

Mythical 47

Chapter 47: Outlook for the Coming Years

Coming from another time and space, Chen Xi naturally knew what industries in this era could quickly accumulate wealth. However, these industries required sufficient military strength to sustain, otherwise, it would be akin to inviting trouble.

Papermaking, in this book-hungry era, was equivalent to printing money. The same applied to printing technology, glass, and lime. These basic inventions were foolproof ways to make money. Don't be deceived by the poverty-stricken appearance of common folk in the late Eastern Han Dynasty; there was still money to be made.

The accumulated wealth of aristocratic families over hundreds of years could be enough to establish a powerful lord. Consider that Cao Song's wealth from just one generation was enough for Cao Cao to start an army. The accumulated wealth of ancient aristocratic families was beyond comprehension.

Moreover, resources were scarce during this time, and Chen Xi had various methods to extract money from these aristocratic families. Despite some bad apples, many individuals in these families had commendable virtues, particularly in terms of integrity and loyalty, which Chen Xi greatly admired.

This was why Chen Xi confidently wrote down the method for producing salt and entrusted it to a soldier to deliver to Su Shuang and Zhang Shiping. Despite potential errors, the era's emphasis on integrity meant they would likely perfect the method and offer it back to Liu Bei without exploiting Chen Xi's technology.

Chen Xi believed that despite the poorer diet of this era, many aspects were superior to the materialistic world he came from. However, he was troubled by the lack of flavorful spices.

In conclusion, there were numerous technologies capable of generating wealth in this era. Even if he couldn't develop them himself, Chen Xi could guide craftsmen to the right direction. The era's positive aspect was that craftsmen, compared to scholars, were at his beck and call, especially with the promise of official recognition.

What seemed like a hopeless pit for Liu Bei in Taishan County, Chen Xi saw as a golden opportunity. Even if it was a hopeless pit, Chen Xi believed his wealth-generating plans could turn things around.

Fifty thousand people—no matter how the money was spent, they would recoup it. The only regret was that Taishan County wasn't coastal, which would have made generating wealth easier.

Regarding Taishan County being part of Yanzhou, Chen Xi didn't care. And being back-to-back with Cao Cao was no issue; Cao Cao would focus on consolidating Yanzhou first and wouldn't provoke Liu Bei without sufficient strength. Given the current situation, Liu Bei seemed stronger than Cao Cao.

Therefore, Liu Bei not attacking Cao Cao was already a courtesy. If Cao Cao dared to think otherwise, it would be suicidal.

Chen Xi speculated that once Cao Cao secured Xizhi's talent, his strategy would likely be to consolidate most of Yanzhou, quietly swallow Sili, and seize the opportunity to take Yuzhou from Yuan Shu. As for the Yellow Turbans in Qingzhou, Cao Cao would be tempted but unable to act, knowing that swallowing it whole would lead to death.

The Yellow Turbans in Qingzhou were a massive trap, even if there was a great reward hidden within. No warlord of this period could handle the burden; they would be overwhelmed and die from the strain. The Yellow Turbans numbered at least two to three million—no warlord could sustain such a number.

Even Chen Xi had postponed dealing with the Yellow Turbans in Qingzhou for at least two years. Only if he could gather enough resources in that time could he consider it. Otherwise, he would have to continue postponing, despite the potential starvation deaths.

Though two years seemed long, Chen Xi had to prepare in advance. This strategic necessity was to be dealt with regardless of the reasons, aiming to pacify Qingzhou.

Realistically, Chen Xi knew that once Qingzhou's two million strong were integrated, with the purchase of women to balance the population, and if they could survive the first year, the path to unifying the land would be on track.

Of course, this assumed that Yuan Shu would continue his historical missteps. If Yuan Shu acted as strategically as Cao Cao, given the resources provided by the Yuan family, he might already be an unstoppable force.

The Yuan family's deep roots granted Yuan Shu control over Nanyang and Runan—each a region worth an entire province. Combined, they had nearly five million people. If Yuan Shu hadn't squandered such a solid foundation, even attempting to claim kingship would be a formidable challenge for other lords.

Hence, Chen Xi included Yuzhou in his plans, although this was more of a long-term consideration. He needed a complete, unbroken Yuzhou, not a fragmented one. Therefore, action had to be timely, possibly enticing Yuan Shu into attacking Taishan while Chen Xi moved on Qingzhou.

These plans were Chen Xi's thoughts, but he knew once Liu Bei started conquering Qingzhou, Yuan Shu would target Taishan, and Cao Cao wouldn't miss the opportunity. This would be Chen Xi's greatest chance.

Chen Xi understood Cao Cao's adventurous spirit and Xi Zhicai's keen strategic vision—they wouldn't let such an opportunity slip. Even though he planned early, he would continuously refine his strategy, ensuring that when implemented, even a strategist like Jia Xu would be left bewildered.

As Chen Xi rode his horse, pondering his future strategies, he didn't realize how his actions in the coming years would shock the warlords. Without examining your plans, only focusing on your character, using your nature to design strategies—who could foresee such a plan, and who would doubt it even if they did?