THE LIFE OF CH'IU CHIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE

BY

LIONEL GILES.

The following biography of Ch'iu Chin, the Chinese national heroine, is taken from an edition of her poems published in 1910, three years after her death. It forms a page of history which at present is practically unknown to Europe, but which, in consequence of the revolution of 1911, is likely to be studied with increasing care as the years go by. The postscript to the work has also been translated, as containing certain facts of bibliographical interest.

Biography No 3 from 錄浙案紀畧
“Brief records of the rising in Chehkiang”.

秋瑾 Ch'iu Chin, whose literary style was 賢卿 Hsüan-ch'ing, and fancy-name 競雄 Ching-hsiung [Vie-with-male], and who also took the appellation of 鑑湖女俠 Female Champion

1 The term 俠 was purposely chosen as meaning a redresser of wrong who resorts to militant methods, in contradistinction to the 禦 or man of inward virtue who relies wholly on the civil art of peace and abhors violence in any form. See Ssu-ma Ch'ien's chapter on the 海俠, Shiik Chi 124.
of the Mirror Lake, was a native of Kuei-chi in Chekiang, and belonged to the administrative district of Shan-yin. When a child, she accompanied her father to an official post in Foochow, and afterwards she again went with him to Hunan. At the age of eighteen, she was married to a Hunanese gentleman named Wang, whose personal name was T'ing-ch'un. He acquired by purchase the office of Secretary to a Board, and resided as an expectant official in Peking. Chin accompanied him thither, and became the mother of a son and a daughter. Subsequently, she made an agreement with her husband, whereby the family property was divided, Chin receiving 10,000 ounces of silver. This money she invested in a commercial speculation, but having placed her confidence in an untrustworthy person, she lost the whole of her capital. Moreover, she was now on bad terms with her husband; her relatives and fellow-townsmen of Kuei-chi, Ch'en Ching-ch'ai of Shan-yin, and others tried to bring about a reconciliation between the two, but in vain. So, collecting all the hair ornaments that she possessed, she commissioned Ta-ch'un's second wife, Ti-i, to sell them for her and turn them into money. With the proceeds of this sale she journeyed eastwards and crossed over to Japan, where she meant to settle down for a course of study. Now, it happened that Wang Chao of Ning-ho, who had surrendered himself to stand his trial for complicity in the events of 1898, was then confined in the prison of the Board of Punishments. When this

1 鏡湖 (or 鏡湖) was, according to the 鍾記, an artificial lake constructed for irrigation purposes in A.D. 140 by the Governor Ma Chên on the boundary-line between the districts of Kuei-chi and Shan-yin. It is mentioned in the poems of Tu Fu, Li Po, Yuan Chên and Su Shih, and therefore fittingly enters into the designation of a poetess.

2 "Her family dwelt near the south gate of the city of 郇紹, belonging to the district of Kuei-chi".