Welcome and Farewell	٠	•	125
XVII	Over the Western Seas			130

CONTENTS

PART II

Chapte	And the second and the second									Page
I	An English Maid	4		٠		٠	·			139
II	The East woos the	W	est	٠	20			•	٠	151
111	A perilous Marriag	e	٠	÷	•	٠	(i		•	164
IV	First Misgivings.	÷	*	×	•	200	£	•	٠	175
ν	Disillusion	ŭ.	•	ě	€3	٠	Ŷ.	Ş	•	185
VI	The Fulfords	٠		•	•	•		*	×	195
VII	The Clouds gather	į,	٠	٠					٠	205
VIII	An ill-fated Babe.	35	*	×	80	•		*	36	216
IX	The Blow Falls .		÷	4			÷	÷	•	229
X	Chun's unfortunate	De	lay		•0				٠	235
	Death the Helper.									
XII	Sorrow and Exile			41						252

PART I



PART I

CHAPTER I

THE ANCESTRAL COFFIN-SHOP

CHUN TI-KUNG'S father, Chun Se-fei, kept one of the most popular coffin-shops in a good-sized village called Pa-li Kiao, not far from the Foo City of Chowshing in the Province of Chekiang. Pa-li Kiao, being interpreted, means a bridge eight is distant from some more important town.

Chun Ti-kung's father had been for years gradually putting by coin from his system of investing largely in planks of wood when cheap, and these in almost every year gave him a good return when they were converted into coffins; the price of a coffin for moderately rich people often amounting to £100 or even £150 sterling.

In the periodical famine years, and in the years 1862 and 1863, when the Taiping rebellion had devastated the country for miles around, and corpses were constantly being brought down for some sort of interment, his business increased to such an extent that his stock of boards was considerably reduced, and he found himself a well-to-do man. Many of the corpses belonged