Tripurari Chakravarty

FORTY YEARS IN CHINA

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BY

SIR MEYRICK HEWLETT

遺愛難忘

Where love is bequeathed it is impossible to forget

LONDON
MACMILLAN & CO. LTD
1943

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY R. & R. CLARK LIMITED, EDINBURGH

DEDICATED TO

MY OLD SERVICE IN CHINA

IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF ALL IT MEANT TO ME

AND TO

MY COLLEAGUE FOR THIRTY YEARS OF MY CAREER

MY WIFE

FOREWORD

THESE Memoirs were originally conceived solely as a souvenir for my son Maurice, who was in China during my last eight years. Friends persuaded me to write them in the form of a book. Hence this volume.

The opinions expressed are entirely my own and are in no way inspired from any source whatever, political or otherwise. They are formed from the many Chinese contacts I made and I trust will be accepted in the same spirit of simple human understanding as that in which they are written.

MEYRICK HEWLETT

GERRARDS CROSS
25th August 1942

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CHAPTER I

1898

WHY did you go to China? I have often been asked that question, and the answer is easy. At the early age of eleven, for some childish reason I can no longer remember, I said I would like to be what Uncle Archer had been. This remark was made in the year 1887, two years after Uncle Archer had retired from the Consular Service, in which he had served since 1857. As I was one of four brothers such a definite wish was not allowed to pass, and from that moment little Meyrick's hand was put to the China plough. I do not regret now that I was never allowed to recall this youthful decision, though during my young days and my days at Harrow I often anticipated the separation which a life in China entailed with horror.

I was only twelve and a half when I went to Harrow and was put on the Modern Side with a view to preparing for my chosen future. When I left I was over nineteen and ready to take my chance in the examination which was held, as vacancies occurred, for Student Interpreterships in the China, Japan or Siam Consular Establishments. I went to France for three months, and to Germany for three months and then settled down to work at home, attending evening classes at King's College in the Strand on Tuesdays and Fridays from 6 P.M. to 9 P.M. The classes were supervised by Mr. A. J. Comyn, who could proudly boast that on an average 75 per cent of the successful candidates passed through his hands. When I went up for the examination there were fifty-two candidates for seven vacancies. In due course I received an official intimation that I was eleventh and was, therefore, not one of the successful candidates. This was a serious blow to father, but in private with me mother could not conceal her unfeigned joy.

I was then offered a post as assistant master at Orley Farm Preparatory School, which I took. Here I spent six very happy months and was devoted to the work. I think, too, I learnt here lessons which were of real value in my subsequent relations with

the Chinese, for I learnt when to exact obedience by firmness, when to promote loyal devotion by sympathetic understanding and the joy of sharing in innocent fun.

But these happy days were not to last. Big events were taking place in China. Germany had seized Kiao-chou as payment for the murder of two missionaries. Russia had taken Port Arthur from Japan, who had secured a footing there after her victorious war with China. France had taken Kwangchou Bay in the south and we had established ourselves at Wei-hai-wei. In the picturesque language of the Chinese, the melon was being divided. In Peking the reform movement of K'ang Yü-wei had failed, the Emperor was virtually a prisoner and the Empress Dowager was supreme. In these circumstances it appears that our Minister in Peking felt that an immediate extension of the Consular Service was essential, and as a result eight more students were taken from the last examination, thereby avoiding the delay which would be caused by holding another examination. I was therefore offered a post of student interpreter which, I may as well confess, I accepted with intense reluctance.

I had only two months in which to get ready and, as I lived in Harrow, made the most of them with old friends in the School. I left home on 25th August 1898, in the s.s. *Britannia*. At Colombo we changed into the s.s. *Parramatta*, as in those days there were no direct sailings to China, and after visiting the usual ports, reported our arrival in Shanghai to the Consulate General on 5th October. We at once proceeded to Tientsin by steamer and thence to Peking by train.

The railway journey to Peking took almost four hours and we finally arrived there on the afternoon of 12th October. Here we were met by some of the students who had been the first successful candidates, and although they had only preceded us by five months, they made us feel they were old hands. The railway terminus was at that time still outside the city walls and I have vivid memories of the long, dusty ride through the Chinese City into the Tartar City by the Ch'ien Mên and thence through the peaceful Legation Quarter to the British Legation. In the wide space outside the Temple of Heaven I and my fellow students had our first experience of the anti-foreign feeling then extant, which was in two years' time to blaze up as the Boxer Rising, for we

were turned off the main road by hostile crowds there assembled. This was not an encouraging beginning. All faces seemed alike to me, and all were ugly in their unfriendliness.

Naturally where everything was so new I did not fully realise how bitter the anti-foreign feeling was; neither could I be expected to appreciate how deeply the spirit of unrest pervaded the city as a result of the young Emperor having failed in his endeavour to espouse the modern reforms of K'ang Yü-wei, of whom mention has been made. The Emperor was a prisoner in his own palace. What did the Empress Dowager intend to do? This was the burning question for the Diplomatic Body to solve; but politics held little appeal for us new students, in fact the extra work entailed by the intense political situation was a cause of annoyance as we were taken from work and pleasures to copy dispatches. This was laborious, as Queen Victoria insisted on written dispatches and only permitted eleven lines to one sheet of foolscap.

On arrival at Peking the first thing was to give to each new student interpreter a personal servant, each student having his own boy who looked after him in his quarters and attended to him at table in the Students' Mess. The servants were usually all of one clan. There were three large clans in the Legation and it was almost impossible to introduce an outsider. As we were fifteen students the "Boys" of the British Legation formed a very strong clique. This was my first personal contact with Chinese, and like all residents in China I soon learnt to value and appreciate the services of my immediate attendant. I also quickly realised how responsive Chinese servants were to ordinary decent treatment, which they did not always get. Then, perhaps more important, came the teacher. Every student had his own teacher who came to him for a week at a time; the fifteen students all changed their teachers week by week. By this method we got a variety of teaching, but we were also allowed to make private arrangements for special tuition. Our preliminary efforts were confined to conquering the tones of the Peking dialect, and after that by degrees we tackled the language itself. I do not remember much about the teachers, except one or two. I used to admire the way they kept the spout of the tea-pot free by continuously blowing down it, and the pleasure with which they greeted

the remark that there would be no studying to-morrow always impressed me. It would have pained most English teachers. But in spite of a desire to explore rather than to study and the attractions of riding and other games, for those who were keen and those in whom the yearning to learn was paramount, the opportunities were great and I do not think the Service as a whole suffered at that time from the lack of a language school. This period of tuition lasted two years. At the end of the second year the place taken in the examination was your permanent place in the Service, a fact the importance of which was not realised till years afterwards, when delays in promotion caused the sufferer to regret the moments spent in a jolly ride instead of with the teacher.

When I was in Peking the Legation Staff consisted of the Minister and three diplomatic secretaries, the Chinese Secretary, Assistant Chinese Secretary and Accountant, who were all members of the Consular Service. Then there was the Chancery Mess composed of Consular assistants, that is Student Interpreters who had completed their two years' study and were not yet commissioned Vice-Consuls, and finally the Students' Mess of fifteen members. The Captain of the Marine Guard was a member of the Students' Mess. The Legation was an area covering just over three acres. The compound and dwelling had formerly been the residence of Duke Liang and was rented by Her Majesty's Government. The Main Building was the Minister's residence, a beautiful Chinese building with an imposing entrance by a raised pathway passing under two stately porticoes, known in Chinese as *t'ing'rh*. All these were covered with the official green tiles, permitted only to officials of high rank, yellow being reserved for the Imperial Palace. The Secretaries were housed in bungalows, with the exception of the First Secretary who had a foreign-style two-storied house. The students and Chancery assistants were located in three sets of buildings: the Escort Quarters, a two-storied building in Chinese style; the Stable Quarters, a two-storied foreign building in the stables; and the Students' Quarters, a long two-storied building in foreign style. There were also the chapel, a theatre and a bowling alley.

The entrance to the Legation was an imposing archway over

which the diplomatic flag was flown. It faced a canal of small dimensions and usually in a bad condition. On the north adjoining the boundary wall of the Students' Quarters was the famous Hanlin University. On the west was the Imperial Carriage Park with its spacious grounds and buildings, and outside the Stable Quarters was the Mongol Market where every winter Mongols made an encampment, though I chiefly remember the spot as the place where the uninitiated practised falling off a China pony.

The whole compound was compact and those dwelling in it were one large family. We were allowed an extraordinary amount of freedom and were always relied on to play the game. At the end of the second year a farewell dinner was held for the departing students. This was always an important function and on many occasions brilliant speeches were made, especially on one evening when Sir Ernest Satow, Sir Robert Hart and Dr. Morrison were guests of the Mess. After two years, when the results of the final examination were known, one student was generally detailed for work in the Chancery and the others drafted as assistants to the various Treaty Ports.

The life in Peking was healthy. The climate is, generally speaking, electrically dry and ranges from 115° to 17° below zero. In the summer the students rented temples in the Western Hills and vacated Peking, the teachers also going with them. It was a good life, a healthy life. Apart from the fascination of living in Peking there was every form of amusement, all within the student's means: riding, cricket, tennis, bowling, football, pony racing, athletic sports, theatricals and generous hospitality from all. We knew nothing of international jealousies, anxious political situations, concession hunting or scheming; the whole Legation Quarter, including the other Foreign Legations, was a happy hunting-ground with doors thrown open for all who chose to enter them, and a welcome for any who did enter.

When I arrived in Peking, Her Majesty's Minister was Sir Claude Macdonald. Generally speaking, the students did not see much of the Minister as their immediate Chief was the Chinese Secretary. Lady Macdonald, a woman of rare charm, keen intelligence and rich sympathy, was a veritable mother to the Students' Mess. I was privileged to know them both exceptionally well, as Sir Claude made me his private secretary at the

beginning of the Siege and I was able to appreciate the magnificent work he did throughout that critical period. It is not too much to say he was mainly responsible for saving the whole foreign community from massacre ; but the Siege of the Legation is a story in itself and must form another chapter. Sir Claude was a soldier by profession and owed his promotion to the Diplomatic Service to a quarrel with a senior officer when serving in Egypt. He was got out of the way by being given a troublesome matter to settle up in the Cameroons. He reported on the result of his mission to Lord Salisbury and had left the room and was walking away when the Foreign Secretary sent for him. He was then bluntly told he was wanted as Minister to Peking, the post having suddenly fallen vacant. It was one of Lord Salisbury's happiest experiments. Sir Claude looked the part of Minister to perfection. He was tall, fair, with piercing eyes, loose-limbed and full of life. He was very popular with his colleagues in the Diplomatic Body.

CHAPTER II

1900

IT was surely a weird situation when China decided to challenge the whole world and to rid herself of all foreigners within her borders, yet this happened in 1900, only fifteen months after my arrival in Peking. I was not keenly interested in Chinese politics at the time, for everything else was so new and fascinating to me ; but after the earliest days of 1900 events moved with such alarming rapidity that even the students took a keen interest in what was happening. The existence of the secret society, soon known as the Boxer Society, was forcibly brought to the notice of all by the murder of Mr. Brooks, a missionary, in the Province of Shantung. Yü Hsien, the Governor of this province, became notorious for the cold-blooded murder of missionaries, men, women and children, in the precincts of his official residence when they were supposed to be under his protection.

The name " Boxer " was a happy translation, readily adopted, of the Chinese name of the Society, namely I Ho Ch'üan (Righteous Harmony Fist). The Society was founded by Yü Hsien in 1895 when he was Prefect of Tsao Chou in South-West Shantung. Members of the Society claimed to be impervious to rifle bullets, able to call down fire from Heaven and under the guidance of the God of War. Probably their aims were largely anti-dynastic at the time of their formation, but the threatened " dividing of the melon " by foreign Powers, and the extraordinary claims of these Powers to spheres of influence, soon convinced the Empress Dowager and her following that it was easy to divert the anti-dynastic tendencies of the Society into anti-foreign channels. This was the more easily accomplished as missionaries had been unfortunately connected with the acquisition of territory by the foreign Powers, especially in the case of the German occupation of Kiao Chou, and seeing that missionaries were scattered throughout the country they became an easy target for official hatred. The Boxer Rising as a movement thus became anti-missionary, anti-foreign, intensely religious and closely associated with

temples, especially those dedicated to the God of War.

In October the Boxers had their first open clash with the Chinese authorities and suffered a bad defeat; some who permitted their opponents to test their claim to be impervious to bullets were shot forthwith, and the movement could easily have been suppressed, but Yü Hsien stepped in, degraded the victorious commander and released all his prisoners. He encouraged the movement throughout the province, but the murder of Mr. Brooks stirred the British Government to action and, under pressure, Yü Hsien was removed, but — and this was significant — he was not degraded. He was sent as Governor to Shansi Province and Yüan Shih-k'ai, who was soon to become famous and who made himself Emperor in 1916 though he only lived a few weeks to enjoy the triumph, became Governor of Shantung.

Yuan at this time was a great favourite with the Empress Dowager, having in the previous year betrayed the Emperor's confidence when the latter informed him of the full reform programme of K'ang Yü-wei and asked him to proceed to Tientsin, take command of the army of Jung Lu, return to Peking and put the Empress Dowager under restraint. Instead of doing this, Yüan disclosed the whole plot to Jung Lu, who in turn informed the Empress Dowager. As a result, the Emperor was made a prisoner and kept in close confinement on an island in the South Lake of the Imperial City. On proceeding to Shantung as Governor, in order to placate the tiresome Diplomatic Body, Yüan was ordered to suppress the Boxers but not to use force, as " they were patriotic and good men and to punish them indiscriminately would not be in accordance with the wishes of High Heaven ". The Empress Dowager herself was soon won over to a belief in the power of the Boxers and they were thereupon recognised officially, although secret societies as having a tendency to be fundamentally anti-dynastic had always been forbidden.

The movement then spread to the neighbouring Province of Chihli in which Peking is situated.

There was drought and famine and everything was ripe for trouble. The Empress Dowager herself was very unpopular, especially in the south of China. There were ugly stories about her, especially regarding her past, and she was freely stigmatised in the tea-shops as an upstart concubine. She removed the

Emperor in January 1900 in favour of Prince Tuan's son, and having to devise some means to turn popular thoughts from herself, like Nero, she found the most simple solution was to cry "It is the foreign religion which has called down the wrath of Heaven, the cursed foreign railways and telegraphs which have destroyed the Feng Shui of our country".

It was not long before many members of the Court became patrons of the Boxers. Foremost among them were Prince Tuan, K'ang Yi and Hsü T'ung. In April 1900 the movement became quite open. Mere boys were given knives and in Tientsin it was a Sunday amusement for foreigners to go and watch them drilling. Their uniform was simple and quaint, the chief characteristic consisting of a large piece of scarlet cloth over the chest, in which usually was kept a piece of yellow paper with a charm written on it in red ink, and scarlet ankle bands.

At this time, April 1900, I was living in a temple at the Race Course looking after race ponies and studying Chinese. To test the progress I had made in my work the Assistant Chinese Secretary sent me a document in Chinese to translate relating to various incantations used by the Boxers and the charms which were supposed to render them impervious to foreign bullets. I took this document to the priest of the temple and asked him, laughingly, whether he did not think it too comic for words that anyone should really hold such impossible beliefs. The old man was very grave and much saddened at what he read and gave me a very serious warning, saying the trouble would be very bitter. In less than three months he was murdered by the Boxers when trying to defend his temple from their depredations.

It seems strange that even at this period the peril was not fully realised. It may have been realised to its fullest extent by the Roman Catholic missionaries, but, if so, their warnings to the French Minister were, if not unheeded, certainly not taken in all their seriousness; nor is this surprising, for in 1898 comparatively few Legation guards had been sufficient to secure the safety of all foreign residents in Peking and it was widely felt that a shower of rain was all that was needed to end the movement, for relief from the severe drought meant employment for the farmer. But May came and still there was no rain. Excitement was intense, no-one was working, everyone was at the right pitch for

mischief. Most impossible stories were believed. The most current story was that the Red Lamp had been seen in the sky, and even the Chinese Foreign Office, the old Tsung Li Yamen, replying to the Diplomatic Body's request that measures should be taken to suppress the movement, stated in an official dispatch that it was difficult to take any action " as the Little Old Priest has passed through Hai-Tien (a place near Peking) on a white donkey ". It was also stated, and believed by the superstitious and simple ignorant Northerner, that eight million men were about to descend from Heaven and exterminate the foreigner. The anti-foreign nature of the movement now became abundantly plain. The enemies to Boxers were divided into three classes. First, the Ta Mao-Tzu, which means " The Big Hairy Ones ". This probably came from the old days when all foreigners were designated as Red Heads and seems originally to have been applied to the Dutch. As late as 1925 my Chinese name was written on a letter I received from the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank in Amoy as " The Red-Haired Consul ". I naturally protested against this and the clerk apologised, but seemed surprised that any exception to the designation had been taken, and I subsequently found it was the common name by which I was known, and had been in use practically since the Consulate was established in 1842. The Big Hairy Ones were the foreigners. Second of the Boxers' enemies were the converts, and these were to be exterminated first. The third and last were people such as servants who had any dealings of any nature whatever with foreigners.

In the interior of the province the Roman Catholic missionaries took alarm and armed. In many cases this saved them, notably at Ch'ü Chou, in Chekiang Province, and as I have hinted above, Bishop Favier of the Northern Cathedral in Peking gave a direct warning to the French Minister that the worst rising against foreigners that had ever happened was about to break out ; alas, he was not believed, or perhaps only partly believed.

In the latter half of May, Peking was placarded with Boxer notices. The students now became keenly interested in the situation and although we were often insulted in the streets and even had stones thrown at us from the city walls, interest and not danger was uppermost in our thoughts. This was natural, for as

boys we had no responsibility. I was to learn later at Changsha in 1910 what it meant to attempt to unravel a situation which appeared fraught with danger, with the added responsibility for the safety of the lives of foreigners who trusted in me and counted on my judgement.

On the 20th May the Diplomatic Body sent a protest to the Tsung Li Yamen, demanding that definite measures should be taken to suppress the movement. They merely received a reply that Boxerism was the pastime of ignorant boys. Although this was the official reply of the Chinese Government to the Diplomatic Body, only three days later the Boxers were drilling openly in Peking. Furthermore, in the Palace itself, and especially Prince Tuan's palace and Duke Lan's palace, Boxers were encouraged to come and drill, and the palace eunuchs themselves learnt the art of their fanatic form of self-mesmerism from Shantung professors. Placards appeared headed " An admirable way to destroy foreign buildings ", and the objectionable term " Foreign Devil " which was officially banned after the Tientsin massacre in 1870 once more received tacit official sanction in many placards. Nothing was thought impossible. Even after the Siege began, when we had captured a Boxer prisoner our Chinese servants begged that he should be killed at once as they thought that he could burn the Legation by breathing out fire. During these days refugees began arriving in great numbers from the country with awful tales of what was happening there, and many Peking residents received private warnings from loyal Chinese friends begging them to leave Peking.

On the 28th May the Peking-Hankow railway line was torn up by Kansu troops under Tung Fu-hsiang, with whom there had been trouble in 1898. The line was destroyed just beyond Liu K'ou Ch'iao, which is famous for the Marco Polo Bridge. This cut off the French engineers at Chang Hsin Tien. Meanwhile we saw a huge fire at Feng-T'ai, the first station out of Peking on the Peking-Tientsin railway, and we realised that the railway buildings there had gone. The queer thing was that rain came immediately the fire started, thus adding to the Boxer contentions that only by fire and the destruction of everything connected with foreigners could Heaven be placated and the drought ended. The fact that rain came was, therefore, taken as a

good omen. The British railway engineers at Feng-T'ai escaped on an engine which had been kept with steam up, and all got safely to Tientsin, but something had to be done to relieve the French at Chang Hsin Tien and a rescue party was made up. It consisted of Chamot, a Swiss, and his brave American wife, Willie Dupree and four French sailors. They rode through a country literally seething with excitement and with bands of Boxers everywhere, but they rescued everyone. Young as he was, it was thanks to the determination of Dupree that the rescue was successfully accomplished. Less than an hour after the party left Chang Hsin Tien it was burnt, parties of Boxers arriving as the foreigners left. This was really one of the finest incidents connected with the troubles in North China, and the heroism of those concerned should never be forgotten.

Then, in spite of protests, Tung Fu-hsiang and his troops entered the city. This Mohammedan army were brave and very fine-looking men in picturesque uniforms of scarlet edged with black velvet with black Chinese characters on them. Before the Siege actually commenced we had chats with these men on the canal bridge at the end of the street that ran past the British Legation main entrance.

In spite of all the protests of the Diplomatic Body, the Yamen continued with platitudes and finally Sir Claude lost all patience and telegraphed for extra guards to be sent from Tientsin.

At Tientsin Captain Bailey, R.N., and Captain Burke, R.N., were in charge of the defence and at once agreed to send seventy-five marines. The Russians, who were not ready to leave, at first protested, and General Wogack even stood in front of the train and said that if it left it must pass over his body. But orders were given for the train to leave and the General skipped back on to the platform. In the hurry to get the Russian detachment off they brought shells for their three-inch guns but no guns ! This want was very seriously felt during the Siege.

The troops arrived late that night. This was the 31st May. The total was three hundred and forty men, composed of Americans, British, French, Italians, Japanese and Russians. It was dark when they arrived and many of us thought this was a pity, but on thinking things over perhaps it was as well, for had it been realised how few troops were really defending the Legations

the attack might have been more keenly pressed. The crowds in the streets were respectful and gaping. The city gates were purposely kept open to allow them to come in. The guards were not properly equipped and twenty-five of our Marines had actually been left behind so as not to hurt the feelings of the Russians who could only send seventy-five men. In the way of artillery our Marines had with them only an 1887 pattern Nordenfeldt.

On the 2nd June Austrians and Germans arrived.

There was a great feeling of relief at the coming of the guards. Everyone felt all would now be well. Only officials in responsible positions were anxious; even the missionaries were quite optimistic.

On the 4th June we heard of the murder of two missionaries, Norman and Robinson, in the south of the province. Poor Norman had been handed by the magistrate to the mob to do what they liked with him. Sir Claude went to the Yamen [1] to protest and again to demand adequate protection, but it is lamentable to record that during this most solemn interview one of the four officials present actually slept.

Imperial decrees were now issued praising the virtuous Boxer and condemning the wicked Christian who had departed from his former paths of charity. It was a lesson to all of us young fellows how easily the Chinese could be swayed. Some of us took this to heart, and in future years I for one had good cause to remember that so long as this power to stir a superstitious and credulous mob existed, we could never be absolutely free from the dangers of anti-foreign outbreaks.

That day railway communications were severed. People were brought in from the outlying parts of the city and housed either in the Legation compounds or in the residences adjoining the Legations. The American residents appealed to their Minister for some soldiers to go to Tung Chou, thirteen miles east of Peking, to bring in the American colony from there. This request was refused, as it was considered there was danger in sending a small armed party such a distance for, if they were

[1] Yamen is literally the official residence of a Mandarin, but in speaking of the Yamen I am referring to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Tsungli Yamen as it was then known.

attacked and beaten, the encouragement thus given to the Chinese troops would result in serious danger to all foreigners in Peking. There is no criticism implied in quoting this ; I am only stating facts, and the attitude adopted was, from the military point of view, undoubtedly correct. But heroes were not lacking in Peking. Mr. Ament, an American missionary, went right through an appalling district, taking with him Peking carts to bring his compatriots back again. It was not only real heroism, but showed outstanding personality, seeing at a time like this, when anti-foreign feeling was rampant, he was able to persuade the carters to go with him. All were brought in safety to the compound near the Hata Mên, one of the southern gates of the city, which Gamewell, whose name stands almost higher than any other, in preparing the barricades and other works for the Siege, had put into a state of defence.

The only Chinese official of any standing in the province outside Peking who attempted to put down Boxerism was General Nieh, but he had his hands tied. It is regrettable that this loyal soldier met his death when opposing the advance of the allies on their way to the relief of the Legations.

On the 4th June we were told that the Race Course had been burnt and my old friend the priest killed. Naturally the students were anxious to see what had happened and four went without counting the risk. After viewing the burnt temple and Race Course they saw an army of Boxers coming towards them on the main road leading to the city. They therefore started to return home. All got back without interference with the exception of Bristow and Drury, who were waylaid by a party of five Boxers in a narrow lane. Bristow throughout the incident maintained a splendid calm, and when his pony bridle was seized by one of the Boxers he leant across and shot him point-blank in the stomach with a revolver. The man dropped dead, and as his companions appeared to realise that he was not impervious to foreign bullets they parted to each side of the road. Bristow and Drury galloped past and, although swords were thrown at them, they suffered no harm.

On the 9th June the Empress Dowager returned from the Summer Palace, the poor Emperor with her. Public banners were displayed with the characters " Wipe out the foreigners "

on them. The Diplomatic Body made further appeals to the Yamen, especially about the cutting of the railway, but they were only met with insults such as " What did the Ministers do in the days when there was no railway ? "

There was a large site to the north of the Japanese Legation belonging to Prince Su. This place was of premier importance in case of siege, and partly by arrangement, partly by pressure, it was taken over. The area for defence was roughly half a mile by a depth varying from 80 to 300 yards. Women and children of all nationalities were housed in the British Legation — in all eight hundred and eighty-three souls in the Legation buildings.

On the 11th June, so sure were the Ministers that Admiral Seymour and General Wogack were arriving with reinforcements that carts were sent to meet them. Nobody was there, so all returned. The Japanese were so certain that even if the troops of other nationalities failed to arrive theirs assuredly would do so, that Sugiyama of the Japanese Legation went to the Yungting-mên, the Southern Gate of the Chinese City, to meet them. Here he was murdered. His body was cut to pieces and children were seen by Dr. Morrison's boy playing with the pieces.

It was unanimously voted that reprisals were impossible. When I was in Hankow in 1934 I had a fascinating talk with Ma Fu-hsiang who was a captain in the Kansu army and was present at this murder. He implored those responsible to spare Sugiyama's life, but he was not heeded. He further told me that throughout the Siege, young as he was, he had urged that peace should be made and a massacre of foreigners avoided. This in spite of the fact that relations of his were killed in an attack on the British Legation from the Mongol Market. He was, however, one of those responsible for smuggling food into the besieged Legations. He was a keen scholar and used to spend hours with me discussing the classics, showing me his writings and chatting. I felt on his death shortly afterwards that I had lost a real friend.

On the 12th June Ch'i Hsiu, one of the Yamen, called and told Sir Claude that the movement was quite at an end. He reiterated perfectly shamelessly lie upon lie, and concluded by saying Sir Claude could take it from him that all trouble was over.

The next day, the 13th June, the Boxers actually entered the

Legation Quarter and walked openly down the middle of the streets. One was captured by Baron Von Kettler, the German Minister, who treated him none too gently. That afternoon our servants were in a state of terror and incessantly told us that the Boxers were about to enter the Tartar City in great numbers. No one believed this, but about 7.15 P.M. they entered the Hata Mên and went straight to the east of the city, burning and killing everywhere they went. The sounds were too ghastly for words — most frightful cries, curses and yells of agony.

On the 14th June a large body of Boxers tried to rush our marine sentries on the canal bridge. They came down a lane adjoining the Imperial City. As they proceeded, men with banners in front after walking certain paces fell on their faces, the mob with them doing the same thing. Our marines, in fact, regarded the whole procedure as so pitiable and half comic that they were reluctant to fire. Matters were brought to a head, however, when one of the Boxers made a sudden rush forward and grazed Corporal Preston in the neck with a spear. He was shot and the spear seized from him. It was subsequently given to me and I still have the spear-head. The marines then opened fire and the Boxers scattered. In discussing this attack with me one of the marines said he did not believe in rifle-fire for this sort of thing, it was much better to get in with a bayonet the use of which " sort of soothed the feelings like ".

It was obvious to all that the next place for an attack would be the Roman Catholic South Cathedral, the well-known building which had been specially favoured by the great Emperor K'ang Hsi, and which had in its precincts a tablet which he had given to the Mission during his reign (A.D. 1662–1723).

On the 15th June a rescue party was therefore organised by Dr. Morrison, the famous Correspondent of *The Times*, and he, together with M. Flèche, a French student, and some soldiers of various nationalities, went to the Southern Cathedral. They were just in time. There were the most ghastly scenes. Girls had disfigured their faces in the hope of escaping the fate which awaited them and were sitting on doorsteps waiting to be killed. All appeared too stupefied to do anything. The converts did good work in assisting the relief party by calling on people to join them, and a large number of Roman Catholic Chinese

Christians were saved and brought back to the Legation Quarter.

During all this time Chinese soldiers watched the proceedings from the city wall and there was no interference of any kind, either for or against the Boxers. During the whole day rescue parties went all over the city, through labyrinths of small streets, and Christians went with the troops calling out to fellow Christians to come out and be saved. The orgy of destruction went on in the city all night, and Duke Lan and a leading member of the Government, Chao Shu-ch'iao, followed in chairs to gloat over the scenes. This day Boxers were actually permitted to enter the Imperial City and the madness was complete.

They left the Tartar City in the evening and assembled in tens of thousands on the sides of the canal in the Chinese City just under the Tartar City wall which formed part of the boundary of the Legation Quarter. Unfortunately, German sailors on the city wall opened fire on this gathering, although it is hard to see what result they expected from this action. I shall never forget the scenes that ensued — thousands and thousands of voices yelling "*Sha! Sha!*" ("Kill! Kill!") for well over an hour on end. No-one who has ever heard this sound could ever forget it. I was only to hear it twice afterwards in my thirty-eight years in China.

On the 16th June Dr. Morrison again applied for permission to take troops to rescue some Christians who were actually being murdered in a temple close to the Legation Quarter. Permission was granted and he took twenty British marines, ten American marines and five Japanese sailors with volunteers and was able to rescue a few survivors. The temple was surrounded and not a Boxer escaped. Forty-six in all were slain. After the Siege was over I revisited this temple at Sir Claude's request in order to secure the temple bell as a souvenir. Skeletons of the Boxers were still lying there unburied.

The same night an enormous fire was started outside the main entrance to the Tartar City, the Ch'ien Mên. The fire spread with alarming rapidity and ended by setting alight to the beautiful guard-houses on the top of the city wall. No-one who was there at the time will forget the awfulness of the fires. At one time fifty-seven separate fires were counted and after the Siege actually began we were to know the horror of fire.

On the 19th June at four o'clock the Chinese Government sent in an ultimatum demanding that all foreigners should leave Peking, accompanied by the guards unarmed. We did not know at the time that the Taku forts had already been taken by the Allied fleets. As a matter of fact, all the Foreign Ministers except Sir Claude were prepared to go ; recollections of what happened in the Indian Mutiny led him to suspect the sincerity of Oriental promises. In many of the Legations preparations were made to pack, but in the British Legation none were made. In many cases more carts were asked for to provide conveyance for foreigners and their goods to the coast. No use was made of the carts except as barricades, and their mules subsequently provided part of our daily food.

After a short meeting of the Diplomatic Body, on the 20th June, Baron von Kettler, the German Minister, decided he would go to the Tsungli Yamen to ask about extra guards. It was known by the officials concerned that he was going, for his official card had been sent and receipt obtained. He went accompanied by Cordez, his Chinese secretary. Within a very short time his two mounted outriders galloped back into the Legation Quarter saying that the Minister had been killed. He was actually shot on the main Hata Mên street. Cordez escaped with a very serious wound, was able to drag himself into safety and finally returned to the Legation Quarter. Naturally many of us wondered what would have been the fate of the little colony had all of us gone. The ultimatum expired at 4 P.M. sharp. The Chinese opened with a fierce volley and a French sentry was shot. The Siege had begun.

CHAPTER III

1900

DURING the Siege the students were enrolled as a Volunteer Corps and were under the charge of Sergeant Preston of the Marines, a man whom we all respected and to whom, before the end of the Siege, we were intensely devoted. All our rooms were given up to members of the Foreign Legations and other foreigners who took refuge in the British Legation, and the students slept wherever they could. At the beginning of the Siege I was writing my daily letter to Mother, in which I recorded minute by minute everything that was happening, when Sir Claude looked over my shoulder and asked me what I was doing. I told him, and said that while writing to Mother I was making a duplicate copy in diary form. This copy he took up, and with the quiet smile that all who knew the Chief cannot fail to remember, he said "Young man, these notes are official and you are now my private secretary." Ever since that minute I was closely attached to him, and it was only during the last fortnight of the Siege when the attacks became desperate that I was ever separated from him for any length of time.

The guards for the defence were composed of the following: Americans, three officers, fifty-three men; British, three officers, seventy-nine men; French, two officers, forty-five men; German, one officer, fifty-one men; Italian, one officer, twenty-eight men; Japanese, one officer, twenty-four men; Russian, two officers, seventy-nine men. In addition the French had, at the Roman Catholic North Cathedral, one officer and thirty men and the Italians one officer and eleven men. Among visitors and those in Peking there were Captain Percy Smith, Captain Poole, Nigel Oliphant of the Bank of China, Captain Labrousse and Herr von Strauch of the Chinese Customs. All these had military training. Above all there were Colonel Shiba and Captain Ando who organised the Japanese volunteers. The volunteers numbered seventy-five of all nationalities out of whom thirty-one were Japanese. Sometimes the more enthusiastic among the volunteers

were rather dangerous to themselves, as many had attached knives to their rifles as bayonets and those who had bayonets forgot how far they extended. It was necessary to be very careful at night.

For guns we only had an Italian one-pounder with one hundred and twenty rounds. For this gun, when the ammunition was finally exhausted, candlesticks and articles of every kind of pewter were melted to make shells. The old shell-cases were put into use again and were fired by the insertion of a revolver bullet. The American Colt had twenty-five thousand rounds and it did really good work. The Austrian machine-gun was not too successful. Our Nordenfeldt used incessantly to jam but was made good use of. And then on the 8th July was found a gun which was subsequently christened " The International Gun ". This was found in a jute store. It bore the date 1860 and appeared to be an old ship's gun. It was mounted on the limber of the Italian one-pounder, to which it was strapped down. It fired the three-inch shells brought by the Russians, with their flanges filed off to make them enter the gun by the muzzle, and the gunner who had control of it was Mitchell, an American. For ammunition the Japanese only had one hundred rounds apiece, the Russians one hundred and forty-five, the Italians one hundred and twenty. The most any nation had was twelve thousand for the Lee-Metford rifle possessed by our marines, and a supply of 4800 rounds for the Martini-Henry rifles stored in the Legation. There was no provision for a long siege, but great care was exercised and, with the exception of the Italians, the ammunition was made to hold out. There were excellent shots among the Americans and British, which enabled them to expend the minimum amount of ammunition. For barricade work the old Martini-Henry with its heavy bullet was much better than the new Lee-Metford and our marines often borrowed it from the students for special work of this kind.

On the evening of the 20th June the Austrian Legation was abandoned for no apparent reason. This meant the destruction of the Customs buildings. Thomann, an Austrian naval captain who was on a visit to Peking, had taken command as senior officer present. I cannot help feeling he always regretted the blunder he made in so readily abandoning the Legation for he

appears to have exposed himself purposely, or at any rate indiscreetly, until he was killed. After the abandonment of the Austrian Legation our Legation became thronged with people. There was tremendous disorder at first, but it was wonderful how quickly we all shook down and got everything in proper order for the Siege. Students gave up their rooms to people of other nationalities; the French Legation was housed; the Customs officials, including Sir Robert Hart, were also given quarters and the American Mission was given the Legation chapel.

The sad occurrence during the day was the death of Mr. Huberty James. He was devoted to his work in Peking and spoke Chinese fluently; he could not believe that the Chinese really meant to attack the Legation and in his blind faith he went to discuss matters with them. The last we saw of him was throwing up his hands on the canal bridge: it is to be hoped the shot which struck him was fatal, for it was subsequently learnt that his body had been flayed and his head exposed on one of the gates of the Imperial City.

The first work undertaken was naturally fortifications, which were in charge of Mr. Gamewell. Every conceivable kind of material from valuable velvet curtains to unwanted cotton pants were surrendered to make sand-bags.

On the 22nd June there was a terrible blunder. All positions except the British Legation were abandoned. During the pandemonium that followed Sir Claude Macdonald, an old soldier, was asked to come forward and take supreme command. I was there when this was done, and I wish to emphasise this fact owing to the unworthy attempts made in certain quarters to deny it after the Siege was over. Being a military man, he at once saw that our greatest safety lay in holding as wide a line of defence as possible and he ordered that the Legations which had been abandoned should be retaken if possible. However, during the morning the Italian and Dutch Legations were already lost and part of the French Legation was lost. The Russians were fortunate in not losing their Legation as their barricades across the main road was the only communication with the American Legation.

At this time we suffered from fires near by, deliberate attempts to burn the Legation. In putting out these fires under walls adjoining our defences everyone, including women, worked hard.

To the north of the Legation was the famous Hanlin College with its library, but we never believed that the Chinese would deliberately destroy these buildings containing all their valuable works, including the Yung Lo dictionary. But the Hanlin was a serious danger as the buildings were almost directly under the wall which divided the students' quarters from the library enclosure. We had watched soldiers moving about in it, but in spite of that we were hopeful that nothing would occur when suddenly we saw the building in flames. A detachment of marines and volunteers went in to clear the buildings as far as they could. An attempt was made to save the books, but it was a dangerous bit of work and very little of this nature could be done, though separate volumes of the famous dictionary (Yung Lo Ta Tien) are known to have been saved and are still in existence. The curious fact was that the wind, which had been blowing directly from the north and therefore straight on to the Legation, suddenly veered to the south just at the moment the flames were about to reach the Legation wall — and our buildings were saved.

To add to the horrors of this day the Chinese began shelling with three-inch guns, first at a range of about a thousand yards, and subsequently at very much closer ranges. We had nothing with which we could reply effectively. We knew that they had ten of these new Krupp guns, but after the Siege the majority were still found in their packing-cases and it was learnt that the Empress Dowager had forbidden the use of heavy guns because of the destruction they might do to the native city. Curiously enough, the importance of the city wall itself, which formed the southern boundary of the Legation defence, had never been taken into sufficient consideration by us, and suddenly on the 24th June we discovered the whole wall directly overlooking the Legation Quarter covered with flags. At once its importance was realised and Sir Claude gave orders to take it. This was successfully accomplished and defensive works were immediately erected, thanks to the magnificent work of missionary teachers, Chinese scholars and other Chinese refugees working as coolies under the capable missionaries and some of our students. A heavy attack on the stable buildings of the British Legation very nearly ended in disaster that day, as the gate leading into the Legation was actually burnt. The disaster was averted by Captain Halliday of

the Royal Marines who, although wounded in the right lung, changed his revolver to his left hand and practically single-handed held at bay men who had worked to the rear of a large body of men sent out under Captain Wray to endeavour to silence and if possible capture a Chinese gun. For this action he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

On the same day there was an extremely heavy attack on the Japanese defences, and here Colonel Shibá deliberately let the Chinese troops right in and inflicted pretty severe casualties, although finally the Japanese had to retreat to a line almost opposite the British Legation main gate on the other side of the canal, which ran the whole length of the Legation east wall, from which it was separated by a very dusty road.

On the 25th June at 4 P.M. the " Cease Fire " sounded in the Imperial City and there was dead silence. A board was put up on the canal bridge asking us to send a messenger to receive a letter, but our messenger taking the letter was fired upon and the attack resumed. So far as we could hear, everything was directed by bugle from the Imperial City. From this day our isolation was complete. We were always imagining we saw the searchlights of the relief column, as we expected they would come any day. These imaginings helped us to pass through in any case a week, but after that time it was with bitter hearts we named Admiral Seymour " Admiral See no More " and General Wogack " General Go Back ". It was only later we learnt of his attempt to get through to Peking, of his defeat and the heroic fight during the retreat to Tientsin.

On the 29th June the French had to retire. In nine days they had lost in killed and wounded sixteen out of the forty-five men. The Japanese, too, were driven back. Rain, which had been so badly wanted in May, was awful and it is difficult to describe the misery of living at or near the barricades, day after day, without changing. From 12th June to 18th August I never undressed for sleep. We simply slept where we could, mostly on doors or boards in the ruined Hanlin buildings ; regular sleep was impossible as we had two hours on watch and four off. We had no protection from the mosquitoes, as all our nets had been given to the hospitals and some of us had our arms practically raw from wrist to elbow. But I think the worst plague was the flies, which

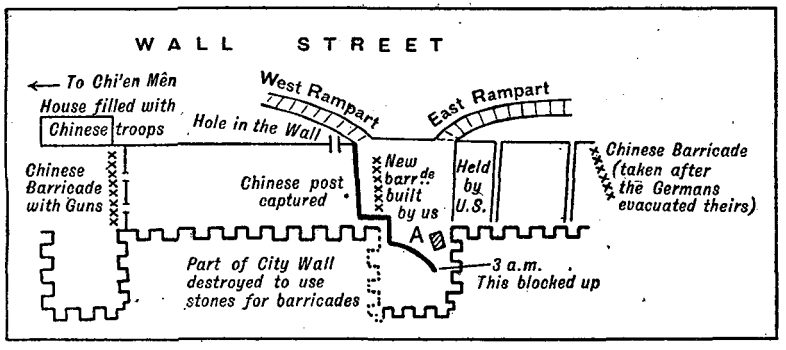
fattened on dead bodies of men and horses around the Legation Quarter. They seemed to come in their thousands, and I can still see the picture in the mess room at night of satiated flies on the ceiling in a thick black mass, like a black cloth drawn over a glass roof.

It was on this day, too, when we heard the first sounds of mining, and Winter of the Customs was so positive of these sounds that he started digging a counter mine which, in a light-hearted manner, we called "Winter's Folly". But it was probably the sound of the deep trenches dug by Winter that stopped the miners, specially brought from the mines in Shensi, from going on under the Legation. After the Siege the Royal Engineers found that a mine, started from the adjoining carriage park in the direction of the Legation, for no apparent reason on nearing the Legation turned back directly into the carriage park again. Eighty pounds of gunpowder were also found. The plan of blowing up the Legation seems to have occurred to one of our own Legation Chinese writers, who suggested it to the Government, enclosing a letter with a plan of the Legations showing the various residences. This too was a terrible day on the Tartar City wall. The Germans lost four killed and six wounded. It was still held, however, by eight Germans and three British.

The 1st July was one of the worst days we had. As it was my birthday it has naturally stuck in my mind. The Chinese surprised the guard on the wall and the Germans had to come down. The American marines, seeing their rear exposed, also left the wall. It was retaken, but a large portion was lost and, finally, only a hundred and fifty yards held. This portion was held until the end of the Siege. The Japanese were being shelled very closely, and Poloni, the Italian captain, thought he could capture the gun. He asked for troops for a sortie and took with him some of our marines, Italians, Japanese and five students, Hancock, Flaherty, Bristow, Russell and Townsend. The sortie was a complete failure; they got into a positive death trap. They found themselves in a narrow lane and opposite a huge barricade, fired at from the loop-holed houses on the north, the barricade and the roofs of houses. The courage of the students, led by Russell, was remarkable. They pressed against a small projecting part of the wall on the north, which just sheltered them

from the barricade, and waited until all the soldiers had crossed the lane in safety before entering themselves. Townsend, feeling he would never be so near the enemy again, somewhat rashly stayed to take a shot at the Chinese barricade and was unfortunately wounded.

The Americans suffered terribly in their position on the wall, chiefly from a Chinese fort which overlooked their position. It was decided that this fort must be taken and, on the 3rd July, a party of Russians, Americans and British succeeded in doing so. In this attack the American Captain Meyers was wounded, but the whole sortie was a complete success and secured the wall



Fight of 3rd July 1900. A is the Tower built by Chinese to overlook U.S. position : the two ramparts lead up to the top of the wall from Wall St. The thick black line is the Chinese barricade begun from the West Rampart and shoved on and on till they got across the buttress covered by fire from their barricade. Our sortie took the Tower round the corner of the barricade and swept the way right up to the West Rampart which they also captured.

position definitely. It was, however, always a dangerous position to hold and on occasions as long as forty-eight hours elapsed before relief of any kind could be afforded to the defenders of the barricade. All the American officers being out of action, this position on the wall was taken charge of by Captain Percy Smith. His attention to maintaining a perfect personal appearance in spite of all difficulties and his essentially English manner of talking delighted the American guard, who were all devoted to him.

The other place to suffer most was the Hôtel de Pékin, where the wonderful Chamot, although shelled out of his kitchen and having to improvise in the parlour another method of baking,

provided three hundred loaves a day. The provisions were naturally a matter for thought, but all I remember of this side of the Siege is that we students merely had pony meat made into soup, mince or curry and rice husks made into a form of bread. My own pony " Memory " was saved till 7th August. I also remember the terrible lack of milk for the little children who, by the end of the Siege, were simply little skeletons. The marvellous heroism and patience of the women, and the valuable help they so often gave, struck me forcibly, but of the deeper anxieties of those in authority and of parents I had not perhaps a full knowledge, for naturally as a boy I had no responsibility. Sir Claude's heroism and his tireless energy were unobtrusively the mainstay of the whole defence ; he visited the defences practically every night, and, in spite of an attack of dysentery, faced the hourly problems with decision and clarity. I think that I, more than anyone else, know the work he did in maintaining unity between the foreign guards, and the respect in which he was held. The following copies of notes given to me by Sir Claude, and preserved by me, give a slight insight into the tasks he was called upon to perform :

(*a*) COLONEL SHIBA,

6.45 P.M.

Please leave the ten men you sent to the French Legation there as long as you can.

(*Signed*) C. M. MACDONALD

June 29, 1900

I will leave them there as long as I can but as I am also pressed hard, please get ready some more reinforcements to me when wanted.

(*Signed*) G. SHIBA

(*b*) *26 juin, 6.35 soir*

Si le Commandant Autrichien et vous estimez comme moi, qu'en réduisant à cinq hommes le renfort qui vous a été demandé pour l'Amérique et la Russie vous n'imposerez pas à votre garnison un sacrifice dangereux, envoyez-moi ces cinq hommes.

Je les garderai pour la nuit à la Légation d'Angleterre qui a envoyé elle même à l'Amérique et à la Russie le secours que vous n'avez pas cru pouvoir lui donner.

La raison est que des attaques sont grandement à craindre de notre côté tandisque vers Ha Ta Mên la situation semble plus tranquille.

Sir Claude Macdonald estime avec le plus grande raison que les cinq hommes dont il nous a momentairement privé, peuvent nous faire gravement défaut.

Il est à craindre, je crois, que de très fortes attaques compromettent beaucoup notre situation.

Ce mot est pour le Commandant Autrichien et pour vous. Saisissez également de la question M. de Rosthorn.

(*Signed*) S. PICHON

M. le Capitaine Darcy.

(*c*) DEAR BARON RAHDEN,

We are very hard pressed in the Fou and at this Legation. Could you send at once a reinforcement of ten men ?—Yours in haste,

(*Signed*) CLAUDE MACDONALD

Urgent.
Baron von Rahden.

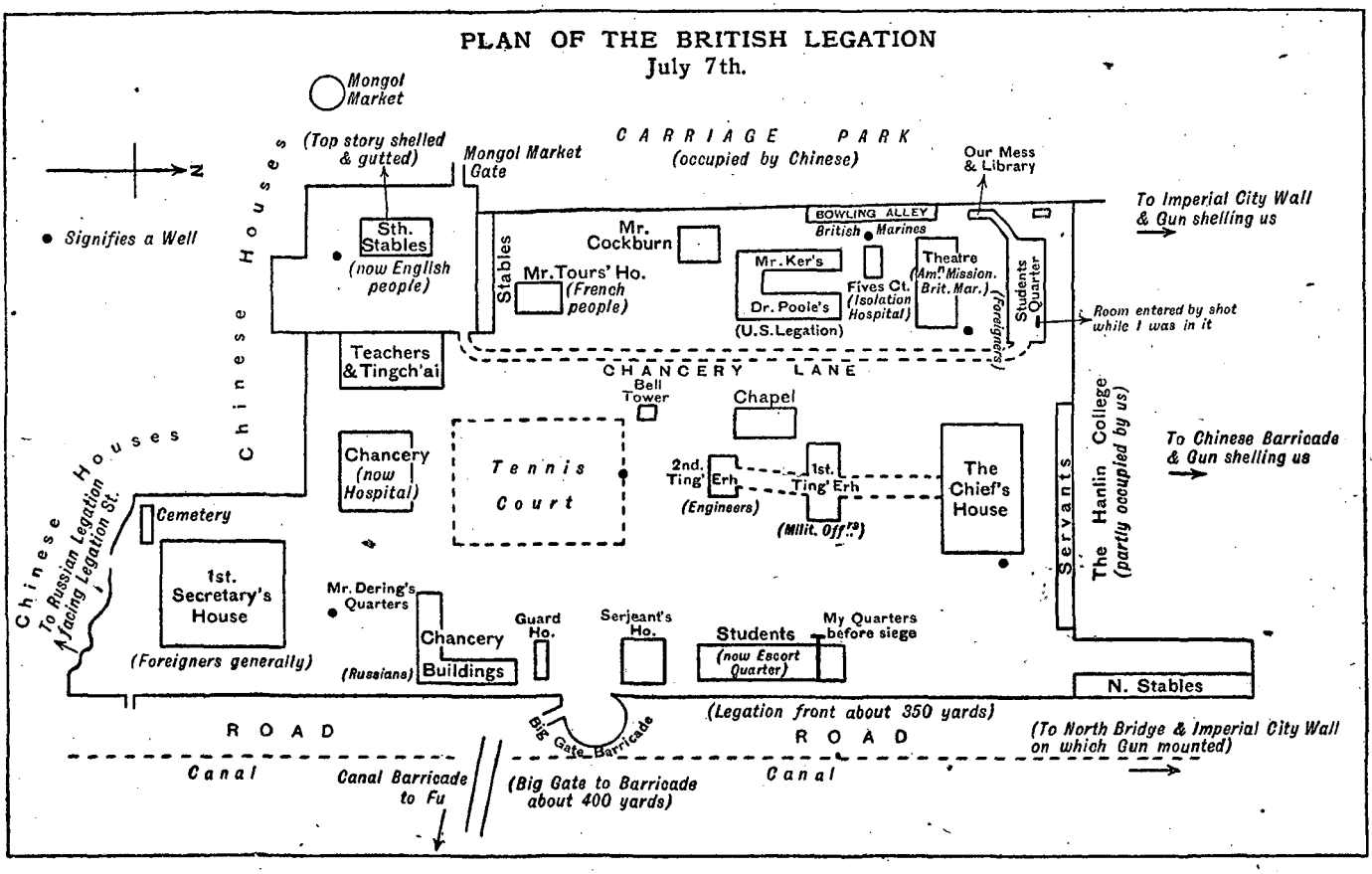
By the 4th July we had forty-four killed and seventy-two wounded and Sir Claude sent out one of the few messages which finally got through. It was a solemn message carefully worded intimating that we could only hold out about a fortnight longer. The exact wording of the note which Sir Claude gave me to read was as follows :

Since June 20th we have been besieged by Imperial troops who have four or five guns, 1 Q-F., 1 1-in., 2 3-in., and 2 throwing 14 lb. shells, chiefly used at barricades ; the enemy, enterprising but cowardly ; Chinese Government, if any, do nothing to put this down. All their positions very close to ours [our position then described]. We cannot hold out if enemy go on as at present, say 10 days, if they attack in earnest four or five places ; haste absolutely necessary if want to avoid horrible massacre. Entrance probably easy ; enemy hold gates of City — canal sluices afford easy entrance. We have lost 44 killed.

It was difficult to persuade messengers to leave the Legation Quarter as every egress was so closely watched ; the easiest way to get into the outer world (namely through the sluice-gate at the end of the canal outside our Legation, which passed into the Chinese native city through this gate under the Tartar City wall at that portion of the wall we still held) was so completely covered by loop-holed posts across the canal held by Chinese troops that it became practically impossible for anyone to get through. Curiously enough, on this day, 4th July, the copy of the Declara-

tion of American Independence in the American Legation was shot through and was subsequently brought to our Legation for safe keeping.

The 5th July was to be a bad day for us. After the burning of the Hanlin and the clearing-away of the burnt houses it was found that a position so close to the carriage park was dangerous, and further, that in order to watch barricades erected by the Chinese in the ruins it was necessary to fell certain trees. Volunteers were asked for to cut down the trees and among them went David Oliphant, one of the Chancery assistants and quite the most popular of all the members of the Legation at that time. The Chinese soon opened fire and Captain Poole told everyone to retreat to within the shelter of the Legation wall. Oliphant thought he could just finish the tree upon which he was working when he was shot. With him was Swannell, a signaller from H.M.S. *Orlando*. He was too small to carry Oliphant himself, so he sat with him propped against him, placing himself between Oliphant and the direction from which the Chinese were firing. David Oliphant's death was a terrible blow to us all; it cast a great gloom over the Legation and brought home to us the reality of what we were facing. The same morning we noticed that on the wall of the Imperial City the Chinese had erected a palisade on which they had mounted a gun behind iron doors. The gun could be clearly seen through glasses when the iron doors in front were opened. Sir Claude went with me to see this gun from the back windows of the students' quarters which directly faced the Imperial City across the now destroyed Hanlin, and was determined to have a shot at the gunners as they opened the iron doors to operate the gun. He was an excellent shot and enjoyed himself. Having used up what ammunition I had, he sent me for some more. On entering the room adjoining the one in which Sir Claude was firing, I was met by a clatter of bricks and a terrible noise. The gun had fired its first shot which had come into the room through the wall over the window almost directly opposite me. On emerging from the room I was greeted with, what I thought, unseemly mirth and told that I was not expected to be found alive. On entering the room we found the shot was a solid round cannon-ball weighing about sixteen pounds. Although there were many


PLAN OF THE BRITISH LEGATION
July 7th.
Mongol Market
(Top story shelled & gutted)
Mongol Market Gate
CARRIAGE PARK
(occupied by Chinese)
Our Mess & Library
To Imperial City Wall & Gun shelling us
N
Signifies a Well
Chinese Houses
Sth. Stables
(now English people)
Stables
Mr. Cockburn
Mr. Tours' Ho.
(French people)
BOWLING ALLEY
British Marines
Mr. Ker's
Dr. Poole's
(U.S. Legation)
Fives Ct.
(Isolation Hospital)
Theatre
(Am.n Mission. Brit. Mar.)
Students Quarter
Foreigners
Room entered by shot while I was in it
Teachers & Tingch'ai
CHANCERY LANE
Bell Tower
Chapel
Chancery
(now Hospital)
Tennis Court
2nd. Ting' Erh
1st. Ting' Erh
(Engineers)
(Milit. Offrs)
The Chief's House
Servants
The Hanlin College
(partly occupied by us)
To Chinese Barricade & Gun shelling us
Chinese Houses
To Russian Legation facing Legation St.
Cemetery
1st. Secretary's House
(Foreigners generally)
Mr. Dering's Quarters
(Russians)
Chancery Buildings
Guard Ho.
Serjeant's Ho.
Students
(now Escort Quarter)
My Quarters before siege
N. Stables
(Legation front about 350 yards)
ROAD
Big Gate Barricade
ROAD
(To North Bridge & Imperial City Wall on which Gun mounted)
Canal
Canal Barricade to Fu
(Big Gate to Barricade about 400 yards)
Canal

narrow escapes from these cannon-balls nobody was killed by them.

By the 8th July the position in the Japanese defence had become really desperate and a retreat to the British Legation was seriously considered. The Japanese defence forces were reduced to thirteen regulars and fourteen volunteers drawn from the students and the Customs. By this time it was almost impossible to look directly through some of the loop-holes, so near were the Chinese defences, and the loop-holes were chiefly watched by us in a looking-glass placed facing them at the back of our dugout. Anything darkening a loop-hole was immediately shot at by the attackers. The Japanese had one special outlook which was a veritable death-trap. To get there it was necessary to crawl through a short passage and a hole like a small tunnel. Sitting for hours in this dugout watching the defence opposite through a looking-glass, consistently subject to shell and rifle fire, was an intense strain and it was here that Warren, one of our students, lost his life.

On the 13th July many thought the end had come. Forty-nine had been killed and ninety wounded. Some had procured poison for their wives, others had decided to shoot them, but everyone went on with quiet determination. In the French Legation two mines were exploded. Extraordinary incidents occurred when this happened, for in one explosion Destinan was buried up to the neck but unhurt. Von Rosthorn, the Austrian Minister, was buried and then blown out again, merely bruised. Two French were engulfed and never found. The Chinese also suffered heavy losses and some hand-to-hand fighting took place in which the French captured several prisoners, all of whom were bayoneted. The Germans, too, were hard pressed and got in an attack with the bayonet. The Americans also, heavily attacked, happened to be changing guard, and having double the number they usually had on guard, saved an ugly rush. When matters were at their worst, and even Colonel Shiba had sent to say the Japanese defence must be evacuated, there was a sudden stop.

The next day a convert, who had been sent out with a message to be delivered if possible to some official in authority, was sent back, after having received a flogging, and brought an official message from the Chinese Government reporting Admiral

Seymour's defeat and offering the Ministers and their staffs safety if they would go to the Tsungli Yamen for protection, but no armed men were to go with them. During this time when it seemed that a truce could be arranged, Captain Strouts was killed and Dr. Morrison, *The Times* Correspondent, wounded. When Strouts and Warren were being buried, a Chinese messenger came in and he had the pleasure of hearing shells and bullets being fired into the Legation while the truce was supposed to be in existence. He was most anxious to get out. From the 17th to the 25th July, however, there was a truce, but not free from the treachery of the Chinese. For example, a man in the German Legation was shot when he was drawing water. At the same time while taking photographs in the German Legation I was able to shout messages to the Chinese troops in their compound. A man with an ear shot off came into the Legation for treatment as he knew the foreign doctors were better than the Chinese. A census was taken in the British Legation during the truce. The total was eight hundred and eighty-three. Troops of all nationalities, seventy-three; wounded, forty; civilians, four hundred and fourteen; and Chinese, three hundred and fifty-six. Out of four hundred and fourteen civilians there were one hundred and ninety-one men, one hundred and forty-seven women and seventy-six children. The garrison in all parts was just under four hundred, four hundred servants and two thousand seven hundred and fifty native Christians. Most of these had to be fed on dogs. They were extraordinarily brave and their losses were very heavy, but, alas, no count was kept. It was largely due to Dr. Morrison that we had these loyal workers to help us in the erection of the defences for there had originally been a lot of opposition to allowing any Chinese of any description to remain in the Legation Quarter.

The Chinese Government's attitude appeared now more conciliatory, so the Ministers decided to temporise. The truth was that Tientsin had fallen to the Allies, that the edict for the extermination of the foreigners had been cancelled by the two great Yangtse Viceroys and that faith in the Boxers was broken. This was the first definite news we had, so it is not strange to remember that a memorial service for those killed in the Legations had been decided on, to be held in St. Paul's Cathedral on 19th

July. Invitation cards to this service are still in existence.

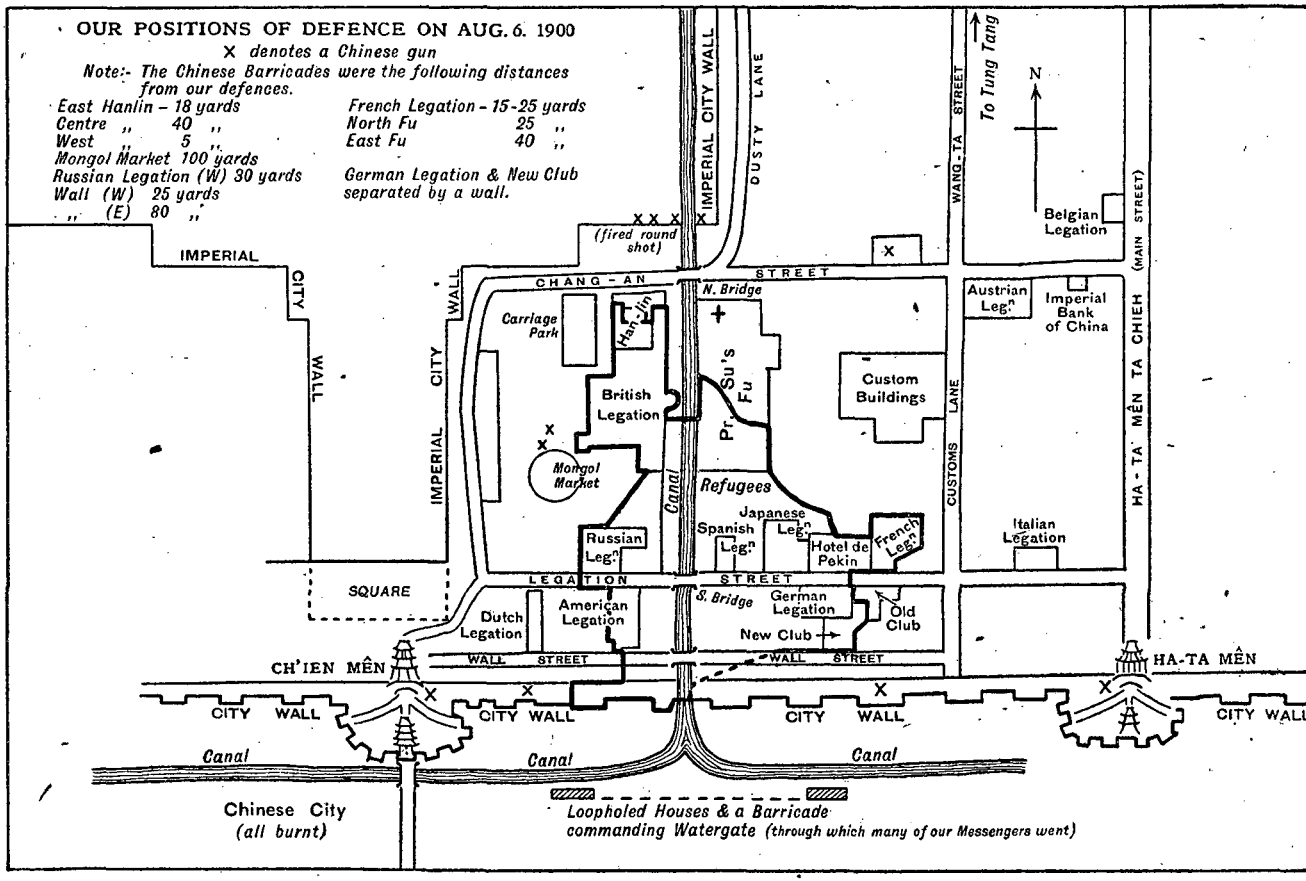
During this period we were regaled very skilfully by daily lying messages given us by a Chinese soldier who was paid from thirteen to thirty-five dollars for his reports and moved the Allied troops about so well that he was able to keep up the game for many days. Still, his skill had the merit of keeping up our spirits, and although completely lacking in veracity, no-one really grudged him his money.

On the 28th July the little lad who had been sent out on the 4th got back and gave us much news. He received ten thousand dollars. This sum was set aside for educational purposes. However, by the 4th August all question of a truce really seemed at an end. We had a terrible time. Although the Chinese said that the firing was merely the bell of the evening and the gong of the morning watch, it was something heavier than we had ever had before. A General from Shansi boasted that he was definitely going to wipe out the whole of the Legations. But while so doing his barricade collapsed and he was killed. It is no good going through these last days when, on an average, we were called up for special alarms six times a night. Captain Labrousse during these days had said all that was necessary was to keep under cover — and was actually killed while saying it on the 12th.

At 2 A.M. on the 14th we heard the first sounds like a rapping of hard wood on hard wood. There was no mistake about it, it was the sound of maxims. It was the relief force. Everyone was overwhelmed with joy, and even when at a quarter to three in the afternoon the first regiment entered the Legation compound we could hardly believe that relief had come. The last I saw of the fighting was at the Ch'ien Men, where our battery was firing at the Chinese who were escaping across in front of the wall of the Forbidden City by the five marble bridges. I went down that night to guide the Major to his quarters in the Temple of Heaven.

Our final losses were :

British : Three killed, twenty-two wounded, total twenty-five.
Italians : Seven killed, nine wounded, total sixteen.
Germans : Ten killed, thirteen wounded, total twenty-three.
French : Eleven killed, seven wounded, total eighteen.


OUR POSITIONS OF DEFENCE ON AUG. 6. 1900
X denotes a Chinese gun
Note:- The Chinese Barricades were the following distances from our defences.
East Hanlin – 18 yards
Centre ,, 40 ,,
West ,, 5 ,,
Mongol Market 100 yards
Russian Legation (W) 30 yards
Wall (W) 25 yards
,, (E) 80 ,,
French Legation – 15-25 yards
North Fu 25 ,,
East Fu 40 ,,
German Legation & New Club separated by a wall.
XXX (fired round shot)
IMPERIAL CITY WALL
DUSTY LANE
To Tung Tang
WANG-TA STREET
N
Belgian Legation
IMPERIAL CITY WALL
CHANG-AN STREET
N. Bridge
Carriage Park
Han Lin
British Legation
Mongol Market
Canal
Su's Fu
Custom Buildings
Austrian Legn
Imperial Bank of China
CUSTOMS LANE
HA-TA MÊN TA CHIEH (MAIN STREET)
Refugees
Japanese Legn
Spanish Legn
Hotel de Pekin
French Legn
Italian Legation
Russian Legn
LEGATION STREET
S. Bridge
German Legation
Old Club
New Club
SQUARE
Dutch Legation
American Legation
CH'IEN MÊN
HA-TA MÊN
WALL STREET
CITY WALL
Canal
Chinese City (all burnt)
Loopholed Houses & a Barricade commanding Watergate (through which many of our Messengers went)

Austrians : Four killed, four wounded, total eight.
Americans : Seven killed, ten wounded, total seventeen.
Japanese : Five killed, fifteen wounded, total twenty.
Russians : Three killed, thirteen wounded, total sixteen.
Civilian Volunteers : Ten killed, eight wounded, total eighteen.
Total : Sixty killed, one hundred and one wounded.
One hundred and sixty-one out of four hundred and seven.

Any account of the Siege would be incomplete without a word in praise of the way in which the hospital was managed by Dr. Poole of the British Legation and Dr. Velde of the German Legation and their staff consisting of five lady doctors, two trained nurses and several assistants. The Chancery was given up for hospital uses, the reading-room being the operating room. The furniture, mattresses, pillows, linen and bedsteads were given by Lady Macdonald and others ; the shops, which were despoiled of their contents after the Siege began, yielded linen towels and calico for sheets, etc., crockery, pots and pans and cutlery. We had good cause to be grateful for the discovery of large quantities of stores and flour and the first-rate water supply from the seven wells in the British Legation. An exceptionally favourable summer was responsible for comparative freedom from epidemics among the besieged. The work done by Tours and Tweed in the fire brigade and Mr. Dering and Mr. Brazier in the supply department earned the gratitude of all.

CHAPTER IV

1900, 1901

AFTER the end of the Siege Sir Claude left for Japan, to which he had been appointed as our first Ambassador, the post having been previously held by a Minister. His place in Peking was taken by Sir Ernest Satow, who came to China from Tokyo. Sir Ernest was a very different type. He had passed into the Diplomatic Service from the Consular Service, and among other places, after serving as Japanese Secretary, he had seen service in Morocco. His knowledge of Japanese was practically unrivalled. Sir Ernest was an austere man. He was very hard on his staff and exacted a tremendous amount of work from them, but, as he used to say, he had been brought up in a hard school — the school of Sir Harry Parkes. After passing my final examination he kept me in Peking as his private secretary, and during the wearisome period in 1901 prior to the signature of the Protocol which closed the Boxer incident, when every Article of the Treaty was thrashed out by the members of the Diplomatic Body over and over again and each new argument telegraphed home, my usual hours for work were 8 A.M. till 1 or 2 A.M. He was unbending in his attitude towards the leading Chinese officials, who knew however much they might wheedle the other diplomats they would get no concessions from the British Minister. He once said to me he thought some of his colleagues paid such deference to Chinese officials because they wore petticoats. I learnt from Sir Ernest to follow Lord Elgin's maxim for dealing with Chinese officials. Never make a demand which is not absolutely just: when you make a just demand see that you get it.

Chinese officials in those days were, and even now still are, apt to do things which appear to us silly, but which to them are vital. One or two examples will show what I mean, and when it is realised the actions were perpetrated by two of the most famous Viceroys who have ever held sway in China, it will readily be understood how often the Consular official was faced with similar, and even more offensive conduct in his dealings with

Governors, Taotais and magistrates. Now for the examples. Two of the most difficult questions to be settled in the 1901 Protocol were (1) the punishment of the guilty officials and (2) cancellation of literary examinations for a fixed period of years. Before their inclusion in the Treaty the terms had to be sanctioned by Imperial edict. (1) was obtained with difficulty, as there is small doubt the Russian Envoy had at least hinted he would endeavour to get some of the sentences mitigated, and further, it meant that the Empress Dowager officially consented to the death or banishment of those high officials whom she had urged by edict to exterminate the foreigner. Sir Ernest was very firm over this Article, but when lunching alone with him I said what a terrible list it seemed as we telegraphed it to the Foreign Office, he replied, "Never mention the subject to me again." (2) hit at the very root of all Chinese officialdom. It was bitter to the Chinese officials to think they were to be deprived of the source from which they drew their recruits, and that the insult would be known all over China wherever examinations were held.

Everything was ready for the signature of the Protocol; only the edict was required. Li Hung-chang, the Great Viceroy who was the principal negotiator on the Chinese side, produced a spurious edict. Our Chinese Secretary spotted the fraud, and when he faced Li with the fact suggesting a more convincing wording, was told the edict was false, the Chinese was poor but our version was not much better. As this last-minute hitch had not been expected, our battery, which had occupied the Summer Palace a few miles north-west of Peking, had left and was in Peking ready to entrain for Tientsin. When Sir Ernest heard of Li's trick he ordered me to ride at once to battery headquarters and bid them reoccupy the Summer Palace. This was done, at a smart canter through the streets of Peking and very quickly on the road outside. When Li was informed of this he produced the edict, and the gunners left. All was now prepared for the signature of the Protocol at the Spanish Minister's residence, he being Dean of the Diplomatic Body. At the last moment Li Hung-chang sent to say he was too ill to go out, but it did not signify as he had prepared all for signature at his residence, wishing at least to give the appearance to the people of Peking

that he had dictated the terms of the Treaty which he had condescended to sign on the plea of the Diplomatic Body, as was evidenced by their coming to him. Some of the Ministers did not mind where they signed, they only wished to sign and have done with it. One of the foreign colleagues even came and asked Sir Ernest to agree, but he replied that until he was informed Li Hung-chang was actually inside the Spanish Legation he would not leave the British Legation. Li Hung-chang knew with whom he was dealing and gave way. Sir Ernest was informed of his arrival at the Spanish Legation, went, and the Treaty was signed.

The other incident occurred when Sir Ernest visited Liu K'un-yi, Viceroy at Nanking. Liu K'un-yi and his colleague Chang Chih-tung, Viceroy at Wuchang, will ever be famous for their courage in changing the Chinese character for "kill" in the Empress Dowager's extermination edict to "protect" the foreigner, thereby saving, with one exception, all foreigners south of the Yangtse River. Nanking and Wuchang (opposite Hankow) are both on the south bank of the Yangtse. It must be recorded that the bold stand taken by the Viceroys was largely due to the magnificent work of Everard Fraser at Hankow, one of the most brilliant Chinese scholars our Service ever possessed, ably assisted by Sundius at Nanking.

At Nanking the Viceroy's Yamen was inside the native city some three miles from the river-bank, and the Consulate was a Chinese rented house almost adjoining. When the time for the call came we proceeded to the Yamen in chairs, the Minister and Consul in the green official chair used by Mandarins of the highest class and the lesser officials in blue chairs. We always maintained the right of the Consul to use signs of official rank equal to those of the highest authority resident in the port at which he was stationed. On arrival at the Yamen we found the huge doors which are at the entrance to the main courtyard of every official entrance closed. In order to gain face with the crowd in the precincts officials were very apt thus to make their guests wait some seconds, or even one or two minutes, or even to try to make them enter the side doors. We would call this rude, as indeed it is, but to the Chinese official it was merely a way of emphasising his supreme importance. Sir Ernest did not wait one second, but at once ordered the chairs to return to the

Consulate. Sündius was furious, as he had set his heart on the visit being a success. In a few moments a young secretary came from the Yamen, said the doors were opened and begged the Consul to ask the Minister to return. Hurriedly he confessed the Viceroy had ordered the gates to be opened, adding he knew we understood Chinese ways and had only meant to give the Viceroy face by keeping the doors closed for a moment ; he had no idea Sir Ernest would leave so quickly. Sundius refused to tackle the Minister and I had to volunteer to do so. It took some persuasion but I succeeded. When we returned we found the old Viceroy standing outside the main entrance in the square in front of his residence in the face of the large crowd. The triumph of courtesy was complete and the interview a huge success. The Viceroy must have been eighty, and the picture of him with his white beard, in his robes, and coral button and peacock's feather standing in that square, remains very vivid in my mind. Thus I learnt my first lessons in dealing with Chinese officialdom. My closer intimacy with the people of China was to come later, for at this time my connection with them lay mainly in the control of the Minister's native staff, but even at this period I was beginning to learn some of the lovable qualities of the humble classes, and to worry out the workings of their minds which made them at times so irritating.

While I was his secretary I used frequently to take Sir Ernest's visitors over the Forbidden City, and its beauties never ceased to be a wonder and a delight. Who that has seen them can ever cease to revel in the glories of the yellow roofs, the rich warmth of the red walls, the pure beauty of the marble balustrades. Often and often had I gazed on those glorious yellow roofs wondering what beauties, what mysteries they contained, and the joy of entering what till the occupation of Peking by the foreign troops was the Forbidden City was intense. I think the real beauty of the palaces and throne-rooms sank deepest into my heart when I revisited these haunts with my wife in December 1935. Well kept and very clean, maintaining the dignity of past glory, those beautiful courtyards seem to preserve a huge secret, and as I wandered unbothered by attendants or other sightseers I mentally filled the empty spaces with the picturesque figures which surrounded the Chinese Court, and visualised the scenes

they had witnessed, scenes in which passion, hate, splendour, base intrigue, love and tragedy had combined, in which life's deepest joys, life's keenest sorrows had been felt in a measure of intensity little known to those who cannot fathom the Oriental heart.

It was when I was Sir Ernest's private secretary I had the happiness of being the means of restoring to the Temple of Heaven one of its greatest treasures. I was living in his house, and one day in the course of clearing up I found in his back quarters a tablet the background of which was a most beautiful sky-blue, framed in rich gold, and with four Chinese characters in gold meaning "God" (*Hwang t'ien shang ti*). I went and told Sir Ernest of the find and said that I thought it must be important. He took the opportunity of a visit from Prince Ch'ing to mention the fact of the presence of this tablet in his house to His Highness. The old Prince at once said, "That comes from the Temple of Heaven. It has been lost for a year." Whereupon Sir Ernest told him he would like to restore it. Prince Ch'ing begged the Minister not to send it to his house, as if it was placed in the entrance to his residence he could neither leave nor enter his home without kotowing twenty-seven times every time he passed it. After some discussion it was decided we would seek some other means of restoring the tablet to the Temple of Heaven, and we sought the good offices of Hu Yü-fen, an enlightened official with modern tendencies who had been Director of Railways. He was a jovial toper and at one famous bout of drinking he made all his staff helpless and, putting them in a pile, sat on the top. He had more practical sense than reverence and at once agreed to take the tablet. He came at night with a Peking cart and took it to the vaults of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank till a favourable day was found for restoring it to the Temple of Heaven. This took place in late 1901 or early 1902. I next saw the tablet in December 1935. I was paying my farewell visits to Peking after my retirement on the 2nd September 1935 and naturally went to see the Temple of Heaven. I was with my wife and Mr. Blackburn, Chinese Secretary of Embassy. When we got to the small temple opposite the Altar of Heaven in which I knew the tablet was usually kept together with the tablets sacred to the Emperors of the Ch'ing dynasty, I told the attendants I would like to see it. They replied that this was quite impossible as no-one was allowed

to see it. " What talk is this ", I retorted. " If it had not been for me the tablet would not be there. What you are saying I truly cannot allow to pass." I thereupon told them the story as related above, upon which they agreed to show me the tablet. One of them, after opening the door, ascended the Altar and opened the black box in which the tablet was standing. I saw it and recognised it as the one I had found in Sir Ernest's store cupboard in 1901. Realising how interested I was in Peking, the attendants became very friendly and showed us the tablets to the twenty-eight major Constellations, to Thunder and Lightning and to other forces of Nature, but told me that the tablets of the Emperors were all lost after their removal to T'ai Miao. My wife gave me a coloured photograph of the tablet. I lent this photograph to an American lady who was visiting Peking and urged her to try to see the tablet. All her pleas to do so were sternly refused. She showed them the photograph : but while they acknowledged that the tablet was there, they added that the photograph ought never to have been taken.

Thus in the early days of my career I learnt the response of the humble Chinese to ordinary decent treatment, and the measure of their gratitude. I also obtained a valuable insight into the wearisome methods used by the Chinese officials in the course of dealing with cases, and the response which firm handling of a just demand received from them. If the response shown by Chinese officials to Western directness in handling diplomatic cases was disappointing, I found the response of the humble was genuine. So genuine did I find it, in fact, during my thirty-eight years in China that I marvelled that, generally speaking, so little care was shown by their own moneyed classes for a people so rich in affection and indeed in a certain measure in gratitude, though their methods of showing gratitude are often discounted by the cynical as betraying a latent hope for further favours.

I have always felt that in questions such as how to handle people apparently so difficult to fathom as the Chinese either you want to understand them or you do not want to ; in the latter case you simply want to use their physical or mental abilities for your own material advantage. The human side of life in China always appealed to me keenly and I wanted to understand, thus I read into what some might consider trivial or even eyewash a

real true meaning. I liked to believe that the thoughtful action was meant, that the kind word was written because the author of the deed or word really meant it. Life was happier for a simple belief of this kind. Thus, on my departure from Peking after four years, when I received a gift and a letter signed by my own servants and all the boys of the Students' Mess, I was encouraged to believe there was a response to be won from these people. I felt they meant what they wrote :

We have in the past abundantly received of your kindness and, ashamed at our lack of learning, we offer you our humble thanks. We realise, kind master, that while you have been in Peking, we your little ones have ever been steeped in your goodness, even to the present, and throughout the ages we will ponder this, nor forget it. And we further pray that happiness will daily follow you at Shanghai and your fame ever increase. We await, kind master, your return to Peking when once again we your little ones will rejoice in your tender kindness. Deeply do your little ones long in hope for this.

How can anyone who wants to understand fail to sense the depth of feeling in this letter ? Carefully written, each time I was mentioned a new line begun and raised two characters as a mark of respect and in perfect language. To me, longing to understand, it brought a new rich meaning to life in China. My belief in the genuineness of impressions of gratitude, though couched in the picturesque terms of the Chinese language and apparently over-effusive, remained with me throughout my career. I have never had cause to alter it, and the fact I still get letters in Chinese from old servants, club boys and caddies seems to me to prove that my faith in their touching devotion and loyalty is not misplaced.

In the whole of my time in China I only twice used parental correction with servants and on both occasions I asked their permission. The first occasion was in Peking. After the relief of the Legations, I had taken pity on a little waif whose relations, except his mother, had all been killed and had made him No. 2 boy. One morning I missed a coat lined with sheepskin (I had about ten, bought at sales of loot) and asked him where it was. He said he had borrowed it as he was very cold. I replied that he had stolen it and would never have returned it if I had not missed it. He had nothing to say, so I told him I did not really

want a No. 2 boy and he could go. He wept and said his mother depended on him. I then said, " Very well, you either go or I beat you." He asked for the beating. I told him to take down his bags and gave him six. I then went to bed and he, after covering me with the restored coat, sat in a corner and sobbed. I do not know how long he stayed, but next day he said he had not slept much. I asked him why, to which he replied, " I was thinking of you. And also I was very sore." I told him he had been stupid, as if he had told me he was cold I would have given him a coat. I thereupon gave him the wretched garment. In Shanghai I sent him to school to learn English and he was my boy for seventeen years, only leaving when I went to Szechuan as his wife wanted to return to Peking and at the time Szechuan was fighting the North.

But his statement that he had " borrowed " the coat was strictly true. It is also true he would never have given it back if I had not missed it ; yet it was in fact merely " borrowed ", as it was always there to be restored if I asked for it. I also got an insight into the workings of the Chinese coolie's mind as regards lying. At Wei-hai-wei, which I visited with Sir Ernest, there had been a murder trial at which the principal witness, a poor coolie, had lied and lied and lied. The Judge finally got so angry when he ultimately came out with the truth that he was given a month's imprisonment for contempt of court. A friend of mine who had acted as interpreter during the case went to the prison and asked why he had annoyed everyone by telling so many lies when he finally told the truth. The coolie, who could not understand their annoyance or why he was in prison, replied, " The truth is very valuable, you can only use it once." Truly a high value to put on truth, the right value in fact ; but a court of law is obviously not a place in which to delay giving away this precious thing which you can only use once.

CHAPTER V

1902, 1903

FROM Peking I went as assistant to the Consulate General in Shanghai. Here I was ruthlessly compelled really to get down to a study of Chinese, out of office hours, by Jamieson (now Sir James). With what I felt was gross and unnecessary severity he shattered my pride in my knowledge of colloquial Chinese by failing me in my examination for the Junior Interpretorial allowance. I do not remember, as he delights to relate, having pursued him round the compound with a gun on the evening of this disaster; rather do I dwell on his visit to me when he gave me a huge cigar in a glass case and urged me to more serious effort. I took his advice and I owe to him the foundations of the knowledge of the language, upon which I readily built. In my future career I ever remember his keenness for the best, rejection of anything just passable, and with him I always couple Fraser (afterwards Sir Everard) under whom in Hankow I was compelled to master the written language to assist him in writing out his personal correspondence with the Viceroy.

In Shanghai I was able to develop my insight into the Chinese character as I was appointed acting assessor in the Mixed Court. In this Court the Consular Assistant, usually a Vice-Consul, sat with a Chinese magistrate and dealt with cases in which British subjects were plaintiffs and Chinese defendants, and also with offences committed by Chinese against regulations governing the good order of the International Settlement. In dealing with the many cases of theft occurring in the Settlement area I was distressed by the number of juvenile offenders who were sentenced by the Court to various terms of imprisonment. It worried me so intensely that I determined to see for myself where they were imprisoned, and to my horror found these little fellows in the most hideous prisons in the native city, each chained to a hardened criminal. This could only mean that they were taught further crime without any hope of redemption. I was so grieved that I asked Colonel Watson of the Shanghai Municipal Police whether

he could give me a portion of the Municipal Jail as a reformatory for boys. To this he agreed, and obtained the consent of the Municipal Council. In this connection he wrote the letter of which the following is a copy:

August 7th, 1903

MY DEAR HEWLETT,

On visiting the gaol I find I shall be able to make arrangements for accommodating boys there and can partition off part of the workshops.

I propose reporting to the Council that in my opinion there is no need to build a separate reformatory at present as arrangements can be made for boy criminals at the gaol. That they can be kept in the workshops apart from the men. There being no means of teaching them any trades under the present arrangements, I recommend that Subscriptions be asked from the Chinese gentry to defray the cost of engaging instructors. A percentage of the amount earned by the boys to be given them on discharge. The amount to rest entirely with the Superintendent.

I think that will meet the case. Bland's views, as I gathered in a conversation over the telephone, are that the Municipality should take on themselves the duty of looking after the boy criminals as well as others, but that the engaging of special instructors, etc., was a philanthropic Movement and might therefore be borne by those specially interested. I shall forward the report to the Council to-morrow, so if you have anything more to discuss on the subject please let me know.—Yours sincerely,

M. WATSON

I then asked the Rev. Timothy Richards, one of the greatest missionaries who has ever worked in China, whether he would assist me to interest wealthy Chinese in this scheme so as to obtain sufficient funds whereby we could secure the services of a carpenter, tailor, shoemaker and tinsmith to teach the boys a trade in order that the work done by them in the jail could be sold, and they would in accordance with Major Watson's plan have some money when they left jail. This also was accomplished and the Boys' Reformatory still exists. One of my successors, Bertie Twyman, told me he was enormously relieved when he returned to the Mixed Court in 1905 after an absence of about five years to find there was a Boys' Reformatory, as it had always worried him what to do with these youthful offenders. The only thing, however, he said, was that the Reformatory was far too successful, as parents sent their children deliberately on to the streets to steal

and to be imprisoned so that they might learn a trade free and make some money to bring home.

When Acting Assessor I released one of those boys whom I had seen in the Chinese prison chained to a hideous criminal. I was peculiarly sorry for him. Obtaining the consent of the magistrate, who was obviously interested in such a weird request, I took him home, had him bathed, gave him new clothes and strove to inculcate in his erring mind some self-respect. At first my house servants were opposed to my experiment, and foresaw many petty thefts in the house, but the little criminal was responsive, had a very quick mind and was a good worker; moreover, when working in my house he was honest. When I felt he had reformed I sent him, though I must confess reluctantly, to his home in Chinkiang; but alas, within a year of my departure he returned to his old practices. Whether he was sent out by brutal parents, was tempted by old colleagues, went voluntarily or in despair of finding a permanent job, who can tell? He returned to Shanghai where once more he was caught by the police, and my colleague sitting as Assessor, knowing what I had done for him, gave him a heavy sentence which he felt in all the circumstances was richly deserved. I wonder if we could have seen right into the heart of the little fellow when he reverted to his evil practices whether any of us could lightly state he did deserve it.

An unpleasant feature of the Mixed Court was the punishment by beating with the bamboo. The police used to send in reports of the manner in which the caning had been carried out marked "Severe", "Moderate" or "Light". As a man could receive anything between fifty and five hundred blows at one time, I wished to see what this meant. I saw quite enough. Let us say a man was receiving five hundred blows out of a sentence of three thousand, that is to say receiving five hundred a month for six months. He is a poor man; he can pay nothing. And this is what happened. He was put on the ground, flat on his face, in front of the magistrate, his trousers were removed and underlings held his head. A man with a light bamboo, kneeling on one knee, flicked the flesh in exactly the same spot behind the buttocks with unerring accuracy. I will not go into further details beyond saying that roughly two hundred and thirty blows broke the

skin and the beating continued right to the bone. Salt only far too often was at once put in the wound, which naturally could not heal within a month, and this meant that a man who had received a heavy sentence was probably rendered a cripple for life. In the event, however, of a man who could pay, not only did the man counting the blows count inaccurately (such as calling out " One, three, nine, fourteen, twenty-five, finished ! "), but the blows were spread all over the bare leg, thus entailing little or no bodily injury. The punishment I minded least, and really think for small thefts was most effective, was the cangue. Here you got a scoundrel or petty thief who had done some crime deserving punishment of an exemplary nature, and you placed him in the large wooden collar, known as the cangue, at or near the spot where the crime had been committed and with the record of the crime on it. There was more personal disgrace than actual pain, though naturally the discomfort of the collar was acute. I only saw after the abolition of the cangue anything similar to this punishment once ; that was in Szechuan where at a fair a young fellow dressed in beautiful silks, who had annoyed some girls in the public theatre at the fair, was chained like a dog to the entrance of the temple leading to the fair in such a way that he could neither avoid the jeers of the mob nor the sneers of acquaintances. I well remember his fruitless efforts by twisting his neck to hide his face from us when I entered the temple courtyard with the Military Governor.

When at Shanghai I was sent on my first independent mission. This was to represent the British Government at the funeral of the missionary men, women and children who had been murdered at Ch'ü Chou in 1900. The Ch'ü Chou massacre was a disgraceful affair. The edict issued by the Empress Dowager for the extermination of all foreigners in China was stopped by the Great Viceroys of the Yangtse, Liu K'un-yi at Nanking and Chang Chih-tung at Wuchang, Hankow, who, as I mentioned in an earlier chapter, changed the Chinese character for " kill " to " protect ". By some mischance the original edict with the word " kill " got to Hangchow, the capital of Chêkiang Province, in which Ch'ü Chou is situated. It was immediately followed by the Viceroys' proclamation containing the alteration of the character " kill " to " protect ". The Provincial Judge at

Hangchow being bitterly anti-foreign, regretted the Viceroys' action and sent out the edict containing the word "kill". This he immediately regretted, realising how strong the Viceroys must be to dare to alter an imperial edict, and thereupon sent further messengers to recall the fatal message he had already sent. He was in time everywhere but in Ch'ü Chou, where full vent was given to the fury of the mob and the most hideous atrocities perpetrated. The local magistrate endeavoured to save the missionaries but became involved in the massacre, was stripped naked and carried upside-down on a pole through the streets with a placard stuck in his back and the characters "Jesus Pig" on it.

Two little children were killed when imploring the mob not to hurt their father, who loved China.

I had no idea how a large funeral of this nature should be conducted, but I was advised throughout by Mr. Fairclough of the China Inland Mission, whose kindness and clarity of mind were of invaluable assistance to anyone as young as myself. All I can remember is that the officials showed their sincere desire publicly to evince their sorrow at the ghastly massacre by asking me to decide exactly what form of mourning their dress should take, whether they should abandon the peacock feather, official girdle and official button, etc. I cannot remember exactly what was decided, but I do remember the actual funeral was conducted with a solemnity and dignity which impressed me as giving full evidence of a genuine sorrow for the hideous events that had taken place. The massacre at Ch'ü Chou was the only one which occurred south of the Yang-tse during the Boxer Rising.

On my return from the funeral, the authorities at Hangchow deliberately attempted to make very light of the whole proceedings, but although I cannot quite realise what made me do so, having in mind what I had learnt when secretary to Sir Ernest, I insisted on a proper escort of soldiers being sent before I would pay any official calls, and after some demur this request was granted and a large number were sent. Although the Consul General at Shanghai told me he felt very doubtful whether such conduct had been correct and was not *ultra vires*, he stated he would support it in his report to the Minister. As Sir Ernest fully approved, all ended happily.

In the month of May 1927, it is sad to relate, Communist

troops overran this burial site, destroyed the stone tombs, rifled the coffins and scattered the remains. Pending an enquiry into this wanton desecration, the graves were temporarily patched up.

In the course of time an official promise was given that the damage done would be made good. It was ascertained that the cost of renewal would involve an expenditure of thousands of dollars. Expert advice confirmed the general opinion that the ruined cemetery could never be restored to its former perfection.

After prolonged negotiations with high officials in Hangchow and Ch'ü Chou, the Mission was led to make the following proposal with a view to finally terminating the painful tragedy :

(1) Collect and place into one coffin the remains of the foreign martyrs, and bury the same in the cemetery owned by the Foreign Community of Hangchow. This burial-place is in the environs of the West Lake.
(2) The Chinese coffins to be buried in the church cemetery at Ch'ü Chou.
(3) To dispose of " The City Hill " by way of gift to the local Ch'ü Chou Government, with the suggestion that it should be for public use as an extension to the City Park.

A proclamation was issued, and posted throughout the Ch'ü Chou area, announcing the friendly attitude of the China Inland Mission and the proposal emanating from them. The intimation was well received by the populace.

The reinterment at Hangchow took place on 20th February 1934, before a large gathering of Chinese and foreign friends.

The whole matter was closed on these lines and no memorial of any kind exists in Ch'ü Chou to bring the Boxer year event to mind. There was a suggestion to place a brass tablet in the Ch'ü Chou church as a small commemoration of our beloved friends. It was thought best, however, to eliminate even this small token.

This settlement was achieved by the Rev. C. Fairclough, who had accompanied me on my mission.

CHAPTER VI

1908

THE years between 1903 and May 1908 can be passed over. During this period I had my first home leave, a time never to be forgotten, and, after a winter in Tientsin chiefly memorable for excellent golf on a cruel course composed chiefly of mud fields and graveyards, I spent two happy years in Seoul. During this period I was married. 1907 found me back in China in Hankow under Fraser, one of the most brilliant Chinese scholars who has ever adorned the Service and with an unrivalled clarity of brain in handling cases. I owe practically the whole of my training as a Consular official to this sterling friend, for it was he who steered me through the difficulties of my first post at Changsha, whose letters formed a volume of guidance worth far more than any instructions I ever received from any other source.

He, too, helped me to my first independent post. Changsha, the capital of the adjoining Province of Hunan, was without a consul, and he was asked by Sir John Jordan, the Minister, whether he could work without a Vice-Consul and release me for the post. He at once agreed, and thus in May 1908, after ten years' service and at the age of thirty-two, I secured my first independent post.

I was delighted with this appointment to Changsha. Not only was I pleased from the financial point of view, one which could not be ignored by a married Junior Consular Assistant, but for many other reasons which can be readily understood. I had secured my first independent post as Acting Consul, and with very brief spells in Tientsin in 1913 and in Shanghai in 1914, was always in an independent post. Then there was the fascination of going to Changsha. Changsha is the capital of the Province of Hunan and is situated on the south bank of the Siang River which flows into the vast Tungting Lake which empties itself in the Yangtse. The Province of Hunan was bitterly anti-foreign and had rigorously held out against all attempts to open its capital to foreign trade. But in 1903 two missionaries were murdered in

the province and the action of the British Government was so quick and so definite, various measures having been considered, such as the occupation of the Chusan Islands between Shanghai and Ningpo pending satisfaction of our claims, and blockading the entrance to the Tungting Lake, that the Chinese Government gave way, realising the pressure was serious and with memories of 1901 still fresh in their minds. Changsha was made one of the Treaty Ports and in 1905 a Consul was sent to reside there. It was considered essential that the precedent of Canton should be followed, where we had a Yamen inside the native city, and with a certain amount of difficulty a Chinese house was secured. The start at Changsha was not propitious. The first Consul got consumption and died a very few years afterwards in hospital in Shanghai. The second left suffering from a form of nervous prostration, and the third went temporarily out of his mind. The Minister seriously considered closing the port, but after careful consideration this step was considered inadvisable and I was sent to see what I could make of it.

The Consulate residence was a large rambling house right inside the city. The area was surrounded by huge walls as a protection against fire, which made the compound and living-rooms unbearably hot in the blazing heat of summer. There were spacious halls surrounding courtyards and a small stage for a theatre. The garden was very picturesque with a pond, a small stone bridge and a dainty little pagoda. The living-rooms were a nightmare. Attempts had been made to line the walls with wood to lessen the damp which streamed down them. The staircase and floors of the upper rooms were rickety in the extreme. Rats flourished everywhere and it was no rare thing to find frogs in the dining-room. Living inside the city was like being in a glorified prison. Every night the city gates were closed at dusk ; not only that, the various sections of the city were shut off by huge wooden barricades which were barred and bolted. When dining on H.M. ships anchored in the river, it was necessary to inform the local authorities, who then issued the necessary instructions to have the city gate opened. In a strange way Chinese used to glean when we were outside the city for dinner, and on many occasions there would be an ugly scramble to squash into the half-opened gate with our chairs. Then we

would hear the gates close, and as we proceeded home barrier after barrier opened and then locked behind us, till finally the huge Consulate entrance doors were clanged-to and we were in the heart of our self-imposed imprisonment.

Changsha was at that time one of the prettiest native cities in China. For a Chinese city the streets, all stone-paved, were fairly wide and the shops all opened to the street showed great wealth. The enormous silk shops were especially famous. Changsha was a proud city. She alone of all the cities of the South had withstood the T'ai P'ing rebel hordes, and the Province of Hunan had produced many famous men during the latter half of the nineteenth century. I visited the houses of these Hunan heroes and in one learnt the deep-rooted hatred of Hunan for the foreigner, on reading a tablet on which a famous General has recorded his desire to imbrue his hands in foreign blood. I soon determined that I could not limit my connection with the Chinese to mere official relations with the Governor and the Taotai, the official with whom our work was mainly conducted. I decided to call on all the Provincial Authorities, and not only that, but on the leading gentry and the schools. I risked my comparative ignorance of Chinese etiquette, now much simplified, and thought I would try to win by personal contact what I knew I could never secure by rigid official standards. The experiment was entirely successful. First I won the affection and loyalty of my native servants, and with the exception of Chengtu, never did I have a more loyal or devoted staff. The gentry, always anti-foreign, were at first suspicious, but while they never changed their attitude regarding such questions as the acquisition of land in Changsha by foreigners and the recognition of rights secured by Treaty, I was accepted as a personal friend, and this friendship stood me in good stead. With the Governor I soon established excellent relations, and his secretary was one of the best friends I ever had in China ; but although we learnt to respect each other after interminable official fights over question after question, I can never claim to have been on friendly terms with the Taotai, who felt it his duty rigorously to oppose every Treaty right and who used every means in his power to render official correspondence as difficult as possible.

The people, generally speaking, were very anti-foreign,

though the missions were beginning to do good work, and I saw the birth of Yale in China. For example, I went one day into one of the largest silk stores. As was common in the larger shops, the walls were decorated with a huge picture depicting a scene representing trees, pagodas, lakes and bridges and figures, all worked in raised stucco and painted in gay colours. The shop was in the main street which led ultimately to the Consulate. In this case the scene depicted an official receiving tribute, and among the tribute-bearers was the crude resemblance of a foreign man leading a woman naked to the waist, and bearing a flag inscribed "The Englishman brings tribute". I mentioned the matter to the Governor's secretary, and obtained the complete removal of the offensive scene through one of the gentry on the grounds that it lacked courtesy and was offensive to me who after all was a guest in their city.

I soon found how bitter was the resentment at our owning premises in the city, and furthermore I realised that life in our ramshackle rambling abode was wellnigh impossible. I felt much friction would be removed if we decided to live outside the city, and argued that if trade could be better secured on a friendly basis it was not of vital importance if we gave the Chinese face by leaving the city, especially if I volunteered to do so on the grounds of health. An exceptionally severe summer decided me, and after some correspondence the Minister, Sir John Jordan, acquiesced in my suggestion.

I approached the Chinese authorities and asked if they would obtain a site and build me a house which I could rent from them. They readily agreed and obtained a delightful site on the river-bank outside the North Gate. It was a two-storied foreign-style house, and as the four rooms downstairs and upstairs were exactly the same size, with the same number of doors and windows, the house was built with delightful rapidity. I made my request in August; I was in the house in early December and will never forget the joy of being in the fresh air with a lovely view across the river to the beautiful Yo-lo Shan, a famous hill, and the range of Hunan hills beyond.

After moving to my new residence outside the city walls, I paid frequent visits to General Yang, a Yunnanese in command of the Hunan troops who were stationed outside the city. I

formed with him a very close friendship which lasted all my time in China and was renewed in Nanking in 1929 after he had retired, and when, like many others, he was residing for greater safety in the International Settlement at Shanghai. He was the most rigidly straightforward Chinese of the official class with whom I ever had dealings and our friendship was very genuine. We met frequently, and I was able to discuss freely with him the growing anti-foreign feeling which was beginning to find open expression during 1909. He was one of those rare officials who could see that the foreigner had his side of the question, and to realise how distasteful it was for me incessantly to be forced into apparently unfriendly actions, when my whole object was to secure a mutually sympathetic understanding in the many intricate situations which daily cropped up in this difficult post. He identified himself with me in an open manner before his troops, and as always happened in China when those in authority were friendly, their following was also extremely friendly ; my relations with the troops were therefore excellent. He lent his parade-ground for the first cricket match ever played in Changsha, and made the team from H.M.S. *Nightingale*, our opponents, very welcome. The parade-ground was rough and stony, but troops cleared the pitch of stones and roughness was ignored. The troops also good-naturedly kept the crowd from pressing in too closely to watch the weird foreign game. Balls misfielded or a catch missed were greeted with much merriment. When batting it was advisable to hit high so as not to hurt the onlookers. This all may appear trifling, but an event of this kind would be talked about in the tea-shops, and no doubt comments would be made that all the stories being then told about foreign malpractices could not be true seeing how they had been welcomed by the General, and allowed the use of his parade-ground for their game.

Attached to the Consulate and anchored at the foot of the steps leading down to the river was a war junk with an officer and eight men. The men acted as boatmen for me. The junk was really useless as protection, but its presence gave me " face ". Its only armament was a small one-pounder muzzle-loading gun. The officer in command used frequently to come to me for a talk and compared notes on the anti-foreign feeling in the city,

and I had further evidence of the existence of unrest in an incident which occurred late in 1909.

I was visiting a temple about eight miles from Changsha. Two foreign friends were chatting to the old blind priest in the monastery and mentioned the British Consul was with them. He showed the keenest interest and asked to be taken to me at once. On meeting me he seized my hand and, with a guide, led me through several rooms right into an inner chamber. Having made fast the door he related the following strange tale. In June a band of over a thousand had come to his temple, where they held a large meeting. Incense was burnt and a society formed to exterminate the foreigner. It was resolved that each member should make the death of a foreigner his object. In reply to many questions from me, the old man said he had not mentioned the matter before because he did not know how to approach me, and did not wish to approach the Governor direct, but he hoped I would inform the Governor and warn him. He said the matter was serious and two meetings were held. They took place after dark and no-one had been recognised. He concluded by saying he was an old man and desired peace above all things, and that he did not wish his temple to be a party to the death of foreigners.

The whole experience was weird in the extreme — the old blind priest, the dark passages we traversed, the dirty inner chamber, the locked door. The old man held one of my hands most of the time he spoke to me, and kept his other hand tight on my knee.

The value of information of this type was always difficult to gauge accurately. Utterly to ignore it would have been foolish, for the old man could not have fabricated the tale. To attach too much importance savoured of panic, so I merely submitted it to the Governor privately to decide himself what it was worth. In view of the fact that after the riots the Taotai viciously snapped at me, " You have the satisfaction of knowing you saved all the foreigners' lives by getting them out of the city, as if they had remained all would have been killed ", adds colour to its veracity.

I felt uneasy with all the growing unfriendliness. Although my relations with the officials were surprisingly friendly, with the exception of the Taotai, and I was also on very amicable terms with gentry and students, I saw no evidence of a desire to check

the anti-foreign spirit the increase of which could, to my mind, only end in serious trouble. In fact I was so certain trouble must break out that in the winter of 1909 I summoned a meeting of the heads of all the missions in Changsha to ascertain their views, feeling their means of obtaining information were better, perhaps, than my own, though by this time many Chinese in various walks of life were privately giving me most useful information. With the exception of Mr. Goteburg of the Norwegian Mission, not one confirmed my suspicions, Dr. Keller of the China Inland Mission, who had the greatest knowledge of Changsha, going so far as to say he considered Changsha the safest spot in China. But I was still not happy and continued to watch the situation carefully.

Apart from their personal friendliness I knew there was always that ineradicable trait of anti-foreign feeling among the leaders who could always find some cause to rouse the people against outside influence, and thus turn their thoughts from a closer scrutiny of their own shortcomings. It may be true that all Treaties with China were objectionable as having been extorted by force, but the Chinese would often have done well in their earlier intercourse with foreigners if from time to time they had asked themselves with whom lay the fault of making the use of force necessary. Chinese officials, gentry and students ever look without for the reason of their sufferings and disasters, and the blame ever fell on the foreigner. Well had it been if at an earlier date the necessity for radical reform within had impressed itself deeply on the minds of the leaders of the people.

This attitude of the officials was especially noticeable in Changsha, which had only been opened to foreign trade for three years. The Governor of the province was anxious and even willing to carry out the Treaties, but the majority of the officials, who had no responsibility regarding foreign obligations, supported by the gentry, opposed every move made by the foreigner. More than once he asked me not to press questions which were in fact rights secured by Britons under Treaty, but he always understood my position and never failed me.

The mob in Hunan were always easily roused. There had been great opposition to the building of the Hankow-Changsha branch of the Hankow-Canton railway, nor was it ever completed

in my day. Although the officials well knew the benefit to be secured by railway communication with Hankow, the people were not educated to these advantages and the line had to be laid out under troops commanded by a somewhat ruthless, if enlightened, official from another province. To the humble farmer folk the building of the railway destroyed the Feng Shui of the whole locality, and here I think I must digress to endeavour to elucidate this mysterious belief, which played such an important part in the life of old China, which has intrigued many a heart desiring to understand these people, and driven to exasperation Consular officials trying to secure deeds of properties for Missionary Societies, or rights to construct railways and many other such matters affecting the countryside.

Feng Shui literally translated means wind and water. Professor Giles elucidates it as " that which cannot be seen and that which cannot be grasped ". It was a well-reasoned system by the art of which it was possible to counteract evil influences by good ones, to utilise the beneficial influences of kindly Nature ; and by the science of which the desirability of sites for tombs, houses and even cities could be determined. It is impossible to translate it. To preserve the Feng Shui of a city, that is to counteract the evil influence of a dragon-haunted hill near a city, a temple would be erected at a suitable spot opposite to it. To ensure perfect Feng Shui for a family graveyard the ideal was a wide stretch of water in front, rising ground behind and flanked by enclosing hills. To all who lived in China before 1911 the clinging belief of its humble inhabitants in the Feng Shui of their district is too well known for explanation. With modern development the simple folk saw with horror that their treasured Feng Shui was completely ignored. Railway embankments cut ruthlessly across the fair outlook of a graveyard whose Feng Shui had been perfect. Telegraph poles cast their hideous shadows over hallowed spots. Churches with their spires cut the beneficial influences by rising between the dreaded hill where evil in any shape might lurk and the counteracting influence in the shape of a temple on an opposite hill. Truly the Foreign Devil had let loose the evil spirits over the land.

Railways were hideous inventions to the simple country folk who dreaded the wrath of the irate evil influences now to be

released, as all beneficial natural objects such as rivers, hills and trees were sacrificed to the foreign innovation. How well I could understand this feeling, irritating as it was when violent antagonistic expression was given to the feelings stirred, and at heart how deeply I sympathised. There was the beautiful peaceful family graveyard encircled by trees, sheltered from the cruel north wind by a high mound, protected on either side by low hills, facing a broad river and bathed at noon shadowless in the glorious sun. The railway comes, hills are cut, the river is bridged, telegraph poles cast their gaunt shadows across the graves, peace as it was known has gone, evil influences are let loose abroad.

Feng Shui, the belief in what cannot be seen, what cannot be grasped, is responsible for much which is beautiful in the old untouched China, the lovely graves round a hillside grove, the beautiful pagodas watching over a city. I love to think the basic reason for this beauty was the inborn knowledge, not learnt or acquired by much study, but simply natural, that evil can always be counteracted by good. Certain it is that in carrying out their simple beliefs the Chinese have created spots of untold beauty, and there must be many foreign travellers who have gazed on these carefully selected sites, and rejoiced in the delicate charm of a pagoda, who have felt with me the wonderful power of this innocent seeking after what is beautiful and kind in Nature, especially when it is coupled with the sure belief their actions will be effective.

However necessary it may be, the ruthless disregard of a simple belief always has to my mind something hideous. I would always rather develop gently than ruthlessly destroy, and treasure anything fundamentally good, as this belief in Feng Shui undoubtedly was. I can never help feeling it contained, though unknown, more than dull unreasoning prejudice, rather a perfect love of Nature and a desire to make full use of her wonderful gifts.

My belief in identifying myself with local superstitions which I found basically sound, however idolatrous in appearance, led me at Chinese New Year to welcome the Temple Dragon into the Consulate compound. The temple was situated just outside the Consulate on the river-bank and was largely used by the villagers near us and by the river folk, who sought from its deities

protection from danger from the River Dragon, who was well known to cause disastrous floods, and gracious prosperity in all their undertakings. I looked upon the Temple Dragon therefore as a good influence. The dragon was, I think, made of paper, of great length and carried by some twelve men on poles. During the dance it performed wonderful evolutions. It was accompanied by a lion (two men rigged up like our pantomime lions) who appeared to provide a comic element. I gave the chief performers tea and distributed cigarettes and all went away happy. After the riots the villagers commented that the Consulate had been saved by the dragon, who knew his way in, and as long as they believe in an Unknown Influence for good surely there is ground for rich development. However, I did shock one missionary who happened to be having tea with us and thought it a pity that I encouraged idolatrous practices.

Strangely enough, I was instrumental in saving the temple from destruction by fire. A beam in the roof was blazing, but I managed with the help of a ladder to play the Consulate fire-extinguisher right on the beam, and by further organising a chain of people to pass the Consulate fire-buckets from the river to the temple we mastered the fire in about half an hour. I am sure my simple-hearted neighbours never forgot this, for when a few months later the rioters came to the Consulate in the course of their destruction of all foreign properties, the villagers pleaded with their leaders to spare my residence, saying I was not an official, I was a friend. It was spared. I think I can with reason claim I had right to believe in the good in the hearts of the humble Chinese.

CHAPTER VII

1909, 1910

IN 1909 I completed the purchase of a site for the Consulate on Shui Lu Chou, the island opposite Changsha. The Office of Works made plans for the new building and the contract was given to a Hupei contractor. This brought matters to a head, for to a Hunanese Hunan was above, and Hupei, if not every other province, below. The Hunan masons and carpenters at once placarded the city calling on all to rise and stop this foreign aggression and to drive the contractor from the port. The Hunan Parliament also declared the masons were perfectly correct in asserting that they alone had any right to do work in Hunan no matter how inefficient they might be, but naturally I could not condone this attitude and maintained our right to use any labour. Our determination to use skilled labour from Shanghai, Hankow and Canton was one of the causes of the riots. I did what I could to obtain the suppression of the inflammatory documents, copies of which were secured for me by friendly merchants, but the agitation rapidly got completely out of hand and was keenly fostered by the gentry, even those with whom I was well acquainted. The leaders of the masons' and carpenters' guilds made one attempt at securing a settlement, but they put forward no sort of proposals that would form the basis of a compromise ; they demanded that the contract for the building should be given to them, although totally unfamiliar with anything connected with a foreign construction. Their chosen representatives called on the Japanese Consul to ask him to intervene with me in order to secure the contract for the building : he refused to see them. They then called on the British Commissioner of Customs, who apparently did not even ask them to sit down and spoke to them like naughty boys. Finally, they came to me and over liqueurs and cigarettes we discussed the matter. I told them it was absurd to ask me to use a blunt knife when I could use a sharp one : to use unskilled labour when I could get skilled. I pointed out that Hunan had only three years'

experience of foreign buildings, Shanghai had seventy and Hankow fifty, and told them I must use skilled labour from these ports, though naturally coolie labour would be Hunanese. Similarly, for the house we required Singapore hardwood, Peking slates, etc., etc., and only Hunan granite was of any use to us. We could not possibly use Hunan soft pine and mud tiles. I offered to let them appoint ten selected men to watch the building from foundation to roof, and even at the risk of a rebuff from the Office of Works offered to give them a copy of all plans, but although they were quite courteous and obviously appreciated the reception they had received, they merely thanked me for receiving them, and I knew they were not satisfied.

Other reason for increasing anti-foreign feeling was a shortage of rice and a rise in its cost. In accordance with Treaty provisions, any province wishing to prohibit the export of rice on account of shortage had to give three weeks' notice. The British shipping companies who were carrying heavy cargoes of rice insisted on the Treaty being observed when the Governor tried suddenly to prohibit the export of rice. The export was permitted and further anti-foreign agitation encouraged. The Governor, after the riots, complained of the pressure that I in Changsha and the Consul General in Hankow, with his immediate superior the Viceroy, had brought to bear on behalf of the companies, stating that with our knowledge of China and, further, knowing the shortage was acute, we could easily have foreseen that riots must ensue.

Signs of anti-foreign feeling became more and more apparent. Chinese pilots of steam launches passing British steamers used to hoot with their sirens and hurl abuse at the officers as they went by. I was on a steamer with the Governor's secretary when a launch in a narrow channel tried to make us go aground by crossing our bows. It was so obvious he meant mischief, I told the secretary to come and watch him. He then deliberately crashed into our side, damaged his bow, created a panic among his passengers, then turned round and went back to Changsha, where he reported we had tried to run him down. It was not difficult, however, to persuade the Governor of the truth of the story and he punished the pilot with great severity for risking the lives of his passengers, giving him a long term of imprisonment and cancelling his pilot's certificate.

I next received a very definite warning from one of the Chinese schools, written in Chinese on paper torn from an exercise-book, begging me to leave and to remove all foreigners as our lives were in danger, and adding, " this is a serious warning from a certain School ". It was difficult to decide how much importance to attach to a document of this nature, but I sent it to the Legation and reported my fears. I felt it was genuine, even that it might have been prompted by one friend among the gentry in Hunan, however openly anti-foreign they were, for they knew I frequently visited the schools in Changsha where I had been well received. This document did not reach the Legation before the storm broke.

It was on the evening of Wednesday, the 13th April, that the outburst came quite suddenly. All round the neighbourhood of the Consulate I had noticed all afternoon and as evening drew on a stillness which could be felt ; the ominous silence meant certain trouble, created apprehension for an unknown danger, a longing for something to happen to produce activity. Then rumours began coming in of mobs outside the South Gate (our Consulate was outside the North Gate) demanding a reduction in the price of rice. I sent for the commander of the little war junk and asked him, as I and my wife were dining on one of the river steamers nearly two miles away, leaving our little son of three with the servants, and as there might be trouble, to use my telephone freely and keep me informed. My wife and I went in our large green sedan-chairs, each carried by four bearers, and preceded by two personal soldiers carrying large lanterns with my name and rank in Chinese on them. When passing the Taotai's Yamen, I saw an enormous and very ugly crowd in his courtyard, and the people crowding in ever-increasing numbers in the streets outside the entrance were none too friendly ; at this moment two of my wife's bearers accidentally dropped her chair and for a few seconds I feared the mob were about to attack, but nothing happened and we got to the steamer. I then went to the Customs House and got in touch with the Governor's secretary and Dr. Hume of the Yale Mission. From the latter I learnt the situation was serious and that rioting had begun at the South Gate. The Provincial Judge had gone in person to try and calm the people, but he only roused them to fury by telling them that rice was not at present

really dear and the price would rise higher still — upon which they strung him up by the feet to a tree in the temple courtyard and, pulling out his moustache and beard, left him unconscious ; he was taken down and saved by his servants.

On returning to the steamer I told our host, Captain Agassiz, not to leave as there was serious trouble, that it would probably mean getting all foreigners out of the city and that we ourselves must leave directly after dinner. I then got a telephone message from my war junk commander telling me not to go anywhere near the city as it was in the hands of the mob. This news was confirmed by the Governor's secretary Mr. Kwok, who was consistently frank and truthful with me throughout my tenure of office in Changsha. I abandoned all thought of returning through the city, and leaving our chairs at the Customs, I returned with my wife to the Consulate by river in the Customs boat courteously lent us by the Commissioner ; we had three others with us. I offered to put the boatmen up for the night, but they sensed what was afoot and preferred to go back to the Commissioner's residence on the island. On arrival at the Consulate we unpacked the twelve rifles which had been supplied by the Government in case of emergency, as was the case in all Consulates in China. We went on the verandah to try to hear definite sounds indicating what was taking place inside the city. At times we could hear the ugly distant roar created by the angry mob, but it was impossible to gauge anything accurately on account of an appalling chorus of hundreds of frogs in a pond near by.

My first intimation that foreigners were being attacked was a hurried message from Dr. Goteburg that their mission, the Norwegian, had been destroyed and that he and his family were on the city wall and their lives in great danger. This was hurriedly scribbled on a sheet of coarse Chinese paper with a Chinese pen. I was then told by Mr. Warren that their mission, the Wesleyan, was also in flames. I thereupon asked my loyal friend the war junk commander to depute men to look for the Goteburgs and to take them to the steamer ; further, to take a circular for me to every foreigner of every nationality inside the city urging them to come out without question and without delay ; those nearest the steamer to go to the steamer and those nearest the Consulate

to come to me. I also telegraphed the situation to the Legation through the Consulate General at Hankow, asking for immediate naval assistance.

At 2 A.M. on 14th April I decided to send my wife and child with seven rifles and a supply of ammunition to the Commissioner of Customs who resided on the island opposite the city. I relied on the commander of the war junk to do this and he performed his task faithfully, though owing to a thick fog he took some hours to reach his destination, causing intense anxiety to my wife who was alone with our little son.

Towards dawn my friend General Yang Chin sent a detachment of soldiers to the Consulate, but they were subsequently withdrawn for reasons I will give later.

At ten o'clock I hailed a passing tug, stopping her by pulling the Consulate flag up and down. I warned them of what was happening and asked them to take the foreigners who had gathered in the Consulate to Captain Agassiz, who was anchored at the company's wharf outside the city over a mile away. I was then alone with three other Britons when I got a personal message from the Governor, brought by a trusted servant, saying he could no longer afford any protection and urging me to save myself and the foreigners. I asked for and obtained the use of his launch, which I kept for nearly two months. A special allowance was granted to me for the purpose by the Government. At 1 P.M. I decided to leave the Consulate and go on board Captain Agassiz' steamer the s.s. *Shasi*. On passing Captain Laverie's steamer, the s.s. *Changwo*, which had arrived during the night, I told him to cast off and anchor opposite the Consulate. The whole waterfront was a thick mass of people calling "Kill! Kill!", that hideous cry I had heard in Peking in 1900, a nightmare sound no-one who has heard can ever forget. On joining Captain Agassiz on the *Shasi* I learnt that the Norwegian and China Inland Missions had been destroyed and the Wesleyan Mission badly damaged, and further that the Governor's Yamen was being attacked and the Governor powerless. As we were about ninety-two on board, all the foreigners in the city by that time having been accounted for, so as to ensure sufficient supplies I commandeered the stores in the Chinese comprador's shop, merely giving him a written promise to pay for what I took at a

later date. His shop was burnt the same night, so he was more fortunate than his neighbours for his claim was subsequently paid. In view of the crowds who were pouring out of the city to the river-front, I told Captain Agassiz to move into the stream and we very soon went and joined Captain Laverie opposite the Consulate. The women and children were then all transferred to the *Changwo* and she was sent to Hankow. Captain Laverie demurred at sailing without his ship's papers, but it was not safe to land so I gave him a piece of paper certifying that though without papers he was properly cleared. By this time the mob had burnt the Governor's Yamen, the American Church Mission, and having destroyed the London Mission had come to the Consulate.

The commander of the war junks, now eight in number, asked whether they should fire, but I said no. The villagers pleaded with the leaders of the mob not to touch the Consulate, and I was told by my Chinese writer, who pluckily mingled with the mob and thus gleaned much information, that he had heard this immunity of the Consulate from destruction discussed and learnt that, in addition to the plea of the villagers, the leading masons and carpenters had given instructions that it was to be left alone. Friends of mine among the gentry were also guiding the mob. Whatever the reason may have been, the Consulate was the only foreign building not destroyed, except the Yale Mission Hospital, which was saved by the native staff putting out notices of contributions of rice given to the poor.

I like to think and always will think that the villagers who pleaded " this man is a neighbour not a foreign official " were prompted by feelings of gratitude for the two little incidents which I narrated above.

The mob, after summoning the gatekeeper, a dear old stalwart known to the sailors of H.M. ships who visited Changsha as Old Bottle Nose on account of a striking facial defect, asked to whom the property belonged ; on being told " The British Consul " they ordered him to open the gates, which he did, and they left without a soul entering. This we saw from the steamer which was anchored opposite the Consulate.

We then watched the progress of destruction from the s.s. *Shasi* through dark glasses, and a hideous sight it was. We

could tell each place as it went — the beautiful Roman Catholic Mission, Jardine, Matheson and Co.'s premises, the Customs offices and outdoor staff residences, Butterfield and Swire's properties and many many others, including the shop of my friend the comprador whose stores I had bought.

The next day, Friday the 17th, I received warning from various Chinese friends that an attack on the steamer was contemplated both by gun-fire from the city wall and by filling junks with kerosene and setting them alight and sending them down with the current in the hope of burning the steamer. The Provincial Treasurer, a very close personal friend, who had taken charge on the flight of the Governor, also begged me to leave. The Japanese Consul, whose residence was destroyed, left for Hankow that afternoon, saying, "This is a revolution, not a riot." I was relieved when he left, for I felt that now, whatever action I took, I could not be far wrong and it left me a completely free hand.

I then arranged watches on board the s.s. *Shasi*, and the precaution was justified as that night the Chinese did in effect send down a junk blazing all over ; it missed the steamer we were in by fifty yards, and well can I remember the blazing mass coming down the river in mid-stream with the current. Meanwhile Butterfield and Swire's s.s. *Kian* had arrived, so, retaining about twelve men, I sent the *Shasi*, which had the export cargo on board, to Hankow and moved about six miles down the river out of sight of the town and waited for the naval assistance for which, as stated, I had telegraphed directly the riots began. H.M.S. *Thistle*, Commander Baillie-Hamilton, arrived on Sunday the 19th April, and I at once transferred to her and proceeded back to Changsha. Thousands were flocking out of the city under the conviction we would take dire revenge for the four days' orgy of destruction. The Treasurer came on board and asked that no-one should land until he had time to calm the unruly elements. The Taotai, with whom I had carried on unremitting official warfare and who detested foreigners, told me I could congratulate myself, for if it had not been for the measures taken any foreigners caught would undoubtedly have been killed. But what appealed to me most was a deputation from the humble folk on the river-front to thank me for not having opened fire and destroyed their homes. Punishment was expected,

punishment was deserved, but not the indiscriminate killing of simple souls who had no guidance and who are, even to-day, without knowledge of the basic reasons which bring on them tribulation.

The launch lent to me by the Governor was, on the arrival of H.M.S. *Thistle*, manned by a naval party and happily christened H.M.S. *Thistledown*. Good work was done rescuing missionaries from places in the Interior where anti-foreign gangs were soon at work. For the most important of these rescues I was indebted to General Yang, who sent soldiers to provide safe exit from the Interior to Changsha. The Norwegian Government were especially grateful for work done in rescuing their citizens from interior places and rewarded me with the Order of St. Olaf. My most treasured mementoes of the riots, however, are the two letters which are given below. They speak for themselves. I think I may be pardoned if I reproduce them.

ENCLOSURE NO. 2 IN MR. MAX MULLER'S NO. 128
OF 29TH APRIL 1910

Foreign Community of Changsha to Mr. Hewlett

SS. "KIAN", *17th April* 1910

DEAR MR. HEWLETT,

We, the undersigned, on our own behalf and on behalf of the whole American and European community of Changsha, desire to express to you our sincere thanks for your services to us during the recent crisis, caused by the riots of 1910.

We recognise with profound thanks to Almighty God that not a single foreign life was taken during the riots. We desire to express our opinion that but for the wise steps which, under God, you have taken, that happy result would not have been attained.

Throughout the long hours from the evening of Wednesday, April 13th, until the arrival of H.M.S. *Thistle*, this Sunday afternoon, April 17th, you have been awake night and day with the exception of too few hours of sleep. We could not have marvelled had the strain rendered you unfit for work; but you have not even swerved from the courtesy that has always marked your ordinary intercourse with us. Of the wisdom of the provision you have made, the successful issue is the fullest praise.

For the way in which you have exercised your hospitality on board the boats which you chartered on behalf of His Britannic Majesty's Government, the non-British members of the community desire to

express especial thanks. The fact that the British portion of those rescued by your help is not the majority of the whole number rescued is in itself significant; but that fact is rendered still more noteworthy when we say that there has been absolutely no distinction in your treatment of us all. It is our wish that a copy of this very inadequate expression of our thanks be forwarded to the American, Dutch, German, Italian, Russian and Swedish Legations, and on behalf of the Swiss, to the French Minister in Peking, and to the Consul General for Norway at Shanghai, with a request that all the Governments that have benefited by your services may know what cause they have to thank you.

We confidently anticipate for you a brilliant career in the honourable service which has been adorned with so many great names with which we shall associate yours.

[Here follow the signatures of 7 American, 1 Dutch, 2 German, 2 Italian, 3 Norwegian, 1 Russian, 1 Swedish, 1 Swiss, and 15 British.]

CIRCULAR LETTER SENT BY CHIEFS OF MISSIONS AT PEKING TO MR HEWLETT, HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S CONSUL AT CHANGSHA

May 15th, 1910

W. M. Hewlett, Esq.
His Britannic Majesty's Consul
Changsha, China

SIR,

Your splendid conduct during the late disturbances at Changsha has been brought to our notice and we have to thank you very cordially and sincerely for the aid and protection you have extended to our nationals. It has been an agreeable privilege to convey this to the Government you represent, but in addition we should like to feel that our personal appreciation for your most efficient services should be made known to you, and that you should accept our gratitude therefor. In a time of danger and distress you overlooked all other distinctions and extended like assistance and protection to British and non-British, and Providence permitted your taking steps which saved the foreign community from loss of life. For the fortunate issue of the crisis we congratulate you; but for your incessant care and vigilance again we thank you.

[Signatures of the Diplomatic Representatives in Peking, headed by Mr. Callhoun, American Minister, who drafted the letter.]

I think a personal letter of this nature must be almost unique. The simple dignity of the phrase "Providence permitted your taking steps" showed a depth of true thought which stirred feelings of humble gratitude such as no studied flow of fulsome praise could have evoked.

When order was restored General Yang Chin told me why he had withdrawn his troops. At the very beginning of the riots he had gone into the city from the camp outside with a regiment of his men. They proceeded to the Governor's Yamen and formed a cordon round it to keep out the mob who had already begun their work of destruction in the outer courtyards. General Yang implored the Governor to give the order to open fire, but he hesitated. Seeing they were not interfered with, the mob became bolder and began trying to force their way past the troops, using bricks and sticks. Again and again the General implored the Governor to open fire, while the Treasurer, who has already been mentioned, an old man of seventy-five, fell at the General's feet and implored him to desist. The General was watching his men dropping, stoned or struck down, each place being quietly refilled with perfect discipline — not one shot fired. The only shot fired came from one of the Governor's own body-guard, and he was shot by the Treasurer's orders. The Governor fled. The General thereupon told the Treasurer he was withdrawing all his men to the camp, and warned him that if any attack was made on the camp he would resist with force and sack the city. The camp was left alone.

After the riots the Viceroy of the two "Hu" provinces, Hupei and Hunan, sent a large force of troops accompanied by gunboats to Changsha, and the pride of Hunan, a province up till that time rich in Great Men, was humbled by being put under men from Hupei, for was it not an old old saying that Hunan was in Heaven and Hupei? On the arrival of the Hupei forces I insisted on still keeping my Hunan guard, for General Yang Chin had ever been a friend of mine and I knew many of his men. The Hupei authorities complained of this as obstructive and even telegraphed to the Legation that they wished me removed from my post. Threats of personal violence were also made, and General Yang never allowed me to go out in public without a strong escort completely surrounding my chair. He even placed

sentries at my bedroom door and on the verandah outside my room all night. This was irksome, but as I had insisted on having his troops I felt he must be allowed to adopt any measures he thought fit.

I got to know the troops very well. Night after night we watched the glorious Halley's comet together, and they too told me everything would be better when the Great Han came forth, thus freely hinting at the revolution which broke out next year. The telegram calling for my removal was reproduced in the local Chinese press, and at the same time unfortunately I got a very severe attack of dysentery and had to be transferred for the sake of my health. I finally went home. On hearing, however, that I was to be transferred, General Yang thought that it was at the instigation of the Hupei authorities. He at once called on me and said that as my Government could not do justice to me it was not likely that the Chinese authorities would do justice to him, so he sent in his resignation. The troops too, annoyed at the manner in which the Viceroy's delegates treated me, and feeling that even my own Government had not done me justice, as I could never explain away my removal after the published telegram — sickness being to them a diplomatic excuse, frequently used to comfort me with talk of the pure Chinese Government, the Great Han, which they ever declared would come forth, adding with emphasis on the "you" that "when the Great Han does come forth you will know who are your friends and there will be no need for you to fear". The following year these men were fighting the imperial troops at Hankow with reckless heroism.

The day of my departure was memorable. The General sent a whole battalion to the Consulate to escort me the two miles along the river-front to the steamer. My old friend Captain Agassiz of the s.s. *Shasi* had dressed ship and the band of the regiment was in attendance. The steps leading down the landing stage were lined entirely by officers from the regiment and from the war junks. The latter also supplied four men as escort to Hankow and there were in addition four men from the regular troops. General Yang after my departure left for his home in Yunnan.

Thus in Changsha I learnt many lessons. I learnt that gratitude,

respect and affection could be won from the Chinese, and in very rich measure. It was a lesson which stayed with me throughout my career and formed the basis of my happy life.

I visited Changsha again in 1932 and received a warm welcome from three of my old servants. I revisited the Consulate inside the city, easily finding the way even after a lapse of twenty-two years. I found the compound divided into many lots, but there was an old caretaker living inside a small gate-house at the main entrance with whom I sat and chatted and drank tea. The dear old man could not get over his surprised delight at a foreigner having been so fond of a place that he wished to revisit haunts in which he had dwelt over twenty years ago. In another part of the compound I had a long talk with a young fellow who delighted in the stories of a past which to him was unknown except from hearsay, and he too was warmed by the thought that a foreigner so loved his fellow provincials that he revisited the spots in which he had dwelt in order to revive the memories of a happy past. In that happy half-hour of intimate conversation the sad years of 1925–7 were forgotten by both of us, a link was formed, I was accepted as a lover of Hunan, and is it not well known in China that all Hunanese stick together?

When I left Changsha in July 1910 I was, as I have said, suffering from a very severe attack of dysentery which developed into chronic colitis, from which I never really recovered until 1913. I was, in fact, a sick man the whole time I was at home.

I pondered much during my leave on those words of the friendly Hunanese, and I felt more and more convinced that an outbreak against the Manchu Dynasty was not only to be expected but was inevitable, and that we were to be faced with a crisis in China bigger than anything that had occurred since the Boxer Rising. I expressed these views freely, both in conversation with junior friends at the Foreign Office and with others. I had nothing specific on which to base my prognostications but, as so often happened in China, I had an irresistible feeling that these events would occur. When categorically asked on what I based my suppositions I had really no reply, for the views of mere Hunan soldiers could not be taken as serious warnings in the highest political circles. When the outbreak did occur I received a letter from a friend in the Foreign Office confessing I was right but

adding that he thought even I had not foreseen the extent of the upheaval; in this he was correct. I felt the outbreak would occur either in Canton or in Nanking, an ancient capital of China. In this I was entirely wrong, for the outbreak, as I shall relate later, occurred in Wuchang, the sister city of Hankow.

CHAPTER VIII

1911, 1912

I LEFT home for China late in September 1911, and travelling via Siberia, reached Harbin in time to hear the first telegraphic announcement of the outbreak of the revolution in Wuchang. By many it was felt that it would easily be suppressed by the military power of the North. How could the slender rice-eating Southerner oppose the organised forces of the hardy North? Those who thought this made no allowance for the capacity for suffering and the passionate zeal of the revolutionaries. A belief in a just cause is of greater power than desire for self-aggrandisement at the expense of a waning authority.

On arrival at Shanghai I found I was destined for Ichang. This meant I had to traverse the centre of hostilities at Hankow; but it was easy, as river steamers were still running and I proceeded there in the s.s. *Loongwo*, arriving on the 21st October, ten days after the revolution had broken out. I ascertained that the Consulate at Ichang was vacant, my predecessor having already been transferred. The ciphers and other documents were on board H.M.S. *Thistle*, which was anchored opposite the Consulate General at Hankow. These were soon retrieved and, by the courtesy of Mr. Sugden, the Commissioner of Customs, I was enabled to pass all my gear through Hankow speedily. I am not relating what happened in Hankow as that belongs to history, and not to these memoirs.

When I arrived at Ichang I found I was very welcome. The community were without a Consul and needed guidance. In addition, a strange fact but true, the Commander-in-Chief at the time did not seem to think that Ichang required adequate naval protection. In fact, its importance as the gate to the Province of Szechuan, in which there were about four hundred foreigners, equally in the dark as to the possible developments of the situation as myself, was totally ignored. One ship was detailed to look after Ichang and Changsha, which meant that at low water it took about ten days to traverse the distance between them, and

this in spite of the fact that a port like Kiukiang on the lower river was well guarded by four ships; moreover the Commander-in-Chief, probably rightly, considered the situation sufficiently unimportant to justify his taking a shallow river gunboat as a houseboat to indulge in shooting trips in the Poyang Lake. This lack of protection for Ichang led to a certain amount of correspondence, which, though never acrimonious, was always decidedly to the point, and finally to an enquiry as to whether relations between Consulates and Naval Authorities in the Yangtse were on a sufficiently satisfactory basis. It was difficult, when as Consul you are officially told gunboats must not be asked for between March and October as a request might interfere with manœuvres, to know exactly what to do if a riot occurred which threatened the lives of the whole foreign community, and at that time there is no doubt that sufficient attention was not paid to the requests of certain Consuls, based as they were, not on panic, but on sound sense. The result of the correspondence which arose over the lack of protection afforded to Ichang was the subsequent appointment of Captain FitzMaurice as Permanent Senior Naval Officer of the Yangtse. I met him when I was in Shanghai in 1914 and we were great friends. He told me he owed his appointment to me, and that now all misunderstandings had been completely cleared up. From his appointment arose the appointment of Rear-Admiral of the Yangtse, the best known of whom was probably Sir David Murray Anderson, who recently died at his post as Governor of New South Wales.

Nothing can exceed the genuine closeness of the relationships between the Naval and Consular officials in the Yangtse at the present time. It is very true that what was sown almost in tears is now being reaped in real joy.

At Ichang the first question to be faced was how to get rid of more than six thousand railway coolies all of whom were from the North and who, being Northerners, were much alarmed at the success of the revolution in Wuchang. The great question was one of finance, how to pay them off and send them back home; but this, after a considerable amount of trouble, was solved.

When the revolution broke out, few foreigners knew which way it would turn. Naturally, among Americans especially,

there was an intense joy at the birth of a new republic and extensive lectures were given in American missions on the benefits of republicanism. Boys, cooks and coolies were indiscriminately urged to join the army, although many of us had doubts as to the wisdom of this policy ; for in China it is easier to lose a job than to find a new one ; and no-one could help viewing with serious misgivings a future with soldiers who had no proper employment and who would in many cases be reduced to banditry for a living. However, at this period all relations were extremely happy.

Seeing the bitter feelings which gave birth to the revolution, for the Manchu was an alien ruler, it cannot be said that there was an excess of bloodshed, though naturally certain brutalities were perpetrated. For example, it was a common thing to make people in the streets count to ten ; this was done because in the North the word " ten " is pronounced in a hard manner and in the South the same sound is considerably softened. It was, therefore, known at once by the pronunciation of this word whether the man was from the North or not. I am afraid that only too often Northerners, discovered in this manner, were killed. There was also a brutal affair near Ichang when the Taotai of an inland town, whose family were wantonly murdered in Ichang, retaliated by cutting off the hands and feet of all the scholars in the school of his town under his jurisdiction.

But I believe these occurrences were rare, and I was impressed in the early days of the revolution by the desire of some of the young men who took charge of the movement to learn, their obvious keenness to co-operate and to be friendly. Would that this spirit had lasted, but speedy victory is ever the parent of conceit. For a certain period in Ichang there were merely two boys who were in charge of the city. They called on me one day. One of them was twenty-one and called himself a general ; he introduced his friend, who was some two years younger, as " The Governor ". I readily took them seriously because they were so anxious about the situation and so keen that we should help and co-operate with them. They were not very tidily dressed, wearing rather shabby foreign clothes with rather dirty white scarves, and crowned with bowler hats of weird shape. It was strange what official significance the bowler secured in those days.

One of their chief difficulties arose from the presence of two lady missionaries in the native city. These two women had been members of the Church Missionary Society, Presbyterian Mission and the China Inland Mission; they had also sought to join the Pittsburg Mission. Finding none of the institutions would suit their ideas, they decided to start an independent mission. They came to Ichang shortly after the outbreak of the revolution, and not knowing which way matters might turn, whether the Northern coolies would sack Ichang or whether the movement might not, as in 1900, be turned by the Court into an anti-foreign rising, I decided for the time being to give the ladies quarters in the vacant rooms over my office. Here they were very comfortable and they were given fresh vegetables from the garden every day. But they considered themselves prisoners and suffering for the Lord's sake. I remember one day when one of them came down to my office and said that she wanted to go and reside in the native city I explained my reasons for not wishing her to do so and she replied, "The Lord has said to you, go up that He may destroy you." I was not quite sure what she meant, so I asked her to remember the Third Commandment and sent her out of the room. However, a short time afterwards it appeared as if matters were settling down and I told them that they were at liberty to go and reside in the native city, provided they would always come to the foreign quarter if serious danger threatened. The chief spokeswoman of the two replied, "I will not bow down to the brazen calf of consular authority." I did not pay serious attention to this stupid remark and allowed them to go. A few days afterwards, however, "the General" and his friend came round and told me that they were in a great difficulty. The rumours from Hankow were bad and it seemed likely that the North might secure a striking victory, in which case Ichang would be cut off and in view of its proximity to Szechuan might be in a very nasty position. Moreover, four Northern soldiers had been arrested for an attempt to blow up headquarters and had stated before being killed that they did not mind what happened to them as the Northern army was following. This brought them to their point. Being friendly, they had no wish for foreigners to be involved in any disaster that might

overtake Ichang and they were anxious, therefore, that all foreigners should collect in the foreign quarter where they would be under the protection of their gunboats. There were, however (and I foresaw what was coming), two women with whom they did not know how to deal. The realm of Britain they knew, and the realm of America, Germany and France they also knew — but what was the realm of Heaven? And who was the Consul? For these two women stated they belonged to the realm of Heaven.

I told them I would act, for which they were grateful.

That evening Captain Mulock of H.M.S. *Woodcock* was dining with me when we heard a noise outside and were informed that the ladies had been brought in. Their hands were lightly bound with the black turbans of the troops, for, I was told, they had threatened to kill themselves with the knives on their table if touched by a man. I do not know how far this was true. I asked Captain Mulock to go to my study and sit with them while I prepared for the interview. I then went into my office and had a preliminary hearing. I told the moving spirit of the two that I did not wish matters to go any further and I felt certain she would willingly agree to go quietly to the Scotch Mission and stay there till it was known whether the Northern menace was serious. She replied, "The King commanded, saying, 'Answer him not.'" I had not the foggiest notion what the "Rabshekah on the Wall" had to do with the case, so I committed her for trial. I asked her companion the same question, to which she replied, "Obey God rather than man." She was also committed for trial.

As I had no wish to put these ladies in the Consulate jail, I applied to Captain Agassiz of the s.s. *Shasi* to accommodate them for one night in his ship. By the courtesy of Captain Mulock I obtained the services of his sailors as warders.

The trial took place the next day and I ordered that they should be deported. Usually in China an order for deportation is either confirmed or nullified by the Judge of the Supreme Court. In this case Sir Havilland de Sausmarez, very kindly realising the gravity of the case, decided to take it as a completely new case. I was, in fact, more than ordinarily troubled by this case for I had letters from missionary friends and from many

placed in China, some commending what I had done and others not so friendly. In fact, one man wrote he would never rest till he had got me dismissed from the Service. I often wonder where he is now. He must be particularly restless.

At the actual trial the leading lady spoke for well over an hour. She accused me of being unreasonable, tyrannical, insulting, crafty, cruel and criminal. A friend, having seen the report in the press, wrote to me that he could have stood all the rest but could never have stood being called " crafty ".

After a long trial, the Judge upheld the deportation sentence, as, in spite of all persuasion not to do so, the accused insisted on stating that when they were free to act they would, at the very first opportunity, return to Ichang. His Lordship again attempted to ask them to give their word, but was interrupted with the remark, " We should obey God rather than you." The Judge stated finally that he would not consider their claim to be in direct communication with the Almighty as irreverence. It was merely impertinence. They were deported.

CHAPTER IX

1912-1916

OFFICIALLY work went well in Ichang, and my relations with the republican authorities were excellent. Again I was on exceptionally good terms with the military authorities. The Consulate was a well-built, comfortable family residence, situated near the river and at that time surrounded by graveyards, a well-known feature outside any Chinese city. The Chinese city had little to commend it. Ichang is situated a few miles from the famous Yangtse Gorges and many pleasant hours were spent in the beautiful Ichang Gorge. The country round was hilly and extremely pretty, a notable landmark being the Pyramid, a hill which in form and height when viewed from the river presented the appearance of an exact duplicate of one of the Pyramids of Egypt.

Here, too, I had an excellent native staff, the boatmen being exceptionally good. This was an important fact as at high water the river was extremely dangerous. With their help I was more than once enabled to watch Chinese fishing with otters. This was fascinating. The otter was let down into a net in the water through a hole in the top and always brought his fish back to his master.

On my departure from Ichang I was treated with exceptional courtesy, General Yü sending a guard of honour to the landing stage. My stay at Ichang further developed my conviction that response was to be found even in official circles, for many difficult issues were settled on a friendly basis, but I began to realise more and more that the authorities were swayed by personal relations far more than by any desire to uphold the Treaties. A rigid adherence to Treaty rights, which was correct in itself, always met with some form of opposition, an attitude which increased as the National Movement developed and in later years produced acute situations. Personal relations and a settlement on a friendly basis, in my experience, never failed.

I left Ichang in April 1913 with wife, governess, two children,

cockatoo and forty tons of luggage and was back there in December 1914. During this interval I spent three months in Tientsin as Acting Consul General, seven months in Newchwang and eight months in Shanghai as Consul.

The period in Newchwang was rendered interesting by the fact that every outstanding case was settled, fifteen in all, and with the help of the Chinese authorities I secured a golf course and a site for the local club. Some of the cases were four to six years old, and my heart glowed when I received a personal note from my Chief and highly valued friend Sir John Jordan : " I cannot thank you sufficiently for all your excellent work at Newchwang. It has been exceptionally good." The appreciation of the community, and the generous tributes of Mr. Walter Clennel, in whose absence on leave I was acting, are deeply human documents which encouraged me throughout my career. I learnt in Newchwang more than I had learnt before in dealing with cases always to throw my mind into the other man's feelings, but to make certain that the case he presented was just. People sometimes forgot when Consular officials appeared reluctant to press certain claims that if everyone could always be relied on to present an absolutely just case there would have been but little need for Consular assistance, though it must be confessed that even in just cases the Chinese authorities were often none too amenable to reason. I think this was due to the fact that they considered all foreign rights as unjust, being based on Treaties extracted from China by force. China will never be content till she has won complete sovereignty over all her territories including Shanghai.

The secret of the settlement of the commercial cases in Newchwang may now be told. The British plaintiff firm would present their case to me. I would satisfy myself that their claim was good. I would then ask what the defendant replied when the claim was presented. Having ascertained the reply, I would then enquire what was the next step taken and what was the defendant's further reply. My course of action was clear. Soon after my arrival I persuaded the magistrate to let me sit with him at Mixed cases, *i.e.* cases in which there was a British plaintiff. In order to preserve his " face " I told him a court-room was unnecessary, that his office would do excellently, and that I

would ask no questions. Before a case was heard I called on the magistrate, related the case in detail and said: You ask him such and such a question, and I think you will find he will answer as follows, having ascertained from the British firms, as recorded above, what the defendant had said in reply to their questions. I would then point out such a reply was absurd, and suggest a second question, again repeating what the probable reply would be, as told to me by the firm. The result was always the same. The magistrate duly asked the questions and became more and more infuriated as the anticipated answers were given. Judgement was invariably given for payment within a certain time or imprisonment, and in order to obtain prompt payments after consultation with the firms concerned I was in some cases able to mitigate the severity of the sentence, and to secure for the magistrate a reputation of tempering mercy with his judgements.

Clennel came back in April 1914, and I proceeded to Shanghai as No. 2 to Sir Everard Fraser. During this period, April to December, it was merely hard slogging in an office and I had no contact with Chinese officials. War broke out in August and the work was terrific; still the time was profitable, as I was daily learning from one of the finest characters our Service ever produced and the experience was invaluable. It was with mixed feelings I was told I must once more return to Ichang, though I rejoiced at the thought of once more seeing the Yangtse with its hordes of junks of all types and the well-known river scenes, the water buffaloes in charge of little children and the fishermen on the river-bank patiently dropping their huge nets as the steamer passed and never seeming to catch anything. I think I enjoyed a trip on the Yangtse in a river steamer more than any other form of relaxation in China.

The return to Ichang in December 1914 was not entirely happy. The Great War was in its bitter stages; there was a German Consul in the port, and a large American community which, perhaps very naturally, was divided in opinion, though in most cases, except for two lamentable incidents which are best forgotten, maintaining a correct neutrality. We also missed the regular visits usually paid by river gunboats to the small ports.

Though strange events were taking place in Peking, Ichang remained in perfect peace till 1916 when Yüan Shih-k'ai sent three

picked divisions to Szechuan to suppress the rebellion which had broken out against him, and to endeavour once more to bring that wealthy province under his control. The rebellion started in Yunnan, and that province sent an army into Szechuan to assist in its defence against the North. It was in December 1915, when Yüan Shih-k'ai was Emperor-Elect, that a curious discovery was made by my wife and myself in company with Dr. Irwin and his wife, of Tientsin, who had been making their way back in the Ichang Gorge and decided to explore a large cave situated about a mile above the Customs station at P'ing Shan Pa, locally known as Shen K'an Tzu. K'an means a niche for an idol, or a shrine, and curiously enough the Chinese character for K'an contains the character meaning a dragon. Many rumours were connected with the cave and there were tales of foreigners having penetrated into its depths in order to verify the report that it extended many miles and led to the Cave of the Dragon King situated in the hills inland facing Ichang city.

We must have penetrated nearly a hundred yards when our boatmen, who were ahead with flares, ran back calling out "There's a dragon!" On looking closely with the help of additional flares of bamboo rope and lanterns we discovered we were balancing ourselves, in order to keep out of the pools lying everywhere, not on ridges of rock but what appeared to be either a number of dragons made in stone or actual fossils; but it may at once be said the British Museum authorities pronounced against the fossil theory, and though I never heard their final report, their first statement that they found the specimens of a very interesting and peculiar formation, possibly stalagmite, suffices for me.

At the time, we and others who visited the cave were convinced they were fossils, about seven in number; the largest specimen was about sixty feet long with two legs about twelve feet from the head and two some forty feet further back. We felt whatever their formation they were of extraordinary interest.

I at once informed the local Chinese authorities of the discovery and urged measures should be taken to protect these fascinating formations from the ravages of sightseers. The officials took a keen interest in the "Dragons", photographs

were taken and sent to Peking, no doubt in the hope that the district of Ichang in which the Divine Dragon had appeared would come at once into imperial favour. The discovery was announced to the Emperor-Elect in the following terms: "Recently some Europeans explored the K'an Tzu Cave at Ichang, and found in the cave a stone dragon, more than fifty 'chang' (500 feet long, some dragon !). It has been discovered that it is the fossil of an ancient dragon. Now a monarch has arisen like a dragon, and the foundation for a dynasty of ten thousand years is to be laid. The fossil of a Divine Dragon has appeared in the regions along the Yangtse River. It is a symbol of the protection of Heaven and the joy of the people. It is therefore requested that a telegram be sent from the Throne to bring to the notice of the public the discovery of the stone dragon at Ichang, and the fact referred to the Bureau of History to have it recorded for the information of posterity. Thus the signs of Heaven for the prosperity of the nation will be appreciated and the desires of the people will be fulfilled, etc."

To this the Emperor-Elect made an exceedingly sensible reply: "From the very beginning the only thing which can ensure the rise of any dynasty has been the effort put forth by the Government for the improvement of administration and popular enlightenment. The Government should secure occupation for every man in the country. No improvement will be made in the Government when people begin to talk freely of signs of Heaven, etc., such as 'spiritual birds', 'yellow dragons', etc. At present sciences have developed and scholars have tried to find out the real causes of all things. It is therefore absurd to get excited over matters which one cannot understand, and try to interpret everything as a sign of peace and prosperity. The request to refer the above fossil to the Bureau of History for record is not approved. However, as the ancient fossil deposited in the cave of the mountains may serve as material for research, the said Chiang Chun and Governor are hereby instructed to make the local officials responsible for its preservation; thus students may proceed there to institute investigations. When I rise early in the morning to work and meditate, when I lie down at night to sleep, the thought uppermost in my mind is the weal and woe of the people; and the only sign of Heaven I look for is the happiness of the people.

I hope all my generals, officials, scholars and gentry will know how to appreciate my ideas."

In spite of appearing indifferent, Yüan Shih-k'ai sent a member of his household, Chang Chung-ch'ang, to make a personal examination on the spot. He pronounced the "Dragon" to be a fossil and was very pleased with it. Photographs were sent to many Governors of the Provinces to prove the veracity of the story, and it was small wonder that the simple folk should consider this sudden appearance as a good omen for the new form of government. The disastrous campaign in Szechuan in the following year and the death of Yüan himself destroyed these hopes, and detracted from my joy at my share in the discovery.

Work in Ichang presented no difficulties at this time with the exception of the commandeering of junks by the Northern troops. These junks were in many cases loaded with foreign merchandise and, having successfully navigated the Gorges, had reached the end of their arduous three to five weeks' journey and were nearing Chungking. The fact that they were thus loaded and any consideration for the delay which must ensue if they were taken the four hundred miles back to Ichang meant nothing to the Northern General, Chang Ching-yau, who, realising the hopelessness of the situation in Szechuan, was only too anxious to clear out with his booty of solid silver, stated to be a large amount, as quickly as possible. To the consternation of the merchants concerned, he laid hands on every junk he could and brought them all to Ichang. I had seen him on his way up to Chungking and had an amusing and cheerful meeting. It was thus easy to approach him, and on explaining the situation fully to him he gave me two hundred thousand dollars with which I was able to charter a steamer for ten trips and to get the merchandise delivered in Chungking with the least possible delay.

CHAPTER X

1916

I NOW received news that I was appointed to Chengtu as acting Consul General. I was very pleased, for not only had I always longed to go to Szechuan, but the present political situation was one of keen interest.

When Yüan Shih-k'ai was preparing to make himself Emperor in 1915 he had placed trusted lieutenants as Governors over every province except Yunnan, which, being furthest south, he apparently ignored. Of these Governors, the one he most trusted, was stationed in Chengtu ; in fact, it is said that when Yüan Shih-k'ai heard of his surrender in May 1916 to the Yunnan forces he murdered his favourite concubine in a fit of passion and shortly afterwards died himself. She was buried with him. Yunnan, as I have said, Yüan Shih-k'ai had ignored. On Christmas Day 1915 Yunnan moved, and they struck at Yuan through his trusted lieutenant at Chengtu. The finest Northern troops under the most prominent leaders were sent to Chungking to stem the Yunnan advance, but it availed nought ; idle disputes, corruption and lack of co-operation ruined every prospect of success and they left Szechuan disgraced. It was while I was still in Ichang the Northern armies passed through. Ts'ao K'un, in command (he was afterwards President), told me the war would not last three weeks ; it would be enough for the Yunnanese to hear he had arrived for them to retreat. In less than three months he withdrew to Peking.

Happily just before I left for Chengtu I met the famous commander of the Yunnan troops, Ts'ai Ao, a Hunanese and a very pleasing personality, on his way to Japan for treatment for cancer of the throat, from which he died. Though suffering great pain he very courteously received me on board the river steamer on which he was sailing for Hankow. He could only talk in a very low whisper and his chief of staff repeated to me what he was saying. My stories of Changsha and my obvious affection for Hunan appealed to him, and as I was leaving for Chengtu

in a few days' time he at once telegraphed to his successor, Lo P'ei-chin, to see that I was properly received. This telegram meant a great deal to me and was the foundation not only of a very close personal friendship with Lo himself, but also of consideration from his staff.

I had a hectic time handing over, as Tours, my successor, only arrived at 4 P.M. and we did not finish till 2 A.M. when he kindly escorted me on board my steamer. The rush and the late hour leaving made everything seem strange and unreal, and it was not till I woke to find myself in the lovely scenery of the Gorges and the excitement of navigating the rapids that I fully realised a really new chapter had actually begun, and a great longing was satisfied. Often from my bedroom window in the Consulate at Ichang had I gazed and gazed at the range of lovely mountainous hills which seemed to shut out the Province of Szechuan from the rest of China. True, I had paid Kueifu a fleeting visit, but this had not satisfied my heart's desire. I wanted to get right into this great province, perhaps the fairest, almost certainly the richest in China, and the chance had come. Besides it was not only Chungking I was to see, I was actually going to Chengtu, the capital, right in the very heart of Szechuan.

"Chengtu." I wonder if it happens to many—I think it must—that a name burns itself into the mind so that no subsequent memory can ever obliterate one iota of what that one word means. It is so with me. The name produces a whirl of memories; many happy, many intensely tragic, some tinged with human sorrows which are the secrets of the heart alone, all deeply interesting. I was there from 29th September 1916 to 12th April 1919, and again 28th February 1920 to 9th November 1922. If I hear the word Chengtu it brings to my heart memories of affection and devotion shown by my Chinese staff, I will not say far in excess of anything I knew elsewhere, for wherever I went my life was enriched by the devotion and loyalty of the humble classes in China with whom I came in contact, but to a degree which I think has fallen to few foreigners to enjoy. It brings memories of friendships formed in the foreign community, both missionary and official, which have lasted to the present day; even the worries, the difficulties were fraught with joy, for a strange and happy peace ended every strife.

The trip through the Gorges was uneventful, but the beauty of the scenery was fascinating. I have only heard of one man who wearied of the lovely scenery and he was the cheery engineer of one of the Socony Upper River steamers. He was too portly to get into his engine-room and conducted operations from the door. A lady passenger once said to him, " Oh, Mr. B., I do envy you constantly seeing this beautiful scenery ".

" Madam," he replied, " don't mention scenery to me, I have scenic indigestion."

In Chungking I had a happy time with Mr. and Mrs. Major at the Consulate and finally set off on my twelve days' trip to Chengtu via Tzeliuching — the direct route by the Chungking-Chengtu main road, a paved way, taking usually ten days. I went in a four-bearer chair, engaging eight coolies for the job, four acting as relays. We made very often forty miles a day, but I had to make the coolies restrain their ardour as the pace was too keen for the escort of troops. This escort of sixty Kueichow men had been provided by the military authorities at Chungking as I had to pass through an area infested by brigands. These pests invariably flourish in localities in which civil war has spread its devastating horrors. We were constantly crossing rice-fields with the solemn water buffalo tended by little children, then past bamboo groves and soft rounded hills of the richest earth. The great stone-paved way wound on and on through the richest variety of scenery, varying in colour from dark brown to a red richer even than the colour in beautiful Devon ; and every inch cultivated with rice, beans, maize, sugar-cane — all in their season — terrace upon terrace to the very top of every hill. It is a beautiful appealing sight ; it leaves a picture no other memories can obliterate. I could gaze and gaze and never weary. From time to time, too, the hand of man had added to this natural beauty by erecting a graceful pagoda, a glorious *p'ai-lou* (stone arch) in honour perhaps of a faithful widow or of some other gentle memory ; dainty little shrines to the little gods who wield such power over the fields were frequent, as were many lovely graveyards in their perfect settings. No-one who has ever seen Szechuan scenery can ever forget it. The farmer in his blue clothes and big straw hat ; the chair coolies in their turbans, upright and with a perfect swing ; the countryman ; all add to

the picture, and only the contempt and almost scorn with which the average Szechuanese regards the unknown foreigner detract from the rich pleasure to be derived from the scene. This scorn, however, I was to learn was only for the " unknown ", for never did I receive greater respect and more loyal devotion than from my staff in Szechuan, and my relations with the officials were quite exceptional.

The chair coolies added to the joy of the trip by their cheerfulness, willingness and obvious desire to please. They were always chaffing each other in a host of different ways such as the two in front calling out, " The front are opening out their legs," and the two at the back replying, " The back are suffering." " Who's not at home ? " was a frequent joke if anyone was obviously not pulling his weight. On one occasion my escort carried umbrellas across the back of their shoulders. An excited child in the field near by called out " Here come the baby carriers ! " and it was only my outburst of spontaneous laughter producing an echo from the captain in charge saved the imp from the severe cuffing which his untimely waggery would otherwise have secured for him, for indeed I saw how closely the umbrella resembled a bundled-up child.

Tzeliuching, the centre of the salt wells, was fascinating. The wells, three or four thousand feet deep, which are all drilled by hand, men working in shifts day and night, take three or four years to make. It is impossible to describe this well-drilling. It is, I imagine, the hardest labour in the world. Four men stand on a raised platform, two on each side of a huge beam, at one end of which is a very heavy stone, at the other the line leading straight down to the well to which a boring tool is attached. A man sits at the edge of the well spinning the line with finger and thumb. The four men, who work naked except for a loin-cloth, jump in perfect time onto the beam forcing it down, and then have to jump clear as it springs back with the weight of the heavy stone. Men have had their thighs cruelly broken in missing jumping back quickly enough, and as I have said this goes on night and day for three or four years.

All over Tzeliuching may be seen natural gas flaring through mud chimneys ; sometimes in groups of four, with one chimney having been stopped flaring by having a lump of mud clamped

on it. When I saw the wells the brine was hauled up by oxen and mules, now probably all by machinery, and run into bamboo tubes which took it to huge iron pans over the natural gas chimneys where it is evaporated. When hauling, the oxen and mules are beaten into a quick gallop, going round and round a huge windlass. After the brine is released the beasts are taken clear and the bamboo tube once more descends into the well, the windlass revolving at a speed which is terrific. It is finally checked with great skill by a single man who, at some distance away, works a brake made of rope with his foot. Nature here provides everything, but it is the toil of man in drilling, and the power of the beast in hauling, the patient labour which is so compelling in the Chinese which gives the salt to the markets.

My last night out from Chengtu an incident occurred which might have ended disastrously. I was settling in to my rooms in the inn when I heard a terrific fracas outside. I went out to find my chair coolies engaged in such a lively dispute with some Yunnanese soldiers that it threatened to become a free fight. The Yunnan troops were always arrogant with the Szechuanese, whom they despised, although the two provinces had allied in the struggle with the North, and the men of Szechuan had no love for these extra-provincials. I was able to calm my men down and learnt the reason of their fury was a demand by the soldiers that I should vacate my quarters for their commanding officer and a threat which they were preparing to execute by turning my gear into the streets. Happily Captain Wang, the officer in question, soon arrived and I took him to my room to discuss matters. He was a Hunanese and a member of the present Governor's staff. Ts'ai Ao, the Governor I had met in Ichang, though in command of Yunnan troops, brought a large staff of Hunanese with him whom he had left in the capital when cancer in the throat seized him. When Captain Wang learnt I had seen Ts'ai Ao and that he had actually telegraphed to the Governor, Lo P'ei-chin, on my behalf, he at once became friendly, and our amicable relations were further cemented when he knew on what excellent terms I had been with the Hunan troops in Changsha. The trouble with our adherents was speedily settled and I retained my rooms. I saw more of Wang in Chengtu and was able to assist him in the disastrous fighting

which broke out between Yunnan and Szechuan in the following year.

I learnt from this incident that when the Szechuanese liked and respected you they were with you to a man. This knowledge was valuable in the days to come. It was rare for chair coolies to stand up to troops, and the fact they did so on my behalf delighted me. I made one of the chair coolies who was most conspicuous on this trip my head chair coolie at the Consulate General and he was with me for over a year, when an unfortunate quarrel with the head boy in the office led him to ask for a transfer. I reluctantly agreed and it was not till some years afterwards I found that the basis of the quarrel was sheer loyalty to the best interests of the Consulate General, though he himself would never give me the facts. The office boy was ultimately sacked for a serious offence, having become a prey to really bad influences just before I ultimately left Chengtu.

I arrived in Chengtu on Michaelmas Day 1916 in the afternoon. Chengtu was a beautiful city. When I was there no wheeled traffic, not even a rickshaw, was allowed inside the city. The mode of conveyance was by sedan-chair, and the chair coolies of Szechuan were famous. The main streets of the city were stone-paved, wide and flanked by shops on either side completely open to the road. As the shops displayed their shop-signs on large boards of scarlet or black with gold Chinese characters on them, the effect in the main streets was of passing through a long arcade of Oriental beauty. This effect was heightened in summer when the streets were sheltered by straw mats on huge erections of bamboo poles to protect them from the sun. Unpaved side streets run in parallels connecting the main streets, and in these most of the residences of the wealthy residents of Chengtu were located. Silk was in profusion, Szechuan silk being deservedly famous. There were streets with shops selling nothing but furs, brass shops, copper shops, medicine shops with rare native medicines of every sort, curio shops, jade, amber, silversmiths, priceless embroideries — a paradise for the lover of beautiful things.

The city lies in a huge plain which was probably at one time a large lake. It is 1903 miles overland from Peking and was considered to be forty-six travelling stages away from the capital.

There was always fear of flood in Chengtu from very ancient times, and situated at the back of one of the city temples there is an ancient Buddhist image carrying the inscription in the characters of the Ch'in Dynasty (221 B.C.), "The Eternal guarding Szechuan Eye". The "Eye" protected Chengtu, and if disturbed, floods were certain to ensue. The Chengtu District is recorded as early as 2205 B.C., but the city itself really became well known as provincial headquarters in 241 B.C. It would be tedious to record the history of Shu (the classical name for Szechuan), a turbulent record of many vicissitudes; suffice it to say that in the Sung Dynasty in A.D. 960 the city first became known as Cheng-tu.

The city as I knew it was divided into three parts: the Chinese City, the Manchu City and the Imperial City. The present city wall is about eight miles in circumference, but there is no doubt that at one period it was greater, for remnants of the ancient walls exist near the lovely Chao Chüeh Ssu and Wu Hou Ssu, temples outside the North and South Gates of the present city. The wall averages thirty-five feet high and is very picturesque. It is not built in four straight lines as so many city walls, but has curves in certain places. The story is that all attempts to build the city wall in ancient days failed till a tortoise was seen to emerge from the canal outside the city. He made a complete circuit of the city, re-entering the canal at the exact spot he had left it. The city wall was built on the wet trail he had made and no further trouble was experienced in the building of it. The distance across the city from east to west is just over three miles, and from south to north just over two miles and a half.

Most large Chinese cities have a Manchu City, where the Tartar General and his garrison of Manchu bannermen watched over the interests of their lord and master the Emperor in Peking. After the outbreak of the Revolution and the establishment of the Republic the Manchu colonies in provincial China fell on evil days, all subsidies from the power ruling in Peking naturally being cancelled.

The Manchu City in Chengtu was known as "Little City" and also "Inner City". It was situated on the west of the main city and was built in 1719. It was about a mile and a half in circumference, the walls were little over twelve feet high. It was

built solely to accommodate the Manchu garrison and the city was laid out so that each banner controlled a main street and three alleys. The streets of this dainty little city were wide and beautifully peaceful, a great contrast from the crowded arcades of the Chinese city. Flowers and trees abounded and there were some beautiful residential quarters. As the house of one of the Szechuan Generals was located in this city, a man with whom I had a valued friendship, and to whose whole family I was well known, a rare privilege in those days, I spent many happy quiet hours in his lovely garden. It was commonly said the city was laid out in the form of a centipede. The head was the Tartar General's Yamen, the main street its body and the side alleys the legs. I am indebted to my valued friend Mr. J. Hutson for nearly all the folklore I learnt of Szechuan. Many were the talks we had together, and through him I learnt the inner workings of the famous Secret Society, the Elder Brothers, with whom I became acquainted and to whom I owed more than one act of valuable assistance.

The remaining city, the Imperial City, was inside the Chinese City. It was built about A.D. 1369. It was originally meant to be the residence of the eleventh son of the first Ming Emperor, who had about twenty sons. Most of the enclosure, as I knew it, was composed of large open spaces. It figured largely in the fighting during 1917, but I do not think since that date it has been used as an official residence. The flower of Chengtu is the hibiscus and in my time it was sometimes alluded to as the Hibiscus City. This name dates from A.D. 907 when the ruler of Chengtu is said to have had the city walls converted into one long garden of hibiscus flowers. As the city was at that date reported to have had a circumference of over thirteen miles, it is small wonder the city has retained its name.

CHAPTER XI

1916, 1917

IMMEDIATELY I arrived the Yunnan Governor, Lo P'ei-chin, made me very welcome and it was not long before he arranged that I should dine privately with him every Wednesday. He gave me a special pass into the Imperial City, and when I dined I was always met at a back gate by an orderly and taken to his rooms. No-one except members of his staff was ever present; and of them only a selected few. Our talks were very free, and he concealed but little from me. From him I soon learnt how serious was the growing friction between Yunnan and Szechuan, and from what he said I gathered fighting would be inevitable in the spring of next year. This was in November. I felt so strongly on this point that I reported my convictions to the Legation, in spite of a respectful representation from the Vice-Consul, who had been in Chengtu for over two years, that I had not been long enough in Szechuan to make such a definite statement. I also told some missionary friends I considered there would be fighting next April. In fact this was well remembered, for early in April the principal members of the West China Union University gave a lunch to the Civil Governor. At lunch Mr. R. R. Service, American head of the Y.M.C.A., called down the table to me, "Mr. Hewlett, may I remind you that April has come?" to which I replied, "And may I remind you it is not finished?"

The reasons for the clash were basically two, namely Szechuanese conceit and Yunnanese arrogance. The Szechuanese up to this period were not noted as warriors, whereas the hardy Yunnanese were sturdy, fearless fighters and had received good training on the Tibet frontier. Szechuan Province was enormously wealthy, the revenue from salt alone was worth a million dollars a month and the poppy provided a rich source of revenue. It was wonderfully fertile and had a splendid system of irrigation. Yunnan Province in comparison was pitiably poor.

As I have shown, Yunnan took the lead against the Dictator Yüan Shih-k'ai on Christmas Day 1915. They joined forces with

Szechuan, and largely owing to intrigues among the Northern leaders, they had little difficulty in ridding the province of every vestige of Northern influence. Yüan's death occurred early in June 1916, and from that date what was known as the period of the War Lords found China torn by civil wars and inter-provincial strife. I cannot trace the course of party faction activities in Peking and other parts of China, I can only relate what I actually saw taking place in Szechuan. The Northern troops, accustomed to wide plains and open spaces and in most cases heavily shod, had been no match for the lithe Yunnanese in the hills, who only wore straw sandals on their bare feet. The neighbouring Province of Kueichou had sent troops to fight beside the Yunnanese and when I arrived in Szechuan the Civil Governor, Tai K'an, was residing in Chungking and the Military Governor, Lo P'ei-chin, in Chengtu. Their object was to secure a South-Western Confederacy between Yunnan, Kueichou and Szechuan which, secure behind the hills, could with safety defy Peking as Chiang Kai-shek at the time I write has successfully held off Japan. The main approach to Szechuan was by the Yangtse River through the Gorges, but to attack by this route was to court disaster. Other means of communication consisted of stone-paved roads and were not helpful for the movement of large armies.

Realising the poverty of their own province, the Yunnanese revelled in the riches of Szechuan, and their conduct after the death of Yüan, when all danger of interference from the North was completely removed, became more and more arrogant.

They placed garrisons in all the leading cities in the district bounded by the main highway from Chungking to Chengtu, the river Min from Chengtu to Kiating and the Yangtse from Kiating to Chengtu. In all their dispositions they ignored the Szechuanese. Their actions produced the greatest resentment among the men of Szechuan. Szechuan for the Szechuanese had always been a favourite catchword with the men of the province, and it had always been known for its bitter anti-foreign feeling. But now the saying was " First drive out the extra-provincial, then drive out the foreigner ".

The Szechuanese took keenly to soldiering and by April 1917 had eight divisions and felt strong enough to attempt to drive

out their former allies and preserve the riches of their own province for themselves. The Central Government still preserved a slight show of authority over the province and saw in this increasing friction the chance of fanning an outbreak from which they might reap benefit. They therefore sent an extremely astute official, Wang Chih-hsiang, to ascertain exactly how matters stood. A young Szechuan General named Liu Ts'un-hou had gradually worked his way up and had come to be recognised by the people as the representative of the province, the man who stood prominently for Szechuan for the Szechuanese. He took the opportunity of Wang Chih-hsiang's visit to hold a review of his troops at Chengtu, and although the Governor and his staff were present, and Liu was in fact a subordinate in command of an Army Corps, the latter took charge of the proceedings, and well seconded by Wang Chih-hsiang, he relegated the Governor to second place and so completely ignored him that I knew serious trouble was brewing. I was standing beside the Governor throughout the review and watched the play with keenest interest. I had what was to be my last meal with him a few days later and we discussed the conduct of Liu Ts'un-hou and the indiscretions of Wang Chih-hsiang. He agreed to keep me fully informed, and I told him I would let him know if there were indications that fighting would take place.

The storm broke with startling suddenness at about 7 P.M. on the evening of 18th April, when I received a 'phone message from a friend in the Friends Mission to the effect that the Szechuan troops had stopped in their street a train of ammunition coming in from the country for the Yunnan troops. Nothing more was required ; the spark was set, the train was fired. The Szechuan troops had started preparations at 4 P.M. and were fully ready for the fracas immediately the firing broke out. Yunnanese barricaded the Imperial City and approaches to the Eastern Parade Ground. Many brutalities were perpetrated, and none who were there will ever forget the massacre on the East Wall where Yunnanese seized civilians and the police at the East Gate, whom they had disarmed, pressed down their heads into the embrasures of the city wall, then one stab in the back of the neck and, dead or dying, the victim was tossed over the wall — for days the marks of blood on each embrasure told its tale. Yet can they

be blamed? Many of their families had been murdered by Szechuanese in the Manchu City.

At one end of the street in which the Consulate General was situated the Yunnanese immediately erected a barricade; at the other end the Szechuanese did the same. The Yunnanese allowed the French doctors Mouillac and Poupelain, who had been playing bridge with me, to pass and they got home; not so the French Consul, who was stopped by the Szechuanese and spent the night with me, as did Anderson of the British-American Tobacco Company, to help in case of need. We were up at 4.15 A.M. next morning and could hear heavy rifle-firing. Lépice returned to his Consulate and I went to see the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. He had not much to say except that the situation was very serious, so I returned to the Consulate and had breakfast and a bath.

At eleven o'clock the Chief of Police telephoned and asked me to meet him at the Bureau of Foreign Affairs. I went, and while I was discussing the situation with special reference to the protection of foreigners a telephone message came from Liu Ts'un-hou, the Szechuan Commander-in-Chief, asking what measures could be taken to stop serious fighting as the city would suffer very severely unless hostilities were checked. The Commissioner for Foreign Affairs suggested the Chief of Police should proceed to the Szechuan headquarters at the North Parade Ground, but he, not relishing crossing a city in which heavy sniping at barricades could be heard unpleasantly clearly, suggested that I was far more suited for the job, being a neutral. The Szechuan Commander-in-Chief suggested I should take a large white flag to avoid misunderstandings, but I did not do so. I called on Lépice, the French Consul General, to tell him what I was doing, and then, with two of my chair coolies, who behaved splendidly throughout, had a most unpleasant walk to headquarters. I had to climb over Yunnan barricades, walk across the intervening space and then be pulled over Szechuan barricades, in one case having to climb a wall by placing a table against it with a stool on the top. All the time sniping went on and I was much chaffed by the soldiers at the Szechuanese barricade who had just restrained themselves from firing a volley into me and my two chair coolies. On approaching the North Parade Ground a soldier pointed his

rifle at me, but his companion, recognising the characters on my chair coolies' uniforms, said, "Don't be a fool. This is the man who gave us cigarettes at New Year", referring to a very lavish distribution of 100,000 cigarettes I was enabled to make, thanks to the discriminating and intelligent generosity of the British-American Tobacco Company. After passing him I was stopped at the main entrance to headquarters by a young officer who, pointing a revolver right at me, demanded I should empty my pockets. "What", I said. "Your talk cannot even be listened to. I have been invited by your Commander-in-Chief to come. Be polite and tell him I have arrived. I will only empty my pockets for him." Reluctantly at first he did so, and like all Chinese underlings, the moment he knew I was welcome he was politeness personified. The Commander-in-Chief came right out to the main gate to take me in.

He had with him his staff, the President of the National Assembly and a few of the gentry. After listening to a long defence of his action we got to business, and the President of the National Assembly incessantly indulged in some dramatic table-thumping and angry words while the terms on which they would cease fighting were drawn up. They were finally agreed upon and I was asked to take them into the Imperial City to the Military Governor. The discussion lasted two hours. Again I had the harassing walk back through the barricaded streets, getting what shelter I could from projecting partitions of shops as I went from barricade to barricade. I called at the French Consulate, told Lépice what had taken place and off we went to the Military Governor. We practically compelled the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs to join us. Never have I seen a man so palsied with terror; he had the moral courage not to attempt to conceal it from the foreigner, and at the same time to stick to his job. Most of the time he was holding his ears, ducking and literally screaming as bullets and shells struck near us. Entering the Imperial City was not easy; it was also unpleasant. The main entrance was barricaded, and while sufficient material which had been used to make the barricades was cleared to enable us to enter, we were exposed to bullets fired from Szechuan barricades at a range of less than two hundred yards which spattered all round us. The Yunnan soldiers, laughing good-naturedly,

helped us over the barricades and we finally got to the Governor, Lo P'ei-chin. I gave him the terms. He summoned his staff and after a very short discussion they accepted them, and ordered "Cease Fire". The Szechuan Commander-in-Chief was informed of this by telephone. We then telephoned to the Civil Governor, Tai K'an, a Kweichou man who had recently arrived from Chungking, to come and confirm the terms of the truce, but although he started he was turned back by the rifle-fire of the Szechuan troops. Lépice and the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs tried at the same time to leave the Imperial City but firing was too heavy and they were forced to return. This was at 6 P.M. Alas, orders to stop fighting had not been given to the attacking Szechuanese, who, hearing the "Cease Fire", attacked with redoubled fury; not a shot was fired in reply. At 7 P.M. the firing was terrific and at one moment the back gate was nearly taken. The Chief of Staff, in a fury of passion (though we were great friends), reported the Imperial City was completely surrounded by Szechuan troops and flashed out, "Now what do you want?" I replied, "I have nothing further to do with it. You have ceased fire for two hours, I take no further responsibility. Protect yourselves; open fire." Orders were at once given and firing began. So hostilities recommenced with redoubled vigour.

At this moment the Japanese Consul arrived in a furious passion, having only just managed to get in, being pulled over the entrance by the Yunnan men, and asked what the firing meant when the truce had been agreed on. As he had come straight from the Szechuan Commander it was obvious the telephone message accepting his terms had been received. His failure to give orders to cease fire was, therefore, deliberate. The situation was fully explained to the Japanese Consul and he calmed down.

It was about 7 P.M. and I had only had a snack for breakfast and had been up since 4.30 A.M., so I asked the Governor first to tell his men to look after my two chair coolies, who had been with me all day, and then to get me something to eat, which was done. I had only just finished my meal when the room in which I was became uninhabitable owing to the accuracy of the Szechuan fire. At about 9.30 the Szechuanese set alight to the houses on the east and west of the city to give a mark to their artillery on

the North Parade Ground ; this was told me afterwards by the Treasurer and the Japanese Consul, who saw them starting the fires. Artillery firing opened almost at once and was very accurate. The fires were accompanied by yells of " Kill ! Kill ! " and I could measure the intensity of the hatred of the Szechuanese for their former Yunnanese allies. Electric wires were cut by the firing, and except for a few oil lamps we were in darkness. We had to move our quarters three times on account of the firing and at one moment the Szechuanese forced the back entrance and were in. I think it was pardonable feeling qualms at this moment at what would happen to me if a massacre began in the darkness, but to maintain an outward calm I asked Lépice, " As there is not much use in saying ' I am a Consul — please don't shoot,' " what he thought the best thing to do. We decided that as the bodyguard and staff were sure to look after the Governor, we had better stick near him. This we did and were pushed into a small alley-way between two houses, but we soon had to leave on account of accurate artillery fire. The Szechuanese, happily for us however, were driven out.

We then settled down to a proper siege, and eleven of us, including the Governor, collected in one room. Few slept soundly except the Military Governor, who curled himself up in a corner and slept soundly for a solid six hours. It is no good attempting to describe what I felt ; besides, it would not read well, but in order once more to preserve a studied calm and to appear quietly concentrated I said to a soldier, " As you certainly cannot sleep to-night, will you lend me your bedding as I wish to sleep ? " He did so, and although my rest was disturbed by lively factors other than shellfire, I was grateful.

The next morning Lépice and I told the Governor we must get out as we were doing no good inside. He therefore, after some argument, told his Chief of Staff to see us out of the main entrance, to clear the main street in the immediate vicinity and to cease firing while we crossed the open square in front of it. So Lépice, Ch'ien, the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Consul and myself started for the main entrance. Shells were falling with hideous accuracy, but pity for the palsied Ch'ien, who screamed and ducked whenever he heard a shell, engendered courage in my heart. On arrival at the main entrance,

the Chief of Staff would not let us go on as Szechuan troops were firing at only one hundred yards and the firing was terrific. He said he would drive them out of the houses in which they were barricaded and then we could go. As we were speaking, a shell fell beside us plastering me with mud; mercifully it did not explode. Whether from concussion or fright Ch'ien fell, knocking down Lépice who bowled over the Japanese Consul, who also hurled over a soldier. This little diversion seemed to relieve us; I don't know why, but I suppose it was the fact that what might have been a tragedy had merely a funny side.

The Yunnan Chief of Staff then gave orders to his men to drive the Szechuanese back. I shall never forget the sight. They were completely successful and set alight to the whole street, making a curtain of fire. "Now," said the Chief of Staff, "you can go." We had eighty yards of absolutely open space to cross, no cover of any kind. Ch'ien, after trying various other exits and being laughingly told by the troops that there was only one way out, bolted across the courtyard. The Japanese Consul telling us he would go straight to the Szechuanese headquarters, which he did, also went on ahead. Lépice and I were left, and in order to acquire a courage I did not feel, I said to my two chair coolies, "Do not run. If you run you will run into a bullet; if you walk a bullet hits you: it is all the same, and as many soldiers are watching us, to walk will look better." So Lépice, the two lads and I walked the eighty yards, the blazing curtain of fire in front of us. We finally emerged and went into a side street to go to the French Consulate. Here, curiously enough, Lépice nearly met his end, a shell completely wrecking a house just beside him.

After seeing Lépice safely home, I once more started out and went to the Civil Governor. The Japanese Consul having been successful in persuading the Szechuanese Commander to send deputies, we concentrated on persuading the Military Governor to do the same. He sent his Chief of Staff, Han Feng-lou, a man of iron will, said to be cruel but fearlessly straight, and after a great deal of palaver a truce was made and the fighting ceased. The city was divided between the Yunnan and Szechuan troops, who in turn were divided from each other by Kweichou troops as being neutral, though their turn came ten weeks later. The map of the city thus divided was handed to me for safe keeping

and to avoid disputes. It is still in my possession. I was able next day to persuade the Yunnan Chief of Staff that it would be wiser to leave Chengtu, which lies in a plain roughly seventy miles square, and proceed to Chienchou, a town beyond the Lung Ch'uan Yi heights, where in any case he would have direct communication with Yunnan. This advice was followed and for four years the Yunnan troops occupied Tzechou, Luchou and other towns. Lo P'ei-chin returned to Yunnan where he was murdered a few years afterwards.

On my return to the Consulate General I found Yunnan troops at the main entrance and Szechuan troops on the garden wall. I pictured a clash in the entrance-hall, but quiet persuasion and cigarettes in the end proved successful and they moved. The inhabitants of the district gave me a silk banner which was presented with much pomp and on which was worked in silk the inscription " [You] smoothed out the difficulties and unravelled the skein ". The leading gentry expressed a wish to give me a present, but I asked for a name by which I might be known to Chinese friends. They had a meeting, and under the direction of Yin Ch'ang-lin, a leading scholar and one of the truest friends I ever had in China, gave me the name " Kuan-san " by which I was afterwards usually known. The name " Kuan-san " was a play on the official name Li-tê given me when I was a student in Peking. On arrival in Peking all students are given a Chinese name, usually a transliteration of their English name, thus in my case Hewlett had been rendered Hsü Li-tê, Hsü being the family name and Li-tê the equivalent of our Christian name. The Chinese character " Li " in my name meant upright ; thus Li-tê was one of the three " uprights ", namely " Upright in virtue ". The other two, well known to classical scholars, were " upright in speech " and " upright in zeal ". Kuan-san, literally meaning " crown three ", implied " capping ", that is combining the three.

The talks leading to the settlement which led to the withdrawal of the Yunnanese lasted for seven hours and were tedious but full of interest. Tension was keen as the Szechuan deputies arrived three hours late, and Han Feng-lou with good reason feared he might be caught in a trap and not get back to the Governor in the Imperial City. While we were waiting I asked

him whether it was true that the Yunnan troops in the east of the city had oil stored and everything prepared to burn that quarter, the richest in Chengtu. In his reply there was no beating about the bush, or saying it was only a malicious rumour. It was a good point with this man, he always said straight out exactly what he meant and he replied it was perfectly true, and if the Imperial City was taken Chengtu would be burnt.

When the Szechuan deputies finally arrived, almost on the stroke of noon, they went back on their word, saying they had never agreed to the Military Governor remaining in the Imperial City in the terms of the truce. Han Feng-lou broke into a perfect fury of passion and stormed out of the room. He came into a small room in which I was sitting with the private secretary of Tai K'an, the Civil Governor, the discussions between the delegates taking part in another room, and burst out to us and to Tai K'an himself who closely followed him, " They can call me a liar but they are never going to call the British Consul General a liar." He then cursed them bitterly for having gone back on all we had decided yesterday, and leaning back in his armchair said, " Truly China is committing suicide."

Tai K'an then took me by the hand, and after walking up and down his garden for half an hour he asked me to go into a private room, where he poured out his whole heart. He was frankness itself, and seldom have I got so close to the inner feelings of a high Chinese official in a real political difficulty ; the interview was fascinating. He asked me to calm Han Feng-lou, who stubbornly refused to go back and meet the deputies for further discussion.

I saw him standing a picture of gloomy fury, arms crossed, angrily brooding in the garden. I took him into a private room. I started by telling him he had been foolish, very foolish. This roused him, but I soon made him laugh by taking out the map of the city which I had marked in red for the Yunnan Quarter, blue for the quarter to be held by Szechuan troops and purple for the neutral Kueichou men under the Civil Governor, and pointed out he must have wounded the susceptibilities of the Szechuanese by placing the character for " Yunnan " right on the Imperial City, and " Army " on the portion of the city still occupied by them in the east. I suggested a change, and to place the character for the " troops " over the Imperial City so as to humour their

childish feelings on this point. He was amused and agreed. The change was most helpful towards restoring a calmer atmosphere. I then urged on him, as a friend, the advisability of a withdrawal to the heights surrounding the Chengtu plain on the south, and to securing unimpaired communication with Yunnan. I did not unduly stress this point but the advice sank in and, as I have stated above, was taken. I seized the opportunity to plead with him not to burn the east quarter whatever happened, as it was cruel to render over 100,000 homeless for the sake of one man, and urged that the poor simple folk should not be made to suffer so seriously as they could have nothing to do with the personal political ambitions of Liu Ts'un-hou. He would not promise not to burn the city but said he would seriously consider what I had said. I felt from him this was a great deal. I then persuaded him to return to the discussions and in a very short time the Civil Governor sent for me. I was given a very friendly reception and Tai K'an asked me to sit at the head of the table beside him. He made a short and extremely friendly speech, pointing out how the Consuls had drawn all factions together and commenting on their efforts to stop the fighting and save the city from further destruction. "Heaven," he said, "protected you in your dangerous task."

Five days later the Yunnanese completely evacuated the city. The Civil Governor, Tai K'an, with his Kueichou troops remained.

CHAPTER XII

1917

THE Yunnanese left Chengtu city on the 25th April, but the Kueichou troops remained and their leader Tai K'an accepted the post of Military Governor. In this he was ill-advised, but in a queer way he felt it was his duty to the Central Government to do so. As related, we had struck up a very close friendship during the negotiations between the Szechuanese and Yunnanese and I could talk to him freely. On the 1st May, therefore, I went to see him and asked why he had not left with the Yunnanese; did he not know the Szechuan saying, "First expel the extra-provincial, afterwards expel the foreigner"; I added, "You see, you come first."

"How long do you give me?" he asked, to which I replied, "At most three months." This was on the 1st May. On the 6th July he was attacked; defended himself for three weeks; was finally thrashed and committed suicide on the 27th July. I then said I heard things which his subordinates did not dare to repeat to him. For example, in Szechuan at present it was said in the streets these were three great "Meet-to-be's": Liu Ts'un-hou (the Szechuan Commander-in-Chief), "Meet to be pitied"; Lo P'ei-chin (Yunnan Governor), "Meet to be despised"; and Tai K'an, "Meet to be killed".

"Is that verily the truth?" he asked, and I said, "It is," adding he must know that Szechuan was not grateful to Yunnan and Kueichou for their assistance in ridding them of the Northern régime and that they were carrying out their motto "Once across the river destroy the bridge".

On the 9th June I went to the Kueichou camp and had a long talk with a sergeant, an excellent fellow, who had been in the escort which accompanied me from Chungking to Chengtu in September 1916. I told him I was afraid the Szechuanese were bent on attacking them and gave my reasons for thinking so. This man was killed in the subsequent fighting. I am glad to say I was able to retrieve a few of his belongings and send them to his

home in Kueichou Province. I received a very pathetic letter of thanks from his father.

On the 15th June I called on Tai K'an again. He at once greeted me with, " Don't you talk too much." I asked him what he meant. He said, " You have been talking to a sergeant, a lower-class man. Do you, a Consul General, talk to lower-class men ? Besides, what you said won't happen." I replied : " Strange that you, a Republican, talk of lower class. Although we are a monarchy we seldom talk of lower class ; poorer class, yes, there is a distinction between those with money and those without. In my poor, or perhaps stupid is a more correct translation, opinion, if a sergeant does his work to the utmost limit of his capacity he is an upper-class man ; similarly, if a Military Governor or Consul General does not do his job to the utmost limit of what he is able to do he is a lower-class man." I then reported that I felt he was in great danger and keenly regretted he had not left with Lo P'ei-chin. He maintained I was wrong and that the Szechuanese would not attack him. On my way out an orderly stopped me and said that the Brigadier, Hsiung K'o-ch'en, wanted to see me. I was warmly received. We had always been close friends and concealed nothing from each other. He said he wished Tai K'an would listen to me ; he believed every word I said ; would I keep him fully informed ? On the 5th July he asked me to see him at once. I went, and found Yin Chung-hsi, my greatest friend in Szechuan, one of the gentry and the Treasurer there. The Brigadier told me the Governor had decided to go into the Imperial City with most of his troops, leaving a small number on the East Parade Ground. I said it was madness and merely meant asking the Szechuanese to attack them. He agreed, but said that nothing would dissuade the Governor. I declined to see him again. The Brigadier continued : " I know the greatest danger is coming to me, for last night I had a dream. I have had the dream twice. The first time I was on a ship " (he had never seen the sea) " the waves were very high. I looked and saw a big wind coming ; the wind was yellow, it enveloped the ship but the ship came up again. Within a month the Revolution broke out. I led my army in the cause of the Republic and I have never been beaten. Last night in my dream I was on the same ship, the waves were the

same, but the wind I saw coming was black; it enveloped the ship, which never came up again. I woke knowing for me great danger was coming." He was caught and executed by the Szechuanese on the 27th July.

On the 6th July the fighting began. The Treasurer, whom I had seen only three days before, was murdered in the streets. The Brigadier telephoned and asked if I would come to the Imperial City. I said the fighting was far too fierce, there were fires everywhere and I could not cross the streets. During the three weeks' fighting a sixth of the city was destroyed by the Kueichou troops who were not in the Imperial City and who sold their lives very dearly. The Brigadier then asked if I would intervene. I said I would not. The Szechuanese would not have it. His last words were to ask me to be careful as they were firing in the direction of the Consulate General. The fighting was brutal. The Kueichou troops went from street to street calling out "Plant the red flag", which meant set fire to the houses; hundreds were burned to death in fires started at each end of the streets. The French Consulate was partially destroyed by the blowing-up of the Imperial City wall and I had great difficulty in finding my way to the noble Lépice the Consul, whom I found in a dug-out. I persuaded him to leave and he came and lived with me. I also got eighteen Chinese students from the Church Missionary Society's hostel, which the Szechuanese were using as a point of vantage from which to attack the Imperial City. They came to the Consulate General and I turned my office into a dormitory.

After three weeks' fighting the Szechuanese offered to allow the Kueichou troops to leave with their arms and even sent 20,000 taels (about £3000) for expenses. The Kueichou troops were, however, only permitted to proceed seven miles when they were ambushed and a terrible massacre took place. Tai K'an committed suicide. A worse fate awaited my friend Brigadier Hsiung K'o-ch'en. The story was told me by a Shansi friend in the Arsenal. The Brigadier having ordered a *sauve qui peut*, managed to escape, and dressing like a coolie, got a carrying-pole and some vegetables and started to walk for the nearest Yunnan garrison, about one hundred and eighty miles away. He had not proceeded far when he was met by two Szechuanese

soldiers who told him to hand over the vegetables. He did so, and walked on. On examining their loot they found inside the vegetables a piece of ham and at once called to the Brigadier to come back. He returned and they then searched him and found on him ten silver dollars. This made them suspicious, and pulling up one of the legs of his trousers they remarked on the whiteness of the skin and told him he was no coolie but a deserter. They ordered him to accompany them to the Arsenal, where he went straight to the Director and gave himself up. The Director telephoned the news of his capture to the Szechuan Commander and asked for instructions. He was ordered to execute him. Hsiung K'o-ch'en on being told of his sentence asked permission to write three letters, one to the Governor of Kueichou not to take revenge, one to his younger brother and one to me. I never received it. The next morning Director Yang told Hsiung to come with him. As they were walking Hsiung asked Yang to get a carrying-chair and not to expose him to the insult of walking through the streets only to be hooted. The Director replied, " You are not going as far as that," to which Hsiung said, " I understand," adding four words hard to translate but which implied Tai K'an had not been the right man to follow. He then knelt down, saying in hurried tones, " Come quickly. Come quickly." He was at once executed. Seven months later, when the Kueichou troops returned and captured Chengtu, the body was disinterred for removal to Kueichou. It is stated that it was in perfect condition and that on removal the wounds bled afresh, a positive proof in Chinese eyes that he was innocent and wrongfully killed.

It was some time before I could ascertain the truth of his end. I had heard the story as told above, and finally invited Director Yang to tiffin. During the meal I suddenly asked him what the last four words uttered by Hsiung before he said " Come quickly " really meant. He was taken aback, and after remarking he saw I knew the truth, we had a good talk and he filled in gaps in the tale. I told him I thought the execution of Hsiung was a political blunder, that it would bring forth a bitter revenge and that he was more valuable as a hostage. It was true : in seven months the Szechuan Commander-in-Chief, who had made himself Governor, was a fugitive and I was pleading with the Kueichou

conqueror not to wreak vengeance on the innocent poor of the city — pleading with success.

During the fighting I became acquainted with a Kueichou banker who finally acted as go-between in arranging the terms for the evacuation of the Imperial City by Tai K'an and his following. He had been asked by the Szechuan Commander whether he would undertake the task and was deliberating what to do when a huge bird flew onto the roof of his house. It made distinctive noises which attracted his attention. The bird having apparently satisfied itself that he had noticed it, then flew off in the direction of the Imperial City. He decided it was a direct omen that he must carry out the unpleasant duty he had been asked to perform. He was not really happy about it as he had, he declared, seen other portents, red lamps in the sky and ruts made by non-existent wheelbarrows, all leading away from the Imperial City and in places where no wheelbarrows had passed for weeks and weeks.

He asked if I believed in the supernatural, and when I confessed to being superstitious he gave me his private diary to read. There was one strange story vouched for by his son who was an officer in the Kueichou army and quartered in the Imperial City. As the son was crossing a courtyard he heard cries for help, and saw a man's head and shoulders appearing over the top of a well the hole of which was large enough to receive a human body. His arms were spread out to prevent him going down the well. He implored the son to help him, but it required the aid of two other men to drag him out. He then told them he was passing the well when he had been jerked off his legs by two devils, who tried to drag him down the well saying he must join them as there were many others with them, all of whom had been murdered during the Northern régime and they had a good time gambling together. He saved himself by throwing out his arms, and when he was rescued the devils were pulling hard at his legs. The strange sequel to this tale was that the man was found next morning lying at the mouth of the well drowned. The old banker could offer no explanation as to how the body got there, and a further strange coincidence in connection with the same well was the discovery of hundreds of copper cash scattered all round its mouth.

During the fighting the Consulate General was frequently hit, but no serious damage was done. I buried the ammunition for the Consulate General in a small courtyard to guard against the risk of a major explosion. The casualties during the fighting were heavy and it was never known how many of the civilian population suffered.

One day a soldier came to me with his ear nearly severed from his head. I plastered it with a mass of some thick sticky healing paste, of which I have forgotten the name, and bandaged it tightly to his head. A few days afterwards I received a message of thanks from his commanding officer who at the same time sent me a man with a shattered arm for treatment. The bone above the elbow was protruding and of course I could do nothing; so telling him that while I was very good at ears I could do nothing with arms, I suggested he should go to the hospital run by the French doctors outside the North Gate of the city. I gave him a really stiff brandy to fortify him, for he was in great suffering.

In the hospitals there was a shortage of chloroform, but it used to tickle most of the less severely wounded to see the X-rays of their legs and arms with bullets in them, and almost invariably they chose to have the bullet extracted without chloroform on condition they kept it. Anyone having chloroform was not allowed to keep his bullet.

At the same time a little slave-girl was thrown over the garden wall into my vegetable garden, where she was found by the gardener and brought to me. She was a pretty and attractive child of almost ten years of age, and having examined the poor little body, which was a mass of weals from blows given by a whip, I asked Mrs. Hampson of the China Inland Mission to come over and see her. She told us she had been flogged and flogged and flogged till she could only just crawl to a shed outside the house. Here she was found by a serving woman, who, telling her she was going to put her in a place where a kind man dwelt, dropped her over my wall. I sent for the magistrate and asked him then and there to write out an official document giving me the child and holding me free from any action the owners might take. But I thought, and thought rightly, that they would keep quiet. The little girl was sent to the Canadian Methodist

Mission School and I never saw her again, as the School authorities thought it was best she should never know to whom she owed her release. I believe she developed a very ungovernable temper, which was strange in view of all she had gone through and the kind treatment she ultimately received.

CHAPTER XIII

1917, 1918

DURING the fighting between the Szechuanese and the Kueichou troops, the Yunnanese made no effort to assist the latter, but contented themselves with establishing strong garrisons in the cities of Tzechou, Luchou and Suifu, thus safeguarding the main route to Yunnan Province. On the final rout of his enemies Liu Ts'un-hou established himself as Military Governor. He had not the capacity for such a difficult job, and he was badly served. He had a childlike brain, and it always seemed to me he took more pleasure in seeing how pretty his soldiers looked on parade than in consolidating a position which was extremely precarious. He made the mistake, too, of flirting with Peking, and this was an unforgivable sin in the eyes of patriotic Szechuanese. As a man he was kindly and extremely hospitable and I spent many pleasant hours with him.

The Yunnanese had left the city so rapidly that they left behind them all the Hunan secretaries, about eighteen in number and all quite young. Luckily my friend Captain Wang, whom I had met in the inn on my way to Chengtu, had told them before leaving with the Governor all about my connection with Hunan, and had advised them to appeal to me if they got into serious trouble. After the expulsion of the Kueichou troops they were thrown into prison and orders were given for their execution.

They managed to get a message to me, pleading for help. I went and saw my oldest friend among the gentry of Chengtu, Yin Chung-hsi (one whose friendship, to this day, I most value, whose upright life I most respect), and asked him to come with me to the Szechuan Governor and plead for their lives. After pointing out the futility of antagonising Hunan in addition to Yunnan and Kueichou, our plea was granted, provided I would guarantee they would go straight to Hunan and that I would give them passes. This was done. I made out Chinese passes in my own name and they reached home in safety. Ten years afterwards, on taking up my post in Nanking, I was thanked for this

by that great son of Hunan, T'an Yen-k'ai, at that time one of the heads of the newly established National Government, and a man deeply respected by all.

The welcome he gave me in 1928 at a time when foreign officials were anything but popular made an impression on his staff, who no doubt reported what had occurred to others, and certainly assisted in a large measure in enabling me to establish satisfactory relations with the new Government.

It was a strange fact, but at this period a permanent pass from myself was of more value than an official passport. Owing to my activities during the fighting I was well known to all of the commanding officers and many of the men of all the warring factions. I did not issue these passes readily, but can quote two occasions on which they were useful. A lady missionary of the Canadian Mission wished to travel overland to Wanhsien. Her Chinese had heard of the passes and she asked for one, but I begged her not to use it unless absolutely compelled to. She arrived one night at a city which was in danger of being attacked, and of which in consequence the city gates were closed. The Mission premises were inside the city and she wished to enter. She showed her official passport but the guards refused to take any notice of it. She then produced my pass and was at once permitted to enter. The other occasion was when a British friend of mine sent his Chinese boy to Chungking to bring up important goods of which he was in need. He was stopped by Yunnan troops at Tzechou who were about to confiscate the goods, especially the large stocks of cigarettes and eatables, when he produced my pass. They at once recognised it, saying they well knew the " priest Consul ". I could never make out the designation " priest ", unless it was because I was bald.

My official relations with Governor Liu Ts'un-hou were chiefly concerned in obtaining compensation for the Church Missionary Society, whose property had been damaged in the fighting, and for a Khotan trader Hadji who had lost nearly 4000 dollars in the large fires outside the Imperial City during the attack on the Yunnanese. The hostel in the Church Missionary Society compound had been used by the Szechuan troops as a convenient post from which to fire at the Kueichou troops on the Imperial City wall, and having drawn their fire, was con-

siderably damaged. I took the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs to see the damage, and as some Szechuan soldiers made no attempt to conceal the fact they had used the premises during the fighting, it was easy to persuade him that the damage was due to the action of the Szechuanese. Actually to get the cash for the repairs was not so easy and he claimed that for this I must deal with the Governor direct. I told the padre in charge of the Mission to have the repairs put in hand at once, just mending windows and door panels wherever necessary and repairing the roof to prevent further damage from rain. I advanced him 500 dollars out of my own pocket. I then went and saw the Governor and told him exactly what I had done, explaining I had taken immediate action to save the property from more serious damage owing to neglect. He asked if I was not very rash to advance 500 dollars, but I replied no, seeing I knew with whom I was dealing and never had any doubts about compensation in full being finally paid. He was amused and pleased, and paid up in full for all the repairs to the Mission.

Hadji's case was not so easy. During the attack on the Yunnanese he had informed me that he had been compelled to leave the inn in which he was living as it was in the zone of fighting, and that before leaving he had buried 8000 dollars in two lots under the floor. He asked whether I would obtain an escort and have it brought to the Consulate General. I said it was quite impossible as the street in which the inn was situated was between the opposing parties. This street was burnt on the day I left the Imperial City when I was endeavouring to secure a truce. It was four months before Hadji could look for his hidden treasure. He found one lot of 4000 dollars intact, and about 92 dollars charred and damaged of the other lot. This was in August 1917. I put in a claim and promised him I would obtain compensation. The Governor admitted the claim, but declared he had no funds to meet it. I brought matters to a head by refusing to attend an official luncheon, stating bluntly I could not go and pretend to enjoy his hospitality when he was deliberately trifling with me over a serious matter. He sent his secretary to argue with me, but I was adamant. He absented himself from the feast, sending a deputy. As I always entered heart and soul into the rollicking fun of a Chinese feast, he appears to have become

convinced I was really angry, and as our friendship was genuine he was upset. He sent a draft for 3900 dollars the same evening. On presenting this for payment I was informed by the banker there were no funds. This banker, however, was a true friend and we had spent many hours together discussing questions of every kind. He therefore, to help me, planned to obtain orders from the Financial Treasurer to have certain taxes levied by the city magistrates deposited in his bank. Directly he had sufficient to meet the draft he telephoned to me, and I was able to collect the money and convey it in solid dollars to the Consulate General. Hadji, who had waited since August 1917 till February 1918 for his money, was overjoyed. He said he must give me some token of his appreciation and took measurements in my drawing-room for two carpets which he said he would have made in his own home at Khotan for me. He abandoned his proposed trip to Peking and went home overland via Sinkiang. On the way home he sent me back by some traders an appallingly gaudy tea-pot, which must originally have been a present from Blackpool, filled with dried raisins, and I dismissed the carpets from my mind. I did him an injustice. In September 1921, three and a half years later, Hadji reappeared with a horse, an Afghan groom and two carpets, stating all were for me. I took the carpets but the horse and the man I declined. The carpets are beautiful and are still two of my most treasured possessions.

By February 1918 it was obvious Liu Ts'un-hou's days were numbered, though I could never persuade him of the serious opposition which was arising against him, and his own immediate following kept him in the dark for their own purposes. I was very well informed by many friends among officials out of office and gentry of a strong combination between certain Szechuan elements and Kueichou troops to drive out the Governor with his Northern tendencies, and to restore Szechuan once more as a partner in the South-West Confederacy, that is, the three provinces of Yunnan, Kueichou and Szechuan. In order to accomplish this object Kueichou chose to ignore the defeat she had suffered in the previous year. I knew every move and was not surprised when one evening a number of leaders of the Southern party called at the Consulate General and informed me that everything was ready for the blow, Kueichou troops prepared

to attack from the East and their pro-Southern Szechuan Colleagues for the North. I urged that in order to prevent any more fighting inside the city I might be permitted to urge Liu to leave. They agreed and I went to his headquarters at the North Parade Ground. He was alone with his Chief of Staff. I urged him to leave. His Chief of Staff lost his temper and said a Consul General had no right to talk to the Military Governor in that manner. I replied I had not come as Consul General, it was a friend talking to a friend, Kuan-san to Chi-chih, using the names by which we were known to intimate friends. I then ignored the Chief of Staff and urged the Governor to leave, saying he was young and could afford to bide his time, that the pendulum might easily swing in his favour at a later date, and that it was easier to maintain himself in the open country than risk defeat cooped up inside the city. He left, but not before a mutiny in the troops had taken place, and he lost a certain amount of money in hard cash owing to his hurried departure. Two years later he returned to Chengtu and reminded me, with gratitude, of this talk. He never took office again and was living a retired life when I paid a farewell visit to the city in June 1936.

The Chief of Police with the best intentions in the world, as it was now dark, closed the city gates before the Kueichou troops could enter, meaning to give them a proper welcome by daylight. His action was stupid and was misunderstood ; it nearly ended in disaster. The Kueichou troops fearing treachery, as well they might, prepared to attack, and the gates were opened just in time. They entered the East Gate and proceeded to the East Parade Ground, where they started looting in search of bedding. Their commanding officer was in a towering rage and would listen to no excuses. At this crisis the Chief of Police telephoned to me urgently to come at once. I went and found him in a state of abject collapse, in tears and moaning. Some of the gentry were also present. I then obtained admittance to the Kueichou Commander. I told him the story of his fellow provincial Tai-K'an and of my relations with the Commander of the Kueichou troops, General Hsiung, with whom I was on the closest terms of friendship. We soon were on friendly terms, and before doing anything else I persuaded him at once to prohibit any further looting. I then made matters right for the Chief of

Police, who never forgot this act of kindness. He never failed to keep me accurately informed of every official move during my term of office in Chengtu, and although erratic as an official, as a friend I could absolutely trust him.

It was not long before friction broke out between the Kueichou troops and their Szechuan allies, and as the Yunnanese were anxious to avoid further hostilities in the province, the Kueichou troops were quietly withdrawn and Chengtu was left to her own devices. Yunnanese garrisons still held some cities, warfare continued in many parts of the province, commanders raised their own armies and established districts of their own, but Chengtu was at peace on the surface, though intrigue was rampant. This was the period in China when in nearly every province the War Lords were a law to themselves and the control of the Central Government over the rest of China was negligible.

I have tried to avoid mentioning too many Chinese names as I realise they are difficult to memorise for anyone who has not resided in China. But it is difficult to write of Szechuan during this period, 1916 to 1922, without mentioning the names of the Military Governors, of whom there were six during my period of office.

CHAPTER XIV

1918, 1919

AFTER the departure of the Kueichou troops a young Szechuan General, Hsiung K'ê-wu, assumed office as Military Governor. He was keen and intelligent and held office for two years, but apart from two or three faithful friends he was badly served. He was popular in Chengtu, though many who wished him well used to comment regarding his actions: "The chair coolies decide": by this brief remark they implied he had not sufficient will of his own, but certain men had put him into the chair of office and would not let him down, but carried him wherever they wished, not where he wished to go. When I was in Chengtu no wheeled traffic was permitted inside the city, so metaphors making use of the common mode of conveyance known to the people were readily understood in the tea-shops where all gathered for their daily gossip.

I got to know Hsiung K'ê-wu really well, and he used to come to the Consulate General for a quiet chat to escape from callers. During one of our talks he said he was surprised the British Government permitted Japanese subjects so much freedom in Singapore, and asked whether we were never afraid that they might one day use all the information they so easily gained against us. He was keenly pro-Szechuanese, but recognised it was sound policy to maintain friendly terms with the Yunnan garrisons in Szechuan, especially as his predecessor was making trouble in the north-east of the province, encouraged by Peking to continue the civil strife. From him I learnt a great deal about the Province of Szechuan. I got him keenly interested in the "Seven Kill Tablet" in Chengtu. This memorial stone was erected by a man, Chang Hsien-chung, who styled himself King of the Great Western Kingdom. He was born in Chingchou in the Province of Hupei, and shortly after the fall of the Ming Dynasty entered Szechuan from Shansi in 1644. He was only twenty-nine but completely devastated Szechuan, being responsible, it is stated, for the lives of over thirty million people; some

told me twice that number. It is for this reason pure Szechuanese are practically unknown as the province was re-populated from neighbouring provinces. He never passed a day without shedding blood. He slew all the scholars in Chengtu and the two mounds still exist under which they were buried; in one the scholars, in the other all their writing materials. He also cut off the feet of all the wives of his officers and made them into a pile. This hideous heap was capped by the feet of his favourite concubine who made the voluntary surrender. This man then erected the famous tablet on which were engraved twenty-one Chinese characters in lines of three:

Heaven brought forth ten thousand things in order to support man;
Man has not one thing with which to recompense Heaven.
Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.

I ascertained that the tablet was in the official residence of the magistrate. Here there was an old gatekeeper who had seen the tablet in 1907, but beyond telling me it had been pulled down, broken in half and buried, he would give no indication as to the spot in which it might be found. The magistrate believed it was somewhere in a wall, bricked in by a predecessor whose son was killed fighting in Tibet. This man thought the curse of blood lay on anyone who saw the stone, for all the people of Chengtu believed whoever looked on the stone must shed blood, and that its rediscovery would lead to widespread slaughter throughout the province.

I tried to persuade Hsiung K'ê-wu to find the stone and let me take it to the British Museum and for ever remove the curse from Szechuan. He, however, said he had no superstition and wished to erect the tablet in a prominent place for the excellence of the sentiments expressed in the first two lines. So far as I know it has never been found. There is a stone now shown in the public park purporting to be this tablet, but so worn that nothing is legible. Like myself, many Chinese, and among them keen scholars, do not believe this is the tablet. Our reasons are that there is not one single recognisable character, and characters on monuments much older than 374 years are clearly visible. The stone came from the prefect's residence and not the magistrate's, where it was seen in 1907 and was still perfectly legible.

Although not superstitious, in this particular instance he confessed that queer things did happen, and I confessed that I too had a certain amount of superstition. He told me an interesting tale about one of his soldiers in Chungking. The man met an old woman in great sorrow; she was very poor and had just been told a dollar she wanted to change was bad. The soldier asked to look at it and saying it was perfectly good, took a good dollar out of his pocket, mixed them up and handing her his good dollar slipped the bad one into his breast pocket. He then saw her get her dollar changed. Shortly afterwards when fighting outside Chungking the soldier was shot, the bullet striking right on the bad dollar which was still in his breast pocket. The dollar was badly dented and saved his life. This General Hsiung considered was Heaven's direct reward for virtue.

During his tenure of office I had only one serious case, and that occurred during his absence from Chengtu when his Chief of Staff was acting Military Governor. Although personally friendly he had no love for foreigners and bitterly resented the presence of foreign firms in Chengtu. Accordingly he demanded that the comprador of the Standard Oil Company, a Ningpo lad of twenty-six, should sell his property, and on his refusal to do so had him put in prison where day after day he was compelled to witness the torture of prisoners till he nearly became demented.

The United States had no consular representative in Chengtu, and at the request of the firm their Minister in Peking asked Sir John Jordan whether I might be requested to try and obtain his release. I received the necessary instructions and at once opened negotiations with the acting Military Governor, a man well known and feared for his callous brutality; had he not ordered the execution of 147 soldiers suspected of disaffection, when the two headsmen worked till their arms were tired and they could hardly perform their odious task properly, and the temple court-yard where the executions took place was a pool of blood? At first he was inclined to be rude and asked what I, a British Consul General, had to do with the comprador of an American firm, but as we were close personal friends I managed to keep the conversation on a calmer basis and he finally agreed to release him. As some days passed and nothing was done, I again called and requested his immediate release. He was absent, but I saw the

Treasurer, and during this interview I actually had to ask him to stop the torture of a prisoner outside the window who was having his knees crushed on chains, as his moaning and groans of agony more than disconcerted me. After what appeared to be a satisfactory talk, he promised to release him at 4 P.M. He broke his word. I was first aware that matters were very wrong when I heard that the Chief of Police had left the city ; as he was a very special friend of mine, this was ominous. He was the man I had saved from arrest and probably death at the hands of the Kueichou troops two years previously, and I was always able to rely on him. As I could not appeal to him I called on the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, a timid soul with no courage and no authority, and went with him at about 8 or 9 P.M. to the prison. We could get no reply to our telephone messages to the Acting Governor, and the prison authorities would not release Ch'en, the comprador. I at once determined on definite action. I thereupon told my servants to go to the Consulate General, get a camp-bed, supper, whisky and soda and bring them to the prison, where I spent the night in Ch'en's room. Next morning early I went to the Acting Military Governor, who asked me if I was drunk the night before. When I replied " No, why ? " he retorted that no-one in my position unless intoxicated would spend a night in prison, to which I responded that few officials in his high position would tell the official of a friendly country a deliberate lie. He flashed out that he knew it was a lie, he had deliberately lied and given orders to shoot Ch'en ; he was going to show foreigners he was not afraid of them and that he could kill their employees if he wanted to. I then said I knew that, but I hoped all that form of bullying had passed with the Manchu régime, and that with the Republic we could secure enlightenment in dealing with cases of this nature. I then once more put the whole matter on a personal basis, as up to this time our relations had been genuine, so I said, " I am no longer the Consul General talking to the Acting Military Governor. I am Kuan-san (my personal name) talking to Nu-kang." I then reasoned with him as a friend, won him over and finally obtained his promise of a release. He said, however, I had made him lose so much face — for example, he had received many telephone calls asking how his prisoner was — might he keep Ch'en two weeks longer ? I said he might ;

that bygones were bygones and I absolutely believed and trusted him. All I asked was that Ch'en should be moved to a private house and shown no more tortures, and that I could send a man every day to see him and cheer him up. This was all agreed to and Ch'en was finally released.

The Military Governor was not pleased with the action of his subordinate in this case, knowing my true affection for Szechuan and what I had done in the past to safeguard Chengtu from the horrors of war. On receiving a report he at once sent his confidential secretary to apologise personally, and followed up the apology with the gift of a personal seal made at the Chengtu mint out of three ounces of absolutely pure gold. The offending Chief of Staff wrote the characters for my name which were engraved on the seal. In return I sent him a set of twelve liqueur glasses set in cups made of filigree silver. They were in a case in three rows of four and on each was a separate Chinese character composing a poem, the translation of which ran thus :

The glass is in our hand,
The moon is at its zenith :
With song and cheerful laughter
In the bowl we'll friendship seal.

He was delighted with it.

The first two lines came from an ancient saying that when the cup is in the hand ten thousand worries are forgotten and the heart finds peace. Alas, how many times a year can a man see the moon at the zenith, so when the time for rejoicing has come why not rejoice ? The third line was from a saying of the Emperor Wu in the Wei Dynasty, A.D. 528, who in a couplet urged his followers to rejoice, and my Chinese writer and I made our own addition for the fourth line to complete the rhyme.

In April 1919 I went home on leave after nine years without a break. The Military Governor and his staff with other officials gave me a farewell party in a temple outside the East Gate, and I was also very hospitably entertained by the Yunnan General Chao Yu-hsin at Luchou on my way to Chungking. From Chungking I proceeded to Ichang in H.M.S. *Teal.*

I only had five months' leave in England and left again for Chengtu in December. I arrived in Ichang early in February

and made the trip through the gorges in a Post Office boat. It was a small boat with a single cabin, a single sail and a crew of eleven. The crew slept in the front of the boat. We were carrying three million dollars' worth of stamps. The weather was bitterly cold, but I enjoyed every moment of it. The crew were a delightfully cheery crowd and magnificent workers, and I loved sharing the dangers of the rapids with these happy sons of Nature. I was, however, always made to get out and walk at the worst rapids.

During the ten months I had been absent conditions in Szechuan had deteriorated. Hsiung K'ê-wu only held sway in Chengtu and practically every large city had its own military leader who owed allegiance to none. Brigandage was rife and in many cases the brigands were in league with the military, who took no steps to suppress them. Plots were being formed to oust Hsiung K'ê-wu and he had few adherents in the province.

I arrived at Kuei-fu without incident, and notified the Commander of the local garrison of my arrival. He asked me to wait a day before going on, and as I had very good reason for believing he was in touch with certain brigand bands operating near the river, I agreed to his request; but it was annoying as there was a perfect following wind. I felt he had a definite purpose in asking me to stop for a whole day, and surmised he wished to inform any brigands who might interfere with me to leave me alone. The wind held next day when I arrived at Yün-yang. Here the magistrate called, told me he knew of my movements and was sending a guard of four to accompany me to Wanhsien. They were unarmed and the one who attached himself to me could only have been sixteen years old, but was very bright and keen. As he was miserably clad and perishing with cold, I gave him a blanket and told him to curl up on the floor inside the boat and out of the wind. He was very grateful.

On arriving at the New Dragon Rapid, which was at its worst, we got out and walked up the bank to the bend of the rapid while our boatmen and trackers fought the swirling turmoil of water. I was met here by an officer who had come down by launch with one hundred men; he told me I could not go on as a large band of brigands were waiting on the river-bank about thirty miles away. I asked my lad what we had better do.

" Go on," he said. " You will be quite safe." And he positively guaranteed it in spite of the officer. So on we went.

News of my coming must have been passed on by that mysterious " bamboo wireless ", as the mouth-to-mouth transmission of news is known in these parts, for I found seven other post boats were with me and apparently with the knowledge and consent of my escort. When we approached the spot where the brigands were stated to be, my young guardian asked to land. He and his three companions accordingly went on shore and for half an hour walked in single file with about fifty yards between each man. After this half-hour they asked to come on board again. Now I am convinced word had been sent by the General at Kuei-fu through the magistrate at Yün-yang to the brigands that when they saw four men walking spaced out at regular intervals no boats passing were to be touched, for whereas our boats passed in safety some cargo-boats which left behind us were seized and partially looted by brigands at this spot. Ten days afterwards seven post boats were completely cleared out.

I went overland from Wanhsien to Chengtu and the second day out I passed a small gang of brigands armed with swords. It was a lovely morning and I had been enjoying the gorgeous scenery, mounting up and up the mountain path. Owing to the presence of brigands there were very few people on the road and most of the small shops were closed. I was struck, too, by the fear in which the harmless peasant lives when in one of the biggest passes I saw hovels cut right in the side of the rocks and accessible only by planks which could be removed as occasion required. I was in my chair when I passed the gang and they paid no attention to me, but my carriers were stopped and examined though they merely gave the head man a fright and let him go. A Chinese who had thought it safe to join my party, unknown to me, was not so lucky. He was stripped literally naked and robbed of 250 dollars. My fellows gave up sundry garments and clothed him. It was miserably cold (16th February), the hills powdered with snow and in a pass some 3000 feet high.

Four days later, just after crossing a river, I saw to my dismay a body of sixty or seventy of these gentlemen of the road dressed in ordinary clothes and fully armed. I had no chance of avoiding them and simply said to myself, " You are properly in for it this

time." I had an imposing procession of carriers with all my stores and clothes and felt the temptation to loot must prove too strong. But no ; they watched us approaching, took a long look and then, to my huge relief, went off by a side road after asking my boy who I was and where I was going.

My last meeting with these folk was two days later in an inn at night. They came into the inn and asked my bearers why they were on the road at China New Year when no-one works. As they were being paid double for working, and had chosen to go on rather than take a day off, their answers were satisfactory and the brigands left.

Having escaped four times I determined to take no further risks and telegraphed as soon as I could to Chengtu for a proper escort, and for the last lap I had 150 men from the 1st Division. I cannot explain this immunity from being looted. My " boy ", who knew I was thoroughly acquainted with the grades of the famous Elder Brother Secret Society, to which all the brigands probably belonged, also that I knew many of their secret signs and even the oath they took at meetings, perhaps played on this. I was well known to the troops, who had seen much of me during the fighting, and I had many talks with officers and men during my fourteen days overland trip from Wanhsien to Chengtu. The talks warmed my heart to the people of China from whom came such a response for ordinary decent treatment. It was a treat to watch the happy energy the chair coolies put into their work, the care with which the bright lad who carried my camp-bed hurried on ahead to have everything ready, and to see the room in the inn was properly cleaned. The strange consideration of even the brigands made me marvel, and as I pondered over the happiness those contacts produced I wondered how those then in authority so consistently persisted in ignoring the hidden greatness which lay in the hearts of these simple folk, seeing the astounding results they could have obtained by giving them just government instead of nice-sounding platitudes, the irresistible force they could have created by compelling respect and devotion by the example of their own lives. When I was in Szechuan the people used bitterly to say that a hen was of more value than a human life.

CHAPTER XV

1920

I ARRIVED back in Chengtu on 18th February 1920 and found several outstanding cases to clear up. I told General Hsiung I felt I was returning to my second home and that I could not possibly start in on three years faced with a heap of unsettled cases. He gave orders that all outstanding cases were at once to be cleared up. This was done.

But, alas, Hsiung's days were numbered. Underhand intrigue developed into open hostility. Chengtu was once more threatened with attack, and to avoid civil war Hsiung disappeared into retirement. I never saw him again. He came under suspicion in the early days of the National Government and was imprisoned in the forts outside Canton for three years. He is still more or less in hiding though no longer under surveillance. The new Military Governor, Liu Ch'ao, firmly believed in an alliance with Yunnan as in the best interests of Szechuan Province. He accordingly invited the Yunnan Commander at Luchou, Chao Yu-hsin, whom I had met the previous year, to come to Chengtu and discuss matters. He came and called on me before he went to the meeting to discuss a means of securing a definite issue. He was also anxious in the event of further hostilities to secure Chengtu being made a neutral zone. As there was a ghastly rabble of mixed troops inside the city, and a very real danger of looting, I urged him to have all troops inside the city moved out and the protection of the city left to the City Guards. He agreed and kept his word. I told him privately that I was convinced he would get no satisfaction at the meeting, and that he would probably be told many falsehoods to induce him to remain in Chengtu. I warned him of the serious combination which I knew was being formed against him and the Governor, telling him exactly where the opposing forces were. He asked how should I, a foreigner, know so much, but I merely said I was very well served, and moreover I had no interest in deceiving him whereas the Military Governor would have a definite desire to

make use of him. This was 3rd September.

At one o'clock next morning he telephoned and asked me to go and see him. I went after breakfast and was exceptionally well received. I amused him by giving him a skit on the eight Szechuan Divisions which had been given me by a scholar friend. He had named the 1st Long Legs as they were so capable at running away. The Pumpkin Party, easily rolled to whichever side you wanted it, and "Will discuss with anyone" were also well named. He told me that, as I feared, the meeting had been a complete failure, but he had been urged to stay a few days more for further discussions. It was quite obvious to me that further delay was useless and I begged him to leave before he was trapped, pointing out he was in the tiger's jaws in Chengtu, which was in the middle of the plain, and that he would be well advised to continue the discussion at a spot in the hills to the east of the city, from which in case of treachery he could withdraw to Luchou. I did this the more earnestly as I knew the Yunnanese and was convinced his bodyguard would burn their way out of the city if there was any treachery. They had in fact, as I learnt subsequently, prepared three hundred cases of oil with which to set fire to the Main East Street of Chengtu in case of an emergency.

At 3.45 A.M. on 5th September he sent a special messenger to say he was off. I gave the lad six bottles of whisky (Aberdeen Club), saying I fancied the General and his escort would have to move too rapidly to secure any food and that a little whisky in hot tea would keep them going. I subsequently received a short line of thanks for the gift. I was right in my surmise as at 5.45 A.M. the opposing forces were attacking outside the North Gate, and at 8.30 they entered the city.

There was a hideous massacre at the city gate which was closed against the retreating troops, who had been sent out of the city on the night of 3rd September. Among these unfortunates was a body of seventy mounted women; only seven escaped and the bodies of the slain were subjected to nameless indignities.

After two days' rest the Szechuan armies pursued the Yunnanese to the Lung Ch'uan Yi heights, about twenty miles from Chengtu, and forming the eastern boundary of the Chengtu plain. As the proportion of men was four to one in their favour

they made a frontal attack on the Yunnan position, but after seven days had made no impression on the enemy. And then occurred what must be one of the most dramatic incidents in any war. The story was told me by a special representative of the Szechuanese Commander-in-Chief. Seven hundred Yunnan men stripped; some were entirely naked, some naked to the waist. Armed with knives and revolvers they rushed the Szechuan camp of 16,000 men at the foot of the hills. The attack was a complete success. Panic seized regiment after regiment and the whole force fled to within the shelter of Chengtu city walls.

About ten of these heroes, for heroes indeed they were, were captured and, naked as they were, kept in the streets on show in cold drenching rain before being murdered. Two were killed and cut up in the streets and I saw the hearts and livers hanging in a cook-shop. Two others were wrapped in wadding and burnt alive in the public park before a huge crowd of men, women and children. Two others were taken to a temple; their shoulders were slit and candles put in. They were forced to kneel at the altar when the candles were lit, and on the flame reaching the bare skin, were hacked to pieces. I called on the Commandant of the City Guards and pleaded for the other prisoners who were incessantly being tortured, making holes in shoulders, back and even head and inserting candles being common. I told him I considered the men were heroes and deserved care; they were under orders, and it was the men who sent them to fight deserved punishment. He merely laughed and said, "Very well, Kuan San, we all know your love of humanity and I will give orders there are to be no more tortures."

This success, alas, tempted the tough warrior Chao Yu-hsin to attack Chengtu. With his small force it was a fatal move. He had told me he considered one of his men equal to nine Szechuanese, but I had warned him to be careful the day did not come when they were one too many. His chief anxiety was shortage of ammunition. To draw Szechuan fire and make them not only waste ammunition but think he was well supplied, his men used to put fire-crackers into kerosene tins and set them off in different places making a sound like rapid rifle-fire. He had also found skilful tapping of wood to sound like the rat-tat-tat of a maxim

was very effective. Chao shelled the city and the Canadian Mission Hospital was twice hit, but I managed to get a message to him telling him the location of British premises and the gun was at once trained in a direction which would not affect our properties.

I will never understand what induced a really capable leader like Chao Yu-hsin to descend into the plain. He had only 4000 against at least 16,000 and he could never have captured the walled city. As it was, the Szechuanese rapidly recovered from the severe shaking they had received at the hands of the seven hundred naked heroes and on the morning of 19th September launched a very successful sortie. I watched the battle, first from the Canadian Mission Hospital and then from the city wall. It was like a sham fight at an Aldershot Tattoo, and the men were at such close quarters the doctors told me many of the wounded had powder-marks from the rifles of their enemies. The Yunnanese so vastly outnumbered were simply massacred, and every prisoner was massacred in cold blood, a fact admitted to me by the garrison Commander.

After this defeat my old friend, and I must name him thus although my relations with the Szechuan leaders were invariably close and, I may add, sincere, retreated to his headquarters at Luchou on the Yangtse intending to withdraw to the Province of Yunnan. Here he had resided for two years and was loved for his wise and just government. Fair treatment could always be had from him and the illegal levies so common in other towns on the river were practically unknown in his district. The stubborn old fighter met his death for the sake of the people amongst whom he had dwelt; the humble folk of Szechuan were never his enemies. When he was pursued to Luchou after the battle in the Chengtu plain he was urged by his colleagues to flee, but he declined to leave till every soldier was out of the city so that he personally might suppress any looting. When on his way to the city gate he found some of his men looting and stopped to check them. While doing so he was shot in the thigh by the pursuing troops. His faithful and devoted bodyguard hurried him out of the city, but he was surrounded in the graveyards beneath the city wall. In an endeavour to save him they covered the General with their own bodies, but this heroic devotion availed nothing;

they were shot to pieces. The dying General was brought into the city on a ladder and died immediately. A revolting photograph of the dead body on the ladder was sent to me for verification. I have not kept a copy. It was exposed to public view outside the official residence of the garrison Commander.

CHAPTER XVI

1921

AFTER the defeat of Chao Yu-hsin, the Yunnanese were all driven out of the province, and civil strife having broken out in Yunnan Province they finally left Szechuan alone, and Chengtu was mercifully at peace during my last two years there. But other more subtle and, to my mind so far as foreigners were concerned, more dangerous elements were soon at work, and the political situation giving no further cause for anxiety, seeds of disaffection were rapidly sown and took firm root in very fertile soil. It was during these last two years that I became keenly conscious of what might be called a growing National movement among the students in Chengtu, and I watched its steady growth with interest not unmingled with anxiety. I became conscious of definite restlessness among the students, and of a desire to take a more prominent part in the politics of the country. Labour too was uneasy and searching a means of making its voice heard. Secret guilds were formed, of which even servants in my employ were urged to become members, though they refused. The extra-provincial had been successfully driven out, now it was time to deal with the foreigner.

I reported my views to the proper quarters, but it was generally considered that I took too serious a view of the situation, and, generally speaking, the members of the various Missionary Societies were not inclined to believe that the students would ever turn on their foreign benefactors. The only person who fully believed me was General Pereira, who spent many weeks with me preparing for his search for the Giant Panda.

Although the movement among the students developed very rapidly in other parts of China at a later period, I think it was only in Chengtu where the combination between students and Labour was so definitely pronounced, and I saw signs in their earlier activities of what might happen if at any time there was a revolution of the people of China, and not merely a change in authority from moneyed class to moneyed class. I felt I knew where I was

with officials and gentry, and I understood the poorer classes, but this student problem was new to me. I was lucky to have a real friend in the Principal of the Middle School at the West China Union University, who did much to help me at this time and who saw me in secret on many occasions.

It must be remembered that the students were rapidly increasing their knowledge of world affairs, foreign history and foreign languages. The history of the Treaties extracted from China was real to them, and in all they read they fastened onto the brutal exactions of the foreigner, and ignored the lamentable conduct of their own officials which in so many cases was the basic reason of the friction which was never absent from our early dealings with the Chinese authorities. These boys possessed burning patriotism and undoubtedly pure love of country. There were not sufficient openings for them to display this zeal, and I found it natural for them when puzzling in their own minds the reasons for the sorrows of China they should look without and wholly ignore within. They lacked guidance, and their zeal, far from being kept in sane channels, was, for a period, fanned into the flame of active anti-foreign hostility. This was the cause of the regrettable anti-foreign attitude of students, so strongly emphasised in the bitter years 1925–7, when the floodgates of anger were loosed.

In Szechuan during 1921 Labour looked entirely to the students and not to the ruling authorities to represent them in political matters. Why indeed should they turn to men whose principal occupation was selfish wars, who press-ganged them and from whom they could secure no legal redress? So Labour organised on its own; and its organisations gave proof of their desire to co-operate with the students by requesting the Students' Guild to press the question of independence for Szechuan. Although this may not appear a national matter, it must be remembered that the love of the Szechuanese for their province is paramount and, though they may not confess it, what they desire for their own province they also long for for the rest of China. Once more it was first expel the extra-provincial, then expel the foreigner. The Chamber of Commerce supported the students' resolution to press for the independence of Szechuan. In blunt public statements issued by them they declared what all

so well knew in China — that military rule was impossible and that it had proved its worthlessness by the mere fact that at that time (namely 1921) there was no real settlement between North and South. They stated that foreign relations were in a hopeless state, the internal affairs of China utterly wretched and that Szechuan must fight for independence and cut adrift from the miserable policy pursued by the rest of China. I am only dealing with the province which I knew, but there can be no doubt that feelings of this nature existed elsewhere, and this passionate longing for dignified leadership in the Central Government was so genuine that it produced widespread bitterness and despair when month after month went past and these longings were not fulfilled.

Szechuan, as can be seen from the above, provided ample material for anarchy, the civil population loathing and hating the military but impotent to make themselves heard except by only very small murmurs. Few can deny the fact that so long as military rapacity exists as the ruling factor in the provinces very serious problems must be faced in the future and development on sane rulings is almost impossible of achievement. Only by suffering can China win through.

It was felt at that time almost a happy coincidence that students and soldiers did not agree. All that students knew was the power of discontented Labour well organised, but that was more useful to damage foreign interests by well-known methods such as a boycott rather than to secure what they so ardently desired, a position for their country among the Powers of the world.

In Szechuan the friction between students and soldiers more than once found vent in public demonstrations. For example, on one occasion some students playing football in the public park kicked their ball into a squadron of soldiers who were drilling there. Words were followed by blows and the soldiers finally cleared the park by force, onlookers being the chief sufferers. The students at once went to the headquarters of the Military Governor, demanded an interview and the immediate execution of some of the soldiers. They even waited till three o'clock in the morning, when they were driven home by heavy rain. The Governor was dining at the French Consulate when the trouble came to a head and did not return home that night. The next

day all the schools (and even some of the girls' schools) refused to work. But peace was restored, the usual compromise was arrived at and orders were issued that soldiers were forbidden to drill in the public park.

At this time the students also showed their dislike for the military by parading the streets and issuing pamphlets and making speeches in the tea-shops and at street corners protesting against all moneys going to the military for the sole purpose of training people to kill while the salaries of their teachers remained unpaid. They did all they could to annoy the troops. They were seen by a foreign resident going up to the soldiers and daring them, calling, "Come on! Strike! Strike! Do you venture to strike?" but marvellous restraint was exercised by the troops.

The Provincial Assembly always maintained a friendly attitude to the students, with the exception of their president who naturally wished to keep in with the military. This ended disastrously for the president; his premises were completely destroyed during the disturbances.

The students, having dealt satisfactorily with the military, turned their attention to the foreigner, and I obtained possession of a document describing the four best ways of killing foreigners. The first was by poison, the second arson, the third assassination and the fourth an electric pistol. The last method was supposed to produce death in four different ways, hiccoughing, vomiting, blood-perspiring and immediate death. The document was found in one of the many unions which had then been formed. However lacking in seriousness meetings of this kind may have been, it was a significant fact that representatives of the converts of nearly all the Protestant missions met to discuss what means they should take to completely dissociate themselves from the foreigner.

On all these subjects I was kept well informed by the chairman of the Labour self-governing Society and the head of the Servants' Guild, whose visits to me were kept strictly secret.

A cause for bitterness was the supposed failure of China to secure all her demands at the Washington Conference, and the agitation was fostered by rumours fabricated at the Middle School of the University and passed on as reports received direct from Washington. Large processions were organised and

slogans raised :— " If we do not at once rise we shall simply become slaves condemned to a prison and become second sons of Judea and Korea ". The largest procession took place on the 21st December 1921. The students paraded the streets scattering pamphlets, carrying flags bearing inscriptions which were calculated to rouse the people. The student harangues in the tea-shops were specially striking, or perhaps to the foreign mind poisonous. Students stood on tables weeping copiously, feverishly theatrical, declaring that China after an existence of five thousand years was now doomed by the Powers and her sons were to become slaves and beasts of burden. Thousands took part in these processions and some of the largest shops in the city hung out flags to show their sympathy with the movement. The propaganda did incalculable harm and the current topic of the tea-shops was " The brutality of the foreigner is indeed terrible ". To my mind, one of the saddest things in China always has been that however much you may get in touch with the poorer classes and become liked by them, nothing against the foreigner is incredible to these uneducated, gullible folk when presented to them by one of their own nationality. In agitations of this sort the agitators will stop at nothing. For example, the Middle School of the Union University boldly declared that " The Washington Conference had decided to hand over Manchuria and Mongolia (an area of several million square leagues) to the control of Japan, Tibet (a territory which produces gold) to Great Britain. Tibet is practically a part of Szechuan. If only all China arises to oppose this we may still have a little hope." Here we have that blind belief in China's unorganised man-power, a belief which caused untold suffering during those hideous years of hate. It breeds a form of conceit in dealing with grievances which no facts however patent and hard can shake : organised by real danger it may well become a potent force. The French School said, " The Chinese Executive and Financial Powers are to be handed over to the foreign Powers. The Eastern Provinces are to go to Japan. The Western Provinces such as Szechuan, Tibet, Yunnan and Kueichou go to Great Britain, the South and Central go to France, America and Russia. This is an out-and-out division of China."

The Agricultural College was still better : " Who would

have thought that when the Washington Conference started that heart and gall would have been so utterly poisonous and that Powers who deserve to be utterly exterminated root and branch should avail themselves of this opportunity to discuss the division of our territory, the control of our finances".

I combated these statements by furnishing the local authorities with telegrams on the subject of the Conference and was able to secure in the local press a statement commenting favourably on the attitude of Great Britain and reporting that the Chinese delegates were following her lead and acting in co-operation with her. But the mischief had been done and these feelings stirred in Szechuan found their echo amongst student bodies in other parts of China.

As regards Szechuan, a General came forward who, seeing the value of using troops to foster anti-foreign feeling, strove to bind together the two parties. This was Yang Sen, who is chiefly known for the Wanhsien incident.

This incident was in every way to be regretted. The captain of a British merchant steamer was accused of being the cause of drowning many soldiers at Yün-yang by not slowing down sufficiently to reduce the wash from his steamer caused by the rapid current which swirls opposite that city and thus swamping their sampan. On his arrival at Wanhsien, Yang Sen, who commanded the local garrison, placed the steamer under an armed guard and made preposterous demands for compensation. He also placed a guard on another British steamer lying in the river. All efforts at a settlement failed and a naval expedition was fitted out to obtain the forcible release of the two steamers. The Chinese resisted and bitter fighting took place at close quarters during which Commander Darley, R.N., lost his life. The gunboat in port opened fire on the Governor's Yamen with its 6-inch guns. The damage done was exaggerated beyond all reason, but the incident took many years to settle. Yang Sen was a bumptious youngster who boasted of having very progressive ideas. I only knew him as a subordinate who was a traitor to his old chief, Chao Yu-hsin, who carefully guarded Yang's family throughout the conflict between himself and Chengtu. This man turned the Student Movement from being anti-their-own-authorities to being anti-foreign, claiming his object was to save

China from the rapacity of the foreigner.

This incident occurred after I left Chengtu, and when student agitations were at fever pitch throughout China, but further comment on the subject will be dealt with in my records of events in Amoy. As long as I was in Chengtu the leaders of the Unions and even promoters of movements kept their word to me that they would not stir up active trouble against the foreigner so long as I remained in Chengtu.

It is pleasant to record that Chengtu never suffered as badly as other parts of China when the anti-British outburst finally occurred in 1925, and I found a very happy community of interest when I paid the city a farewell visit in June 1936.

CHAPTER XVII

1922

THIS completes my official connection with Szechuan, but while I lived in Chengtu I learnt many things which endeared these people to me, and I was fully confirmed in the opinion I had formed in Changsha that there was, as regards the humble classes, a genuine response to ordinary considerate treatment, and that an intelligent interest in the things which interested them, their homes, the purchase of a new gown, the cost of living, awoke feelings of affection which added immeasurably to the happiness of my life in China. As regards the officials, I never found a personal appeal to fail. It may have been wrong not to insist on Treaty rights as Treaty rights, but I could never rid myself of a deep conviction that sympathetic understanding in all cases was necessary when measuring the reasonableness or otherwise of the attitude of obstruction they so often adopted. I strove to win a mutually sympathetic understanding, but this was not easy, though they were ever ready to concede that definite instructions from the Legation must be carried out.

I have hinted that I knew a certain amount concerning the famous Elder Brothers Society (Ko Lao Hui), perhaps the greatest Secret Society in China. I was so closely in touch with them that I was invited to a feast of "Helmsmen" in a town near Chengtu, preparatory to closer connection, but I stated frankly that being a foreigner I did not wish to "cross the threshold". I gleaned much fuller information of this Society from the Rev. J. H. Hutson of the China Inland Mission, whose knowledge of their activities was almost a source of danger to himself.

The Ko Lao Hui originated in Hunan Province and came into prominence in Szechuan in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was divided into eight lodges, each designated by a Chinese character. There were different forms of salutations such as placing the hand on the shoulder, elbow, forearm or wrist. When in Hankow at an official dinner I placed my hand on the wrist of my host during a conversation, he at once recog-

nised the sign and sent his private secretary to me next day to inform me that so far as he was concerned I was not a foreign official but an Elder Brother. His assistance to me was valuable and he settled cases for me personally which had given an infinity of trouble to the Consular Body at Hankow, but I never made indiscriminate use of my knowledge.

The Society had a curious connection with the sea in the terms they used. Their meeting-places were known as "the Anchorage". Then there were the "Helmsmen" and under them Red Flags and Black Flags, who in turn controlled managers. Meetings were either held in temples or some small village, and nearly always during a festival, for greater security and to deceive the officials. A meeting was called "to open the hall". The oath at these meetings may be translated: "We who gather together this night are neither heads nor eyes. If there are those who act as either heads or eyes (*i.e.* have come to spy) may they die as incense, may they perish as a fowl." Incense is then burnt, and a chicken is slain. The blood is drained into a bowl and all present drink it. Discipline is rigid. A guilty member who is forgiven may expiate his crime by "rolling on the nailed board" or "rushing against the knife". In the latter case he presses a dagger in his thigh till the blood flows freely, and in the former rolls naked on the points of nails till his body is covered with blood. Those to whom repentance is not allowed are killed outright.

I think a great deal of the marked consideration shown me by soldiers and others was probably due to the knowledge I had of this Society, for although I was always careful how I spoke about matters of this kind, my servants must have known that I had an inkling of how to keep on the right side of their people, and naturally my success in the case of the Swedish professor gave them intense pleasure. This story I may now tell. A great friend of mine, Hamilton of the Church Missionary Society, had a coolie whom I had every reason to believe was a Helmsman, for through him came the invitation to the feast at Hsin-tu, some fourteen miles out of Chengtu. On one occasion he retrieved seven cows stolen by brigands when on their way to the Canadian Mission in Chengtu. But his best achievement was done on behalf of a Swedish professor. He was known as "The Youngster",

which also happened to be a grade in the Secret Society. The professor had left Yachou unescorted, having been told an escort was useless. I could never persuade some missionaries that the men they scoffed at as the umbrella brigade were in fact the best. Apart from anything else, they had not rifles to capture and did not invite attack, but in addition these escorts provided by the magistrate were nearly always Secret Society men and when giving them twenty cents a day you were in fact paying the Society. Well, the professor left Yachou unescorted and one day out was completely looted. He came to Chengtu and, having no Consular representative, asked if I would help him. I readily agreed to do so. I wrote to the Governor, giving details of the place where and the time when the brigands attacked and asked him to try to recover the goods stolen. At the same time I got "The Youngster" and, giving him all details, told him that although I knew it was not in his area I hoped he would help. He was away ten days and came back with everything. I thereupon wrote to the Governor and said with reference to my letter I had recovered everything. He at once called and asked how I had done it. I said, "You are a Military Governor, and I am a Consul General. A Military Governor had his methods, a Consul General his, I do not venture to say," and no further questions were asked.

The Chinese authorities never acquiesced in foreigners residing in Chengtu for the purposes of trade, though this was done. Neither would they recognise the right of the foreign Powers to maintain Consular establishments in the city. This never affected either the French Consul or myself; we were always treated with respect and accorded the courtesies due to our rank, but the local authorities were not so punctilious in their dealings with my Japanese colleagues, who frequently were submitted to trifling annoyances such as being badly placed at table. In a quiet friendly way I used to try and check these pin-pricks and was often successful.

Chengtu was outstanding for its hospitality and we had many merry gatherings. The Consulate General was the scene of many festive occasions. It was a delightful Chinese residence and lent itself well to functions of this nature. On entering the huge gates with the Guardian Gods richly painted on each panel there was a

large courtyard in which visitors' chairs were deposited. On the right hand was a smaller courtyard in which the chair coolies and two escort men lived, and a similar courtyard on the left hand for the other members of my native staff. After passing through a large covered archway supported by huge black pillars you entered another courtyard, through which a stone path led to the main buildings. On each side of the stone path was a grass plot. On the right hand of this courtyard was the Chinese writer's room and a lumber room, and on the left the public offices. During the summer the whole of this courtyard, about sixty feet square, was covered over by a huge erection of bamboo poles and straw matting, which could be opened or closed as desired. The entrance-hall was a beautiful lofty square space with black lacquer beams and the plaster squares of the wall plaster scarlet lacquer. A lovely beam with richly painted dragons in gold on a background of scarlet, blue and green formed the main support for the roof. On the right of the entrance-hall was the dining-room, dark green and black lacquer pillars and beams, and on the left a large drawing-room in which cream took the place of the dark green. My private study lay beyond the drawing-room.

Passing through the entrance-hall you entered a peaceful courtyard onto which the four bedrooms opened ; on the right and left and in front was a long stone-floored room which I used as a study in the summer. Beyond this lay the garden. Its most valued possessions were a walnut tree and a soap tree. The latter produced huge soap-pods every other year in the shape of large pea-pods, and the pods could be used for washing without preparation. I allowed my native staff to take the whole crop. Since the closing of the Consulate General in Chengtu this residence has passed into Chinese hands. I visited it in 1936 and spent two hours with the new owner, who thanked me for the beautiful condition of the house, but it was already in sad disrepair and the garden which I loved was ruined.

As Chinese officials when calling always bring a fairly large retinue with them, I decided to fit up a room in the chair coolies' courtyard as a guest-room, and gave them a small allowance to entertain the chair coolies and military escorts of my guests. It was a huge success and gave my servants much " face ".

As the quarters were all bungalow type I built a look-out on the roof of my study, which commanded a wide view of the city. The most wonderful sight from this spot was a view of the snow mountains of Tibet, the nearest range 130 miles away. I only twice saw this perfectly. Conditions had to be ideal, that is, a perfect dawn after a deluge of rain most of the night. It was July when I saw the mountains, range after range spreading across the western horizon and looking within a day's hard march. It is curious but few of my Chinese friends had ever witnessed this sight until I told them of it.

The Consulate General, as I have said, witnessed many happy functions. Gatherings of the Canadian School on Empire Day, official receptions on the King's Birthday and many repasts. Two occasions were outstanding. On the completion of my fifth year in Chengtu the local authorities borrowed the Consulate General and converted the large inner courtyard into a theatre. The best players from all over the city acted in relays and the entertainment lasted from 3 P.M. till 11 P.M. Never have I been made to feel more keenly how deep the friendship of my Chinese official friends was. This kindness was repeated on the eve of my departure when every leading General whether of the Governor's party or otherwise was present. Many members of the foreign community were also invited. At the end of the entertainment my hosts still insisted on treating me as a guest though I was in my own home. They refused to permit me to show them the courtesy of seeing them off the premises, and with great good-humour six Generals, accompanied by the French Consul and the two French doctors attached to the Consulate, finally escorted me to my bedroom.

My neighbours, shopkeepers, chair coolies and other scallywags knowing I was ever willing to join in their fun, always paid me a visit at Chinese New Year and on other festivals. The most fascinating was what they called "playing the dragon". The "dragon", about thirty feet long, was carried by some twenty men on bamboo poles. They were all stripped to the waist however cold the night and performed marvels, running round, twisting and turning but never getting entangled. During the contortions and twistings others fired golden rain fireworks point-blank at the naked bodies of the bearers, who saved them-

selves from burns solely by body movements. My house coolie was an expert " dragon " carrier.

The water dragon who was brought forth in times of drought was also a source of great fun, the performers being drenched with water from buckets and hoses.

But the most beautiful and the weirdest of all sights was the procession of the City God. He resided in a temple near to the Consulate General, and although it was unwise for foreigners to be in the streets during his passage, a friendly shopkeeper concealed me and gave me an excellent view. The car of the god was drawn by thirty-two men in spotless new white clothes. Many of those in the procession were rendering thanks for lives of parents saved in answer to prayer, or were making atonement for misdeeds ; the latter, many of good family, usually had their faces painted to avoid recognition. For example, I saw a man who had falsified accounts carrying an enormous abacus of huge weight on his shoulders. Others carried chains and the cangue. As the procession lasted eight hours this was no light penance. Then there was a fine lad of eighteen, naked except for a pair of black shorts, who had two oil lamps pinned in his breasts by an " S "-shaped hook, one in the forehead and two on the shoulder-blades. The lamps had gone out and he came to the shop I was in to have them refilled. He had remarkably large deep-brown eyes, and a fixed gaze that haunted me for many months. I was told that he had probably spent the whole night in the temple and fallen into a trance when the hooks could be inserted in the flesh without draining blood. Some had their arms stretched in front of them slightly bent at the elbow, and a bridge with figures on it fastened by sharp points in the muscles of the upper arms and the flesh of the forearm. Many had swords pressed into their shoulder-blades and bodies red with streaming blood, unless indeed merely pig's blood had been smeared on. Others had swords passing right through the abdomen front to back ; no-one could ever tell me if this was genuine or a clever fake. Beautifully dressed children lent colour to this wonderful scene. Merchants and gentry in gorgeous silks carried incense, silver and precious metals in the procession, and many others combined to make a huge throng with hundreds of people carrying incense and following the great City God.

In his immediate *entourage* were men impersonating the eight celestials and others who decided the fates in Hades ; men, too, dressed as demons preceded his chair. Feelings are much roused during this procession and I was lucky to have such a splendid view of it secreted in my friend's shop. While struck by the barbaric beauty of the whole scene, I think I was chiefly stirred by thoughts of the mental and physical pain which had been and was being endured to placate this exacting deity, for every participant in the ceremony was in deadly earnest. I pictured to myself the heart-searchings which many must have gone through before they felt compelled to devise something sufficiently painful and even degrading enough to placate a Great Unknown Force, capable of good or evil, in whose power they believed implicitly, for whose mercy they hoped and for whose pardon they implored. I knew though there were many who were endeavouring to obtain forgiveness for misdeeds in order to escape the dreaded punishments of Hades, there were those who were deliberately suffering pain to secure the well-being or restoration to health of those to whom they owed filial devotion.

In March 1922 I spent three weeks in the Erh Lang Miao, a beautiful temple outside the West Gate of the little city of Kuanhsien. I had been suffering from acute headache and was generally run-down and the doctor advised complete rest. I could not have found a more perfect spot. I left the Consulate General in charge of the Vice-Consul and left without telling anyone of my movements, with the exception of my French colleague. The Military Governor was not long in finding out.

Kuanhsien, or perhaps more correctly Kuan Hsien, which may be translated as " Irrigation City ", is situated about forty miles north-west of Chengtu in the corner of the Chengtu plain where the mountains begin ; in fact, the eastern part of the city wall is in the plain and the western on a knoll which forms the beginning of the mountain ranges. Though very small with only 7000 inhabitants, it was an important place as being the key to the great west and north roads. Here Tibetans could be met with and it was a large centre for pilgrims. But it owes its fame to being the head of the famous irrigation system which is responsible for the watering of the huge Chengtu plain and for the prosperity of its teeming millions. By it many rivers and

streams are fed and thereby the people find the cheapest form of transport.

The works date from about 200 B.C. and are commonly attributed to a man named Li Ping, who was assisted in various ways by his son Li Erh-lang. Chinese themselves are not always clear about the respective merits of these two, and Erh-lang was exalted to Lord of the Rivers, but the Emperor Yung Cheng (1723–36) refused to elevate Li Erh-lang among the national deities and maintained that Li Ping was the originator and his son simply assisted him to finish the work. This decision was subsequently confirmed about 1854, and in 1868 a temple was built in Li Ping's honour and his spirit was brought from the Erh-lang Miao and settled in the chief seat of a temple named Lao Wang Miao.[1] Thus in the Lao Wang Miao (now called Fu Lung Kuan, the Crouching Dragon Temple) the son has a back court of the temple, while his father still takes the back place in the Erh-lang Miao, now alas no more, having been completely destroyed by fire.

The temple was lovely ; the grounds were very extensive and it was beautifully situated on the side of a hill overlooking the river on one side and the mountains beyond, and, from the rooms allotted to me, having a wide view beyond the city of part of the Chengtu plain which was then a carpet of the most beautiful yellow, as the rape was in full bloom. I was well received by the Abbot and was extremely comfortable. In addition the Military Governor, on learning where I had gone and the reason for my holiday, had caused proclamations to be posted at all the main entrances stating that, as I was to have complete rest, soldiers were forbidden to visit the temple so long as I stayed there. I was deeply grateful for this considerate action. It was a favour I never would have dreamt of asking, and it evinced a very genuine friendship and courtesy which added to the perfection of the holiday. The Abbot was also grateful as soldiers were not always very welcome guests in a temple.

I arrived at a good time to make a careful study of these works, in their simplicity, ingenuity and strength surely the most remarkable work in existence. The temple was situated very nearly opposite the most important section of the works, where the river is divided into the Outer River and the Inner River.

The Outer River lower down subdivides into three main streams and many branches, and so does the Inner River, which is made to pass through an artificial gorge; part of these waters pass Chengtu. The water of the Inner River is regulated by the gorge and overflow. At very high water the swirling torrent cannot pass the gorge and water is hurled back in a huge whirlpool into the Outer River. All along the banks of the rivers and streams fed from this source are dams and weirs leading into a multitude of small canals and smaller channels for the rice and for the water supply of towns and hamlets in the huge populous Chengtu plain, making the total extent of its seventy square miles one huge well-watered garden.

Early in each December the annual cleansing and repairing operations are begun and are continued with unremitting zeal till the end of March. The Outer River is first dealt with and then come the more important works on the Inner River. The Inner supply of the Outer River is cut off from the Inner River by means of large timber tripods, which are parked and ballasted with baskets filled with stones forming a very strong embankment. The Inner River is thus dried off except for a mere trickle. The banks are made of long bamboo baskets, thirty feet by two feet, packed with cobblestones laid out side by side and piled on each other to the requisite height. Several thousands are used every year. Then when all is ready to release the waters of the Outer River into the channel of the Inner River, the Taoyin, one of the leading civil authorities, comes from Chengtu for the ceremony.

On this occasion the Taoyin, whom I had got to know very well during the fighting in Chengtu and on my festive occasions, asked me to join him in the ceremonies, and I was present during the whole of the preparations for the opening of the dyke, including his personal intercessions in the inner recesses of the temple. It was a rare privilege and I appreciated his kindly courtesy. The prayers and offering of incense began before dawn, and was so timed that the Taoyin arrived at the river-bank just before sunrise. Here there was an altar, candles and incense. As the sun rose the signal was given and coolies, pulling long trackers' ropes attached to the tripods, strained and strained till about six of the eighteen tripods fell with a crash. The rush of

water soon demolished the other twelve as the terrific torrent swirled from the Outer into the Inner River. People took the most extraordinary risks in endeavouring to secure the tripod beams, but cases of drowning were rare and it was considered unlucky if the river claimed life on this occasion. The temple dog, however, was caught in the swirling waters, but by a magnificent effort he struggled to safety, to the huge delight of the onlookers. This was considered a very happy omen. Immediately the waters burst through the dyke the Taoyin got into his sedan-chair and was carried with all speed to Chengtu, relays of chair coolies waiting at several places to enable him to make his destination in the quickest possible time, for he had to reach the city before the first waters got there. To fail to do so would cost him his post. As a matter of fact I gathered there was no need whatever for this excessive speed, as it was often three or four days before the water flowed into Chengtu ; nor was this surprising, seeing the thousands of channels into which it was diverted during its progress across the Chengtu plain.

As I gazed and gazed at this stupendous work of man I marvelled at the patience and skill of the race who year after year built up a new river-bed, putting stones into thousands of wicker baskets of great size, laying them in place for the sake of the millions who would benefit from their stupendous labours.

Near this spot is an ancient rope bridge which is kept in good repair, as by it all traffic starts for the great west road. It is 900 feet long, 25 feet high and 10 feet wide and has seven spans. It is supported at both ends and in the centre by solid masonry, and at other points by piles driven deeply into the river-bed. The ropes are twenty in number, ten on the bottom and five on each side ; the side ropes pass through uprights which keep them in place. They are very thick and strong. At each end of the bridge the ends of the ropes pass through holes in strong upright pulleys built in stonework. A lever is used to twist these pulleys and tighten the ropes. Flooring boards of the bridge are laid crosswise and fastened down by smaller bamboo ropes. The bridge swings considerably, and as I can never face a height I never managed to cross it, much to the amusement of my servants. Animals frequently refuse to cross the bridge and have to be blindfolded and carried over slung on poles.

The three weeks spent in Erh-lang Miao were a sheer delight. I had a few selected members of my native staff with me, and as they were just a lot of happy carefree overgrown children our wanderings in the beautiful countryside were thoroughly enjoyable. Only one incident marred the pleasure of the visit. I had been into the city to purchase some local curiosities and in passing through the market-place saw a poor demented being chained to a pole being baited by a crowd, who took care to keep out of his reach. He was frenzied with passion, and straining to get at his laughing tormentors. I went to a near-by temple and told the priest I was horrified at what I had seen and begged him to persuade the magistrate to have the poor demented creature moved to some spot where he could not be seen by others. He was so impressed by my obvious distress over this case that he actually had the man removed to his own temple.

It is this streak of cruelty which blackens China's character in the eyes of so many. Cases in Szechuan were all too common and brigands were particularly merciless. In these parts rich folk were known among brigands as " fat pigs ". I was told of one who was taken and refused to divulge where his treasure lay hid. He had his tongue nailed to a table and was left to starve. A wretched woman had the legs of her trousers fastened below the knees and snakes put in. These were irritated by being constantly flicked with bamboos to make them bite her.

Chengtu was never free from horrors of this kind. A man who styled himself Emperor of Mengkung had raised an insignificant rebellion among the hill tribes. He was caught and brought to Chengtu. Here he was paraded through the city in a chair and taken to the East Parade Ground, where he was executed. Hundreds watched the scene. The executioner filled a bowl with the blood which poured from the trunk and drank it. Women and children among the spectators bought cakes which they dipped in his blood and ate. Thus, I was told, could they gain some of his warlike courage.

The Chinese have a keen sense of humour and love a joke. At a lunch-party I had given to a few of my personal friends among the gentry one of them made a remark which the whole party judged gratuitously rude. Although it was decided he might be forgiven on the ground he had drunk a little more than

was perhaps good for him, he was told he must pay a penalty for his fault. He was therefore solemnly condemned to invite us all to a lunch-party at the beautiful temple Wu Hou Ssu, outside the South Gate of the city. With proper ceremony he was to purchase a fish and to release it into the sacred pond in which the fish and tortoises, offered as votive offerings or in expiation of wrongs committed, were kept. This was deemed fitting, as his fault being due to an excess of wine would be expiated by the fish consuming unlimited quantities of water.

We had the party and the fish was solemnly released. We spent a happy, peaceful afternoon in this lovely spot discussing Chinese calligraphy and listening to one of our party reciting extracts from plays he was writing. Wu Hou Ssu is a beautiful temple full of memories of Liu Pei and his famous Counsellor Chu K'o-liang, heroes of the wars of the Three Kingdoms (A.D. 220–60). Temples in China have a rare beauty of their own, with their lovely trees, quiet pools, pavilions and galleries. To me they always spoke of tranquillity and peace.

I learnt to the full in Chengtu how much the Chinese delight in giving pleasure, that is, when they really know you and are convinced of the sincerity of your love for China. Many affirm that no Chinese ever does any kind act, or gives any gift without expecting a return. This I can positively deny, as I can recall many many kindnesses received without any question of a return. When I was leaving Chengtu, the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, knowing the family crest was an owl, had a scroll embroidered for me with an owl in a maple tree as a farewell present. Complimentary scrolls are frequently exchanged between Chinese friends and the best calligrapher in Chengtu, and one of the three best in all China penned two scrolls for me. Nor were the gifts from my native staff less sincere. It was strange that in two of the most anti-foreign provinces in China, Hunan and Szechuan, I won such devoted affection from my native staff. In Chengtu after three years I was known as "Old Father" inside the compound of the Consulate General, and this term is now freely used by the many old servants, golf caddies and others from whom I get letters in simple Chinese. I never had a better staff than in Chengtu, and their loyalty and devotion was much commented on by many foreign friends. On leaving, my head

chair-bearer wished to give me a personal souvenir which I would always have near me. He gave me ten plain brass ash-trays in Chengtu brass and had his name inscribed on two of them. I saw him again fourteen years afterwards and found he had carefully put away a little suit of clothes I had given him in the old days for his baby son, and had carefully preserved a target, bow and arrows which I often used in the garden. Snapshots I had taken while I was Consul General covered his walls. As he had no idea I would ever revisit Chengtu, I could not doubt the sincerity of his affection and I am convinced, in spite of anything anyone may say, that affection is a trait of the Chinese character which few have taken the slightest trouble to evoke, except in missionary circles.

My special orderly gave me a small silver box with a lion on it which he asked me always to carry in my pocket as a memento of him: this I have done. He also presented me with the ceremonial scarf he wore on his wedding day. The wedding took place in the Consulate General. I only once when in Chengtu had to punish a servant. One of my chair-bearers was too intoxicated to carry my chair, which meant a walk of nearly two miles in pumps on stone paving. I was really angry. I told him I did not mind his being intoxicated so long as it did not interfere with his duties, and my having to walk home had caused loss of face to them all in the presence of the French Consul and his men, consequently there were no two ways about it, it was either a beating or the sack. He asked to be beaten, so I told him to take down his pants, lie across the office table and not utter a sound. He had five strokes with a cane and took them well. Next morning he came very early to my bedroom and thanked me for my fair treatment.

If I appear to over-emphasise this loyalty, or to refer to it too often, I am sorry. But I do so deliberately, for I am convinced that whenever a ruler arises in China who wins the love of the people he will indeed be able to claim he rules the greatest Power in the world — unconquerable China.

The day I left I was escorted outside the city for a day's stage by the staff, and given an official farewell in a temple by the leading authorities. The last act the Military Governor did for me was to seal all outstanding deeds covering Mission properties.

The Civil Governor, a new-comer, had refused to assent to my demand as he wished for higher fees than the Legation considered fitting. I explained the position to the Military Governor and told him I could not attend a large official feast unless this matter was settled. On the morning of the feast he sent one of his staff to the Civil Governor, took his seals and stamped the deeds and brought them to me. I left Chengtu with a clean sheet.

CHAPTER XVIII

1922–1925

I FELT what had been done in Chengtu could be done in other places. That beneath the surface there were feelings which few had worried to consider in official relations with the authorities, and that by entering whole-heartedly into their pleasures as well as really striving to comprehend their difficulties I was able to produce a response which, apart from vastly adding to the happiness of my life in China, proved of real benefit to the foreign communities whose best interests were my special care.

Before I left Chengtu I was offered the post of Chinese Secretary in the Legation. I was overjoyed, as it was the post of all others I longed for. I was never to take up the appointment. Shortly before leaving for Peking, Sir Beilby Alston, who had given me the appointment, was transferred and on my arrival at the capital I was informed that his successor had not confirmed his decision. I only stayed in Peking a few weeks as I had pleurisy and pneumonia due to a broken rib which had scratched the lung. I went home on leave. The decision of the new Minister not to confirm my appointment was never satisfactorily explained, but though it caused me the keenest disappointment at the time, on looking back I am thankful Fate guided me into other channels, for liberty of action in my own sphere was undoubtedly dearer to me than being attached to a staff however brilliant its members might be.

It was finally decided I was to go to Amoy, where I arrived with my wife and daughter in November 1923. By losing the appointment as Chinese Secretary I lost promotion to Consul General and it was four years and a half before I got this step up.

The Consulate at Amoy was beautifully situated on a high bluff rising from the sandy bays of the outer harbour. The view extended for miles, beyond the huge outer harbour to the open sea with Chapel Island, some twenty-two miles away, in the distance. This natural harbour with the wooded hills on either shore was one of the finest typhoon anchorages on the coast, and

could accommodate ships of all sizes and in great numbers. On one side of the bluff on which the Consulate stood was a lovely wood thick with firs and presenting a perfect specimen of the glorious Flame of the Forest. Poinsettias abounded, bougainvillaea flourished in rich profusion. The house was bungalow style with wide verandahs on the south and west sides. Originally it possessed an upper story, but this had been damaged in a typhoon and was never rebuilt. The floors were made of glazed tiles in the principal rooms, and so far as I now remember were concrete in the bedrooms. The Consulate had its own bathing beach and the bathing was excellent.

The Consulate was on the Island of Kulangsu, which, like Shanghai, was an International Settlement. The island was rather less than two miles in length and about half a mile wide. It lay across the inner harbour opposite the city of Amoy, one of the dirtiest cities in China. Here was the small British Concession, one of the first to be opened, consisting of a block of properties owned by various firms. The affairs of Kulangsu were controlled by a Council and the Consular Body. There was a small police force composed of Sikhs and Chinese, many of the latter drawn from the disbanded Wei-hai-wei Regiment. The Captain Superintendent of Police and his assistant were both British. The international character of the Settlement made problems very difficult to handle, and there was less harmony in Amoy than in any other port in which I ever served. With very rare exceptions, I cannot state that I was very loyally served by the British community, but the British subjects of Chinese descent, of whom there was a large and wealthy community, were splendidly loyal. It was only after I left Amoy that I learnt with satisfaction I was truly missed.

When I arrived I found Amoy itself under the control of a free-lance, General Tsang Chih-p'ing, while on the Island of Kulangsu, that is, in the International Settlement, relations were maintained with officials recognising the Central Government at Peking. I further found that General Tsang was ignored by all foreign officials, who seemed to see in him more of the outlaw rebel than a man with serious convictions. It was not long before I decided I could not share this view, as it was well known at the time that Peking politics were, to say the least of it, queer, and I

felt that however wrong his independent attitude might appear, there was justification for it till the political atmosphere cleared. Moreover I was anxious to get in touch with him as the *de facto* ruler in Amoy, for actually at that time I composed a list of sixty-nine various taxes levied by him, and trade was suffering in consequence. I accordingly called and was very well received. He sent his own chair and a picked escort to meet me at the water-front and to escort me through the city. From that day I maintained excellent relations with him, and in spite of keen opposition from the Tax Bureau was able to persuade him to remit every single tax which affected British trade.

His chief difficulty at the end of 1923 and early in 1924 was controlling the many Formosan residents in Amoy who, as Japanese subjects, were inclined to defy the local authorities. These Formosans were the worst characters in Amoy, owned most of the lowest haunts and were usually armed. The Japanese Consul himself confessed to me how many bad characters the Formosan community contained, but still upheld the Treaty right of refusal to permit search in their premises by Chinese police except when accompanied by Japanese police. General Tsang, ignoring all Treaty rights, dealt firmly with the worst offenders, and defied the Japanese authorities. The latter threatened force, but though they did show a display of naval force and threatened to land men, the ships were withdrawn at the request of the Japanese residents, who did not wish to see their trade ruined for the sake of utterly worthless characters. The Chinese were with Tsang Chih-p'ing to a man over his firm stand and indulged in the wild talk which assisted in bringing such drastic retribution on their heads in 1937. They were encouraged in their ebullitions by General Tsang who said he was ready for war if Japan landed a single soldier, rightly surmising that war would bind China as a whole, and not far wrong in deeming China with her millions, if properly organised, unconquerable. The Japanese, however, were very restrained and the Consul, on the departure of his ships, merely remarked to me it did not matter as General Tsang would not last another four months. But Japan did not forget.

He was correct. Less than four months afterwards I was dining with the American Consul when I received a personal

letter from General Tsang telling me the forts would start bombarding the mainland at six o'clock next morning, and to warn British subjects not to be alarmed as the Island of Kulangsu was not in the range of fire. I took the letter seriously, though my colleagues were inclined to pooh-pooh it and said surely I had been in China long enough not to be taken in and believe a man like Tsang. I knew him better than they did. The forts opened fire punctually at 6 A.M. and General Tsang started on a campaign which in three weeks ended in defeat. He executed a wonderful retreat through the interior to the Province of Chêkiang, where he was made welcome by the Military Governor. The remnants of the beaten troops, who made a weak attempt to hold Amoy and were shelled at point-blank range by the flagship of the Chinese Navy, were treated with great brutality. Large numbers were herded into lighters and covered with boards which were nailed down. When the boards were finally removed many had died from suffocation.

I had advised the commander of the troops not to resist the Navy, but he was young and ambitious and felt the bid for power was worth making. I am glad to say I was able to smuggle him away to safety in one of our emigrant ships.

Amoy then came under the control of the Navy and was placed in charge of Captain, now Admiral, K. K. Lin. This officer was present at the battle of Jutland and was awarded a C.M.G. on the completion of his service in England. I formed with him one of the closest of the many friendships I made in China, and with his frank assistance was able to steer safely through one of the worst situations I was ever called upon to face.

On 30th May there occurred in Shanghai what was to become widely known as the Shanghai Incident. There had been student demonstrations in the International Settlement at Shanghai arising out of the death of a labourer in a Japanese mill; these ended in a clash with the police during which nine students were shot. Photos were taken of the dead bodies and copies sent all over the country urging students to rise. Shanghai was persistently and deliberately referred to as a British Concession, though this was entirely wrong, as in 1869 Her Majesty's Government had consistently refused to listen to any inducement,

whether from officials or merchants, to convert Shanghai into a British Concession. The whole blame for the incident was consequently placed on Great Britain although in the Settlement the Chairman of the Council was an American and the Senior Consul an Italian. Up to that date nothing had ever occurred which so united public opinion in China. Everywhere the students rose, old friendships were forgotten, poisonous half-truths were widely disseminated and the agitation against Great Britain was carefully fanned. We stood alone, for many in the interior not of our nationality were only too ready to let us bear the full brunt of student wrath, and in Amoy at the height of one anti-British demonstration a foreigner outside the Consulate was heard thanking the Almighty we were at last getting what we deserved. Through all these troubles my Chinese friends of every class stuck to me, but there were anxious moments. Amoy was a large educational centre and I knew we could not escape, nor was it long after the Shanghai Incident when the students of that place sent a deputation to Amoy with the deliberate intent of creating trouble, declaring they would leave their bones there. I was warned by friends among the Chinese of the exact hour when the demonstration in the British Concession in Amoy would take place. As the agitation was solely anti-British there was at that time no question of any demonstration in the International Settlement and some of my foreign friends who ought to have known better adopted the pose of amused spectators.

I was now faced with the problem whether I should ask for naval protection. The British community strongly urged this step, but I decided not to. I argued that if a cruiser came it would inflame the already sufficiently wrought-up feelings of students and disaffected characters ; that it would assuredly entail having to land men ; otherwise why ask for protection, that if men were landed they would almost certainly be used and blood would be shed. I determined, therefore, to take what seemed to the large majority of British residents a very serious risk, namely, to rely on the Chinese authorities solely and absolutely for protection. It seemed to me that were I to say " I rely on you but at the same time I am getting a cruiser " I could only expect a half-hearted response, but I felt full and complete reliance would win a genuine response, and it did. I told Captain Lin I was relying on him

absolutely for protection and he accepted full responsibility. I further told him the police would be kept indoors, and I asked the members of British firms whose offices were in the Concession not to appear in the streets. I also telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief that though demonstrations would take place, the local authorities had guaranteed protection and I was satisfied they would keep their word.

I crossed the harbour early on the morning of 6th June 1925, about an hour before the time I had been told the demonstration was to take place. After a chat with a Colonel Lin, who was in charge of the troops, I went to the offices of Messrs. Butterfield and Swire. It was not long before the procession came. It was headed by young fellows in firemen's helmets, short-sleeved dark shirts, shorts, black stockings and black shoes. They carried red-and-white pennons on lances and were picturesque enough if one's mind had not been fixed on matters weightier than a pleasing spectacle. The procession proper was composed of scholars, boys and girls, down to tiny mites of very young age. They were accompanied by riff-raff out for mischief. Headed by Shanghai agitators they yelled slogans: "Annihilate the Imperialists", "Abolish Consuls", "Give us back the Concessions", "Britons have slain our compatriots in Shanghai", "Remember China's shame". These slogans were also written on flags which had been smeared in blood in many cases and with further slogans calling on their compatriots to avenge the martyrs of Shanghai. I can remember feeling intense sorrow at watching children passing, shouting hatred and realising an age was being inaugurated with revenge and hatred as guiding principles. We, suffering alone, sought the good in this blind burning patriotism and two years later this fact was realised, especially by one of China's great men whose photograph is always beside me, so gradually and steadily better feelings prevailed. All the schools were represented in the procession, and as I have said even girls' schools and tiny children. The passionate hatred which the leaders strove to rouse in even the smallest hearts affected me more than any ideas of patriotism which underlay the movement. I loathed the thought of passions being roused against us when I knew we were bearing the blame alone for an incident which had occurred in an International Settlement, and I determined to

do all in my power to keep the movement in saner channels so far as Amoy was concerned.

On entering the Concession the Shanghai agitators had hoped for a barricade, resistance, some bloodshed. They found none of this, only a few Chinese police and soldiers who very quietly and with infinite tact formed on each side of the demonstration. Leaping in the air, foaming at the mouth, in a frenzy trying to work up something, they only succeeded in creating mirth in the hearts of some coolies to whom this cheap show was a huge delight. British watching from their windows were cursed and derided, but all showed admirable restraint. It was only when one of the agitators who was madly rushing up and down the line urging the demonstrators to more active measures threw a stone at the Japanese Bank that anything exciting occurred, for then a policeman, believing it was a bomb, fired a warning shot, a prearranged signal with the soldiers at the farther end of the Concession. Pandemonium at once broke loose. The scholars, big and small, fled for refuge into those very foreign premises whose owners a few moments before they had been cursing. The Chinese troops and police were equal to the occasion, calm was soon restored and the procession re-formed, but the road was littered with the remains of the slogan-bearing flags which a few moments earlier all had been so bravely waving.

As I had to get across the harbour again to return to my office, I could not wait till the demonstrators had all passed. I chose my time, however, and selected a girls' school as the safest contingent to cross in order to get to my gig. One of the principal agitators glowered at me, but I was not molested.

The same afternoon a selected body of students who had organised and led the demonstration called on me and indulged in very wild talk. They had previously been to see the Japanese Consul, who said the matter was no concern of his. With difficulty I persuaded them Shanghai was not a British Concession, and I told them of my true love for China, relating the risks I had run in Chengtu to save the inhabitants from the horrors of fighting in the city. I tried to put myself in their place. I knew they were burning with blind patriotic zeal.

Their zeal appealed to me, for I too loved China. The blind misconceptions on which their actions were based grieved me,

their temporary hatred saddened me. I sought to persuade them that the Concessions were the result of the arrogance and unfriendliness of the Chinese authorities themselves. I pointed out the glaring contrast between the conditions in foreign concessions and adjoining native cities and I strove to get them to regard the Concessions as being held in trust until a strong united China would be in a position to take them back and carry on the work we had begun. To my query " Have you really a Government which commands the respect and adherence of the whole country ? " they had no reply.

I like to recall that this interview ended happily. They returned to a meeting which was awaiting their report and frankly stated they had been shown every courtesy and that they were not prepared to demonstrate further. I had friends at the meeting, for one got up and said, " The British Consul does love our people, not only the rich but the very poor ", and related incidents in connection with emigration to Malaya.

Now here you have a party of educated lads calling on the official representative of the country against which their full hatred burned, calling, too, immediately after a demonstration, intending to be rude, hoping to be insulted. Yet deep down there was the true heart to be touched. Who fails ? Is it the foreigner who simply says " Curse these boys, they want a whipping and to be sent home " ? is it their own official who applauds their zeal, ignoring what disastrous results it may entail ? or, summed up, is it merely a lack of deep human mutual understanding ? I think it is the latter sentiment in nearly all dealings with China. I could feel for the students in their desire to see their country take her place as a Great Power after the Washington Conference in 1922, which to them seemed to promise so much and to perform so little, and while deploring the methods they used throughout these trying years I never lost hope of developing the good which I felt sure lay deep in their hearts.

During the height of the anti-British demonstrations I went alone with my Chinese clerk, who would never leave me, to a school which was holding a meeting to discuss further disturbances. For an hour and a half I answered questions till, when some of the more truculent were getting offensive, one of the leaders said the British Consul came voluntarily, he has shown

extreme patience and politeness and also he is our guest, I will not have any more questions asked.

During this meeting it was hard to keep my face, for at one period the principal agitator so worked himself up in his description of China's shame that he wept copiously, and unfortunately my eye caught some little fellows at the back of the room who were highly delighted at this display and kept on nudging each other, obviously suppressing with difficulty an outburst of uproarious laughter.

In spite of the apparently peaceful ending of the first demonstration we were by no means out of the wood. Anti-British pamphlets literally poured forth; posters were freely displayed all over the native city, showing students being murdered in the streets of Shanghai, and wild appeals were made to all to rise against the British tyrants. The General in command of the troops in an inland town near by stated he was ready to declare war on Great Britain and forbade the entry of any British goods into places under his immediate jurisdiction. Students went so far as to examine postal parcels and, if they contained British goods, to throw them into the harbour. Stocks, too, of cigarettes belonging to the British-American Tobacco Company were burnt; for these Captain Lin ultimately paid compensation.

It was perhaps small wonder that the majority of Britons desired naval protection, but I was so convinced that the presence of one of H.M. ships would cause a wild explosion and further relied so implicitly on Captain Lin that I rigidly adhered to my determination to place the whole responsibility of affording protection on the Chinese authorities. This attitude led to a certain amount of unpleasantness, and on one occasion a leading Briton stormed into my office and accused me of gambling with the lives of their women and children. I told him if he did not feel they were safe to send them to Hongkong, that he appeared to want brandy, bayonets and blood, and I was determined he should not have them.

As, however, massed meetings were frequently being held by merchants, students, Labour Societies and all sorts of new Societies such as "Root out the Tyrants" Society, I felt steps must be taken to check the growing discontent, and as I was reliably informed that a Boycott Committee had been formed by

the merchants and a Strike Committee by the Labour Guilds, I determined to see the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce who was a great personal friend of mine.

I wrestled with him for an hour and extracted from him a promise that he would do all in his power to counteract the activities of the agitators, but it must be done very secretly. He told me his Chamber would be strongly represented on the Boycott Committee, they must do that because of public opinion, but he would keep me informed of every move they made. He kept his word. He next informed me there was soon to be another massed meeting of merchants, students and representatives of Labour Groups, and I asked if he could arrange for me to attend. He considered that it would be far too risky, so I asked if I gave him a statement in Chinese would he read it to the meeting. He not only did this, but had it published and widely disseminated throughout the city. It was in great demand and did a lot of good. I was also able to prove to him, and to students who doubted him, from our archives that Shanghai was never a British Concession. The pamphlet was in Chinese and brief. It was meant to make people think for themselves. Here is a translation :

FACTS

1. Shanghai is an International Settlement.

2. The Settlement at Shanghai is under the control of the Municipal Council.

3. The Chairman of the Council is elected annually. This year, moreover, he is not British.

4. The Police are under the orders of the Council.

5. From first to last there has been no British Concession at Shanghai.

6. Originally the United States, Great Britain and France, the three Powers obtained land at Shanghai.

7. In 1854 the International Municipal Council was established.

8. In 1869 the British and American localities became the International Settlement.

9. At the present time the Senior Consul at Shanghai is not a British subject.

10. Revision of Treaties is an International matter affecting all countries.

11. Great Britain has not the power unilaterally to alter International Treaties and Regulations affecting all the Powers.

ANXIOUS QUESTIONINGS

(*I.e.* Questions raised by doubts in the mind as to the answer)

1. Why should the blame (*i.e.* for the shooting of the students by the Shanghai Police) be placed on Great Britain alone ?

2. Is it fair, or unfair, is it just or unjust, that Great Britain alone should suffer this blame ?

3. Is it not possible that in the International Settlement every Power has an equally weighty responsibility of keeping order as Great Britain ?

4. The British House of Commons is elected by the People. How can it be maintained that Great Britain stands for Imperialistic ideals ?

5. Last year the British Premier was a member of the Labour Party. Does not this make the talk of Imperialism still less tenable ?

6. Who in the long run of those now trying to destroy the trade between China and Britain is going to reap most benefit ?

7. After all, who has inflamed feelings so as to cause Britain bearing the whole blame for this incident, which is an International affair ?

8. If there is any real desire for a reasoned settlement and a striving for harmony, why make all these complications ? Isn't now the time when right should be relied on and matters discussed, so as to recapture the lost sense of what is decorous and maintain peace ?

For a few days all went well, but on 22nd June I was informed the extremist elements had decided on a demonstration in the International Settlement. I at once informed Captain Lin, but he would not believe it, though finally he ascertained it was true and sent a messenger at midnight to say the situation was serious. I worked with the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs till 3 A.M. and got to work again at 6 A.M., and by his efforts and efforts of my friends the demonstration was postponed till 25th June. I now had to deal with the Consular Body and the Council ; it was no longer an affair in which I could rightly act alone, but I did — more or less.

The first thing the Council demanded was that our naval authorities should be asked for suitable protection. I was outvoted in this matter, but took steps on my own to see the telegrams were sufficiently delayed that no man-of-war could arrive during the demonstration. The Consular Body had already written

a protest to Captain Lin. It amused me that so long as the agitation only affected Great Britain it was to them rather amusing than otherwise, but directly the Settlement was involved there was an uproar.

The Consular Body then demanded an audience with Captain Lin, having previously sent to their naval authorities for protection. This tickled Captain Lin, as the movement was entirely anti-British and we alone sought no protection. At the meeting I kept silent while Captain Lin was exposed to almost insulting taunts at his apparent failure to keep order. Nothing definite was decided, and I kept to myself the knowledge that the naval protection telegraphed for could not arrive before the demonstration took place. I waited till the meeting was over and then said to him, "They have had their talk, you and I will now act." I told him that as before I would have all the police removed from the streets, and designated the posts in which they would be stationed. I further showed him a plan of the Settlement, pointing out where the women and children would collect, and motor boats were held in readiness in case the worst happened and they were compelled to leave the island. I begged him to assist by keeping the demonstrators in the streets, and by preventing any attempt to attack residences, and I assured him I had the fullest confidence in his ability to steer us through even this crisis.

My next problem was to tackle the Captain Superintendent of Police, who fortunately for me was a close personal friend. When I told him all the plans he was at first horrified and maintained he could easily prevent the students landing on the island. I said quite quietly, "Herbert, I am quite convinced with your maxim guns, riot guns and other arms it would be perfectly easy to shoot down hundreds of unarmed students landing from sampans, but I am determined no blood shall be shed. In addition, with everyone working against me I rely on you to do exactly what I want." He had served in the war and the appeal did not fall on deaf ears.

At an early hour next morning all the women and children were in the selected spot close to the seashore where motor boats were ready to take them to a ship kindly detained by the Netherlands Consul in case of need, and anchored opposite the Consulate

residence. The police were also at their stations. Not a man was in the streets. I was in the office, which was on the edge of the Inner Harbour about three-quarters of a mile from the residence, alone with Montague Smith, who assisted me throughout the day as personal orderly. Colonel Lin and some thirty Chinese marines were also with me. The students arrived at about 9.30 and at once started a violent demonstration outside the office, but Colonel Lin closed the gates and would permit none to enter. One of my native staff was rough-handled when crossing the street to buy some soft drinks for the Chinese marines in my compound, but when the mob heard what was wanted, and for whom, merry quips were exchanged and he was allowed to pass. The thin line between tragedy and comedy in circumstances such as this gives much food for thought, but ever reminded me of latent good, and "try to develop the good" remained a consistent motto with me. The demonstrators made straight for the Consulate residence where there were many women and children and, what was worse, enthusiastic volunteers quite eager for a scrap. For half an hour I feared the worst. Colonel Lin, however, had the situation in hand and his marines made them pass the main gate. My next moments of keen tension were caused by receiving a telephone message from the Captain Superintendent of Police saying there was an ugly demonstration outside the Municipal Buildings and he doubted whether he could restrain his police from opening fire if there was any attempt to enter the premises. Among his police were many Chinese of the disbanded Wei-hai-wei Regiment, men who knew the British officer and were intensely loyal. They were especially made the targets of insolent abuse, both as being Northerners and running dogs of the hated British, but their discipline and restraint was marvellous. I told Colonel Lin what was happening and he said quickly, "Do you mind being left alone? I will go and see to this myself." He went, and returned shortly afterwards saying he had persuaded them to move on, adding with a smile: "I wish everyone trusted our word as you do. I have about 100 picked men in that mob dressed just like the students and shouting 'Down with Imperialistic Britain'. They are all armed and will see to it nothing unfortunate occurs." He then happened to look across the harbour to the Amoy side through field-glasses,

and discovered mobs of real rowdies preparing to cross over to Kulangsu. He asked if he might use my 'phone and gave immediate orders that not a boat was to cross the harbour. These orders were implicitly obeyed. After the end of the demonstration, which lasted nearly four hours, a heated meeting was held in a hotel near the Consulate offices. The Shanghai agitators, having been disappointed in their desire to leave their bones in Amoy or Kulangsu, urged more violent action, especially against the British and Japanese Consulates, but local students absolutely refused any further action, stating the British Consul had played the game and allowed them to parade in the Settlement without interference, consequently they were satisfied. Hyde Park teaches valuable lessons even to a Consul.

The demonstration was followed by a memorial demonstration on 30th June, the first month after the Shanghai Incident. It followed the lines of the first demonstrations, the leaders with their heads swathed in cloths, foaming at the mouth and leaping in mad frenzy; but they received little response, and Chinese marines kept the agitators and their immediate following from the main procession. The boycott was then finally instituted and a general strike was also pending. I redoubled my efforts against the strike, working through every channel I knew, but I could not persuade the peace-loving majority to impose their wills on the noisy minority. I was, however, able to persuade the Labour Guilds that agitators had nothing to lose by creating disturbances, that Labour alone suffered, and it was among the Labour groups I saw glimmerings of the development of healthy public opinion. In fact the boatmen's guild refused to strike unless they were guaranteed $30 a month instead of the $9 offered them by the student leaders. I knew that a strike fund had been formed, and I also learnt from friendly sources that the Chinese in the Netherlands East Indies were making a collection to send to this fund. I therefore went to the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and asked him why he did not send the strike funds to the general fund at Shanghai, pointing out that as no blood had been shed in Amoy and Amoy was consequently known as the city of shame, they might redeem their reputation by such an action. I knew that whereas $10,000 and whatever might come from Batavia was dangerous in Amoy, it could mean nothing when sunk in the

hundreds of thousands, if not millions, collected in Shanghai. Not knowing money was coming from Batavia he took my advice, and when the Batavian subscription came it was useless and was also sent on. The strikers thus had no funds to fall back on.

CHAPTER XIX

1925-1927

A WAG, whose identity was never revealed, at this time enlivened matters by publishing comic telegrams "by special arrangement" in the most virulently anti-British local paper. The following translations are three samples :

(1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has lodged a protest with the British Minister against the unequal Treaties. The British Minister replied that British people are tall and fat while Chinese are short and thin and consequently there can be no even balance. To this the Ministry replied that although the British people are tall and fat the number of Chinese is great, therefore balance can be secured. Thus each claims he is right and so the case is not yet settled. [This referred to the long-drawn-out and apparently irrelevant discussions ensuing on the Shanghai Incident.]

(2) His Majesty's Minister at Peking has received a telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Amoy to the following effect :

"I have used a gentle-transformation water to irrigate the soil of Amoy. The advocates of dissension having absorbed this injection have now become gently transformed. Henceforth there is nothing to fear."

H.M. Minister replied conveying the highest praise, in addition stating he had already telegraphed to London requesting the Government to continue sending gentle-transformation water to Amoy to the amount of several tens of thousands of bottles to assist in meeting his wants. [This was a delightful dig at the agitators.]

The third had a dig at us all, and especially at a body of students who had formed a "Foreign Relations Society" to prevent the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs from acceding to foreign demands and to secure revision of the Treaties and generally to raise dealings with foreigners. It ran thus :

(3) The local Foreign Relations Society has had a split over the strike question. This has come to the ears of the foreigners on Kulangsu.

Yesterday the British Consul laughingly told his staff: "I am thoroughly acquainted with the fact Chinese have simple brains, and find it extremely difficult to act as one. I have now done a little conjuring trick ! I have verbally agreed to revise the Kulangsu Land

Regulations, and now not only is the strike lifeless and to be cancelled, even the Society itself is smashed up.

" This is called to know oneself and to know others and will gain the victory a hundred times."

As he spoke he curled his moustache and laughed heartily, and his whole face beamed with happiness.

This reference to the revision of the Land Regulations was a promise I had given to obtain an alteration so that Chinese residents could elect their own member on the Council instead of having to accept an official nominee.

Incidents in connection with the boycott were interesting, and every phase gave me a closer insight into the Chinese character. My staff were consistently loyal, and my No. 1 boatman who was a leader in his guild gave me much valuable information, and by following suggestions given by me was able to help me in defeating the attempts to secure a servants' strike. Nothing could have exceeded the loyal zeal with which my Chinese clerk, S. E. Ting, publicly identified himself with me in the desire to keep the anti-British movement in sane channels. Through him, when anti-British feeling was most bitter, football matches were arranged between H.M. ships and the Anglo-Chinese College, and the well-known tact of the British sailor, when he fully understands what is expected of him, was outstanding in assisting me to heal sores the existence of which really hurt me and was genuinely deplored by Chinese reasoning friends.

The boycott merely brought irritation, demanded patience and clear vision, but the threatened strike, alas, brought tragedy.

The first hint of assassination as a weapon came in a letter which was addressed to the Chinese Secretary of the Municipal Council. He was accused of resisting the popular anti-British movement, and also of reporting to me every kind of secret. The letter ended, " Unless punishment of death is publicly announced there will be no warning to the rest of the people ; consequently speedily we send deputies from the Executive Committee of our Band to carry out the death sentence to let one and all, far and wide, know ". He was handed this letter in the street on the way to his office and on taking it was shot in four places ; no wound proved fatal. His assailant, a young student of about twenty, escaped.

The principal agitator was a student aged twenty-seven named Lim Tiong-hock. He had organised all the student demonstrations and was determined to paralyse British trade. He also tried to organise the general strike and to call out all employees of British establishments, compradors and their staffs, boatmen, boys, cooks and coolies. I determined to break the strike and decided to wrestle with Lim personally. The Commissioner for Foreign Affairs seconded my efforts and persuaded him to respond to my invitation.

He came twice. The visits were very late at night as Lim did not care to let it be known he was seeing me, and my residence was closely watched by extremists. The only other person present was Mr. Pinguet, agent of Messrs. Douglas Lapraik. He came as he had a perfect knowledge of French. The Commissioner of Foreign Affairs was a fluent French scholar, but his knowledge of Mandarin was limited, and he knew very very little English. Lim Tiong-hock spoke perfect Mandarin, and as our talk was conducted in French and Mandarin it assisted me in translating what I said to Lim in Mandarin for Pinguet to do the French, thus enabling me to consider what I would say next.

I pleaded with Lim against a strike, and told him frankly how Chinese members of all the staffs of British firms, who had received letters threatening their families if they did not strike, had pleaded with me to arrange for them to leave their employment in a spirit of absolute friendliness and when all was over to be permitted to return in an equally friendly manner. As a matter of fact all the heads of British firms responded nobly to my appeal to agree to this straightforward request.

I pleaded with Lim from every point of view. Among many arguments I asked whether, when the students were making no sacrifice, it was fair to ask servants to sacrifice their jobs for practically nothing. I also asked whether he could honestly say there was a Government in China sufficiently strong as really to be justified in a claim to represent the whole nation. His answer naturally had to be in the negative, as the South were openly opposing the North. I then pleaded with him to believe that the British Government had really no wish to retain many of the Concessions, and could he not believe they were really better held in trust by us, seeing the perfect manner in which they had

been developed and administered, rather than become bones of contention between warring factions.

The talks were fascinating. There were two ; on 7th and 9th July, and I completely won him over to our side. Lim was not lacking in courage and used all his power to resist the extremists. He definitely stated he would have no strike. He was keenly opposed by a Japanese subject of Chinese descent who had been deported from Singapore in 1919 and was grinding an axe of his own ; but he won, and once during a heated argument challenged his opponent to a duel. Alas, however, unreasoning Communist elements now appeared upon the scene, and agitators came both from Canton and Swatow. On 16th July Lim asked me for a permit to carry a revolver in the International Settlement as he knew his life was in danger ; this was readily granted. The Wei-hai-wei members of the police warned me that I was not safe, and voluntarily wished to guard my residence. I did not accede to this request till after the night of 26th–27th July when a man entered my bedroom and turned on the light at 3 A.M. ; I woke at once, but he escaped through the bathroom window ; although he left marks of hands and feet on the colour-washed walls, he was never traced. It was at 9 A.M. this same morning that Hwang, Secretary to the Municipal Council, was shot. The next day Lim Tiong-hock was murdered in Amoy city. He had been summoned to a meeting to decide finally whether the strike was to take place on 1st August. In the same way as in the case of Hwang, he was handed a letter in the streets and, realising what it meant, at once tried to draw a revolver, but there were four assailants and he was shot in the back. His death killed the movement for a strike. It had very different results to those anticipated by the extremists ; for at once a society was formed for the protection of labour, and with my No. 1 boatman, now promoted to chairman, bound themselves never to strike unless the students who were urging active anti-British measures of this nature guaranteed them $30 a month.

The death of Lim Tiong-hock was a great grief to me, but the strike was averted. In spite of agitators from Canton, where there had been serious incidents, and in spite of virulent attacks in the local press, we never had a strike in Amoy. The neighbouring port of Swatow was not so lucky, and all the servants at the

Consulate there left their posts. I was able with the help of a Dutch skipper to smuggle in to my colleague there a boy, cook and coolie, but when I wanted my boy back again he was with the utmost difficulty got out of Swatow. The Netherlands Consul dressed him in the uniform of a Dutch sailor and actually took him through a body of strikers who were picketing the Consulate.

I had broken the strike, and I determined to break the anti-British boycott. This I felt could best be done by obtaining a renewal of the sailings of emigrant ships from Amoy to Singapore. Amoy was one of the principal ports for emigration of Chinese labour to the Malay States. As Swatow was completely closed to British shipping, and the Swatow guilds had sent representatives to Amoy to enforce the boycott in our port as well, I foresaw many difficulties. I did not foresee the opposition I was to receive from the British Chamber of Commerce. They telegraphed to Hongkong and Shanghai demanding prompt action should be taken to prevent the situation becoming hopelessly out of hand, and asked Hongkong to forward what they called their statement of facts to London. This implied I was not keeping the Legation and Foreign Office properly informed. The courteous channel for a telegram of this kind would have been through me to enable me to make my comments. As it was I heard what had happened through friendly channels, and telegraphed to the Legation to pay no attention as I had the situation well in hand and was working in close co-operation with the authorities. Captain Lin by this time advocated the presence of a ship, and there is no doubt that since the departure of the more violent agitators this obvious sign of a return to normal procedure when H.M. ships paid regular visits to the port was welcomed by the majority of level-headed residents.

I often wondered when Britons in Amoy talked glibly of a "strong" attitude what they really meant. Whether in fact they wanted bloodshed and the killing of unarmed students and other agitators, or even the risk of war. So long as I felt I could handle the situation in a way which would win respect from those who really mattered, and would lay the foundation for permanently sound relations, I was determined to avoid the use of force. But the Chamber was not satisfied and attempted to force

my hand. The agent of one large firm went to Hongkong and laid their case in person before the local Chamber, maintaining shipping was at a standstill. To prove he was correct, on his return to Amoy he brought in one of their largest steamers, kept her ten minutes and sent her away empty, to the fury of the master, claiming he could get no coolies. He wired this to Hongkong. Now he had neither informed me as Emigration Officer that his steamer was coming, nor had he asked me as Consul to assist in removing the restrictions against British shipping. When I tackled him on the subject he had the effrontery to tell me he wanted to prove his case to Hongkong and had deliberately not informed me in case I got coolies. This roused me.

There was one single member of the Chamber, Pinguet, acting agent for Messrs. Jardine, Matheson and Co., who had completely dissociated himself from all these actions of the Chamber, and who trusted me implicitly. I asked as so much of their shipping was lying idle whether he could not risk a steamer coming to Amoy, and I would guarantee he got coolies for Singapore. He did so, and the Hongkong office agreed to send one.

I first got the head of the Sampan Guild to promise that if the Boarding Houses, where the emigrants stay and who control all this trade having their opposite numbers in Singapore, agreed to send coolies they would convey them to the steamer. I then got representatives from the Boarding Houses to agree to try the experiment. Then I tackled the head of the Boycott Inspectors and urged him not to kill Amoy trade and damage the interests of Chinese wishing to avail themselves of the huge demand for labour on the rubber plantations in Malaya, and I obtained from him a promise that active hostility would not be shown. I also saw the head of the largest Labourers' Association in Amoy, who implored me never to mention he had been, and not only won him over but obtained his promise to assist in getting passengers. Finally I told Captain Lin everything.

It was a real strain when the test came and the steamer finally arrived. I had lunch on board with Pinguet, but the captain thought it all so foolish he went on shore, and the ship's comprador had not even provided rice-bowls for the emigrants. We passed

two hours in anxious suspense till finally we saw the firm's motor boat towing a lighter. There were only thirty emigrants but the tension was broken, and it was not long before many other lighters came and finally we got 516 passengers. It was a delight to watch the real joy of the ship's officers, compradors, brokers, sampan men and even the coolies themselves. From that date shipping boomed. British shipping flourished and the emigration numbers went from a normal 75,000 to 250,000. I heard afterwards that when the first batch went a man called from the shore, "If you move I fire." A Chinese friend of mine called out, "If you are even fired at I will give you $1000." Nothing happened. Word was passed to the Boarding Houses that all was well, and from then on there was no further trouble. After this incident I obtained due notification from the other British firms of the dates when their steamers would arrive in Amoy for coolies. I telegraphed to the Legation that with reference to my previous telegram emigration had been resumed in bona-fide British steamers with perfect success.

I think the human element appeals to me above all things, so I naturally took a keen interest in the coolie emigration from this port to Singapore, and strange as it may seem, I actually enjoyed counting the coolies and the cheery chats in the saloon where the passes for cabin passengers were being signed, the farewell drink with the agents when everything was completed and the papers were all signed. Still from the very beginning certain aspects of this emigration worried me intensely.

The very first ship I cleared in 1923 I saw a well-dressed, corpulent Chinese flicking coolies on their naked backs with a very pliable bamboo. He was in the well deck, I was above. I stopped counting, dashed down the ladder, smashed his cane, threw it overboard and ordered him to leave the ship. He looked flushed and sulky, but left. I then went back to continue counting coolies with my Chinese clerk; we always both counted as a check. The clerk was rather upset and said, "I don't think you know who that was." I replied hotly that I did not know, neither did I care, I would not have coolies struck by anyone in my presence. He said, "Oh, but he is the agent." I left it at that. He always in future sent a deputy when I was counting coolies.

On another occasion I found fourteen little fellows drawn up

in line on deck. I asked what they were doing. I was told they were going to be put on shore as they had skin diseases. Now these skin diseases were mostly curable in seven or eight days, but being contagious no-one with such a disease could pass the doctor and they were simply put on shore to become beggars, perhaps as many as even two thousand a year. The emigrants only too often had sold up everything in their country homes to get to Amoy and buy their passage to Singapore and had nothing except their ticket, and this, if they were rejected, was usually taken from them by force by the sampan man who took them on shore, and who got back the money from the Boarding House which issued the ticket. Emigration to Singapore is practically run by the Boarding Houses in which the coolies must await ships on arrival from the interior. I asked whether these little chaps had relations, and was given a casual reply that they probably had but with two thousand emigrants on board there was no time to look for them. To this I replied I would not clear the ship until the relations were found. I accordingly got the little fellows to line up beside me as the coolies passed me and told them to point out their relations. This they did ; the relations or parents were withdrawn and I sent the united family on shore.

However, it was not satisfactory. The family had probably no home to return to, certainly no funds to keep themselves in Amoy while the sick member was being cured and I soon realised that something more must be done. Having heard of what I was doing in many cases parents actually refused to recognise a child rather than to be put on shore. Two women tried to commit suicide, one by bashing her head on the deck, the other by jumping overboard. Another poor woman tried to throw the sick child overboard, and on being stopped asked me whether it was not better to get rid of the child and continue her journey rather than go on shore with her family of three and starve. These cases affected me so keenly that I set to work to get a Home for Emigrants in which the whole family could be housed free and fed free and the sick doctored free, until cured, when all could go on. I was told it was useless to attempt to carry on the project in view of the anti-British boycott and anti-British feeling generally, but I persisted and was loyally assisted. In this I was helped by all the Shipping Companies concerned, including the Netherlands and

other Companies, the Boarding Houses and wealthy Chinese in Malaya. The Home, known in Chinese as the Home of Kindly Charity, was opened on my fiftieth birthday, the 1st July 1926. The first batch of rejects mistrusted the Home ; it was a new idea, neither could they believe that if they were induced to enter they would not be fleeced when inside. The situation was saved by a bright youngster of fourteen who was terribly ill with dysentery and a skin disease affecting his hands ; also a poor worn-out woman with three children too tired and sick at heart to care what happened to her, who at once went to her room where the children played with the electric light, something they had never seen before, to their intense delight. The lad asked " Can I sleep here ? " and when told he could, asked " And nothing to pay ? " following it up with " And eat as well and nothing to pay ? " and then, darting from room to room, jumped about exclaiming " This is truly excellent ! " He also showed the doctor his poor hands and again was assured he would be cured and nothing to pay. He was in the Home nearly a month, and on leaving wanted to part with all his little possessions to the doctor and myself. I remember these included a packet of anti-seasick medicine and some dried fruits, with a few copper cash. Word must have got round to the doubting rejects that all was well ; perhaps they were lurking outside for news, for within an hour they all had come. The Home soon became well known and we used to get telegrams from Singapore enquiring about missing children. Every inmate on leaving the Home was given a free pass which was good for any steamer, whatever the passage rate for the day happened to be, and this varied considerably. The Home has now been taken over by the Chinese authorities, and through the kindly courtesy of Dr. Wu Lien-tê it has been called after me.

As I have noted, in addition to counting the coolies, the Consul signs passes for cabin passengers in emigrant ships proceeding to Singapore. One day, before counting, I saw a pretty little Chinese girl of about sixteen sitting in a corner of the saloon gently crying. I asked her why she wept and she said she did not want to go to Singapore. I told her emigration was free and if she did not want to go she need not. At that point a woman calling herself her mother came in and said she would fix

everything up. I said I must continue counting the coolies, after which I would see them. Accordingly, I returned to the saloon after the counting was over. Every saloon passenger, as stated above, had to have a special pass giving the name, age, occupation, etc. etc., of the holder. Little Yüan Yüan, for such was the child's name (it meant perfection of beauty), had a pass made out in Chinese. Her name was given as Baby No. 2, age sixteen, and occupation wife of a merchant. I remarked that this was interesting, and then flashed out in Chinese, " I will be quite frank. You may go. You say Yüan Yüan has agreed to go. Very well, go. But the moment you leave I telegraph to the Singapore police saying you are arriving with Baby No. 2 who is said to have a husband in Singapore." She said, " If you are going to do that, it is useless for me to proceed." " Of course it is," I retorted. " Get into the Consulate gig with Yüan Yüan and all your luggage and wait for me. I am taking you on shore." I asked a Chinese friend and my clerk to accompany me as chaperons, or perhaps witnesses is a better word, and we went straight to the Sing Song Girls' House, in which I learnt little Perfection of Beauty had been residing. From enquiries I made I found the " mother " had kidnapped the girl in Hankow and was taking her to Singapore in payment of a debt for some four thousand dollars she owed to the merchant, designated as " husband " on the pass. Yüan Yüan was in fact a living cheque.

When I got to the house of the Sing Song Girls with my friend and the clerk I sent for the head woman in charge, who was both capable and pleasant. I told her the facts in the presence of all the other children, including Entrancing Spring and Golden Lotus, whom I had met at many parties. I then added that any attempt to remove Yüan Yüan was to be telephoned to me at once, that she was to be sent to the Home for Emigrants next door if ever interfered with, and that I was informing the local authorities. I then ordered the " mother " to leave and told her that if ever she came near Amoy again I would have her arrested. She did not delay her departure. Some days afterwards I met the Chinese Superintendent of Customs at the American Celebration on the 4th July. He was an old-type scholar of the best school with delightful quiet humour. He came up to me and said, " Truly you are a queer fellow," and on my asking why he replied,

" You are not content with opening a Home for Emigrants, you also want to be known as Protector of the Girls."

On leaving Amoy I had asked Admiral Lin to give me a family party and not an official farewell, and with other special Chinese friends at the party he gave Yüan Yüan, Entrancing Spring, Golden Lotus and another girl were present. On entering the room I saw little Yüan Yüan crying to herself in a corner ; quite resigned, weeping. My friend, the Superintendent of Customs, drew my attention to her and said, " I asked her why she was crying and she said because the only friend she had ever had was leaving China and no-one would help or look after her." He asked, somewhat naïvely, why I could not add her to my household and take her home. I told him. I then went to comfort the Perfection of Beauty and taking her to Admiral Lin easily persuaded him to promise his valuable protection, and also that " mother " should never reclaim her. He was as good as his word and I now like to picture little Yüan Yüan as the secondary wife of the friend who went with me to the home of the Sing Song girls on the day we saved her from going to Singapore. The silk handkerchiefs she gave me on my leaving Amoy are still treasured possessions, and I have a vivid picture of the little lady and her companions waving farewell to me on the day I left for home from the verandah of their home as the steamer passed it going through the harbour to the open sea.

Usually at dinner the little girls sit on small stools slightly behind the guests. At Admiral Lin's party they were made guests and sat at table with us, to their intense delight. They were little people with a quiet dignity of their own and liberties were not permitted, though with closer friends they showed a complete absence of fear, and were attractively simple. After the rescue of Yüan Yüan I spent more than one happy afternoon chatting in their quarters, when a delicious tea was always carefully prepared. Fragrant Spring was the most capable and most entertaining of my friends, and it was known that I liked her to be present when I was at a feast. The reason is not far to seek. The first time I met her was at a large party when she was detailed to entertain me as she spoke excellent Mandarin. I told her it seemed wrong that she should be condemned to spend the evening chatting to an old fellow like myself and suggested she might move to the

young end of the table, but with a fascinating, quiet dignity she declined this offer. I then told her that I did not wish to drink too much and would she take care that my glass was not filled too rapidly, and reprove me if she thought I was having too much. All the motherly instincts in the protective female were aroused in her and nobly did she perform her task. During the meal another girl, no doubt egged on by some wag, came and challenged me to the well-known "Kan pei" (no heel-taps) in brandy in a sherry glass. Fragrant Spring let her put the glass down, and then throwing it brandy and all on the floor, said, "Begone — I am looking after this."

I was to meet her later at a large party given to me by the Chinese agents of one of the leading British firms. Now only a week before I had cause to write to the agent of another British firm about his comprador who had been accused in the press of an excessive love of women. In a friendly manner I had pointed out how unseemly this was. At the dinner on entering the room I failed to see Fragrant Spring, so wrote on a piece of paper in Chinese, "I want Fragrant Spring". I saw a hurried consultation between my hosts and a certain amount of distress, and then the British representative of the firm came across and said, "This is very awkward, for Fragrant Spring is the third wife of the comprador of Messrs. —— and Co." — the very man I had reproved. However, they were determined I should not be disappointed, so a telephone message was sent to him, and as I was a special friend of his, the little dame came over and very welcome she was. She had to leave early, and before going made me promise that I would be very very careful when she was not there to look after me. I kept my word.

A strange thing happened at one of the official dinners. I had been asked to speak, and made my speech in Chinese. I never spoke from notes and was only a ready speaker if I felt keenly what I was saying. At the end of my speech one of the girls came and sat on the little stool beside me and thanked me. I did not pay much attention to this at the time, but just chatted quietly with her. When the party broke up, however, she clung to me and implored me to take her home with me. "I have never," she pleaded, "heard anyone talk from the heart as you did and I could be happy in your home." She was so insistent

she made me late for the launch which was taking us across the harbour, and naturally I was subjected to a certain amount of good-natured chaff, but the picture in my mind was that of a dainty little child removed by her amah, for each Sing Song girl is attended by a type of duenna to see she returns to her " home ", crying and being reluctantly led down a dark alley-way back to a life which, as I felt, obviously was distasteful to the small heart.

Now these recitals are not meaningless. At least they were not to me. To me they breathed inherent good in everyone concerned. The routing of Yüan Yüan's mother, the action of Admiral Lin in making the girls guests and not mere entertainers at my farewell party, his promise to protect the little lady, her acceptance into the home of my friend in a properly recognised manner — all combined to prove a unity of purpose in bringing happiness to a human life. The response to a speech by a foreigner she had never seen before of the poor little child who had to be led away gave evidence of " heart ". The care with which Fragrant Spring performed her duties, bringing in a personal and almost maternal touch which in a dainty child was more than ordinarily appealing, coupled with the fact they would never accept any gift in money, proved conclusively to me that in every walk in Chinese life there is an immediate and very genuine response to ordinary human treatment. " You have a heart," I felt in all my dealings with these people ; " you have feelings too, there is your side of the picture. I want my relations with you to make you happier in a life that had many hardships and worries," and learning the response from them, I learnt to love this great country itself and to bring the effect of their simple understanding into my calculations in even official relations. They seemed so much to expect callous selfishness, unthinking indifference to their point of view, that I cannot help feeling more gentle consideration would have produced untold results not only in the simple relations between foreigners and Chinese, but in those greater issues which have been marred by friction and misunderstanding. Yet the fault is not only on one side. An appearance of weakness is seized on by Chinese officials to attempt all sorts of exorbitant demands. Complacency has over and over again proved disastrous, but I have never found that however bitter any struggle might be the Chinese resented an action no

matter how strong provided they were convinced it was dictated by the heart.

I hope that I have not expressed my thoughts too bluntly. They come from a heart which has ever loved China as a second home. They express an intense longing for understanding. They are the thoughts of a real friend. The patience with which Great Britain, knowing her power, met the cruel attacks delivered on her citizens and their properties in 1925 to 1927 did not meet the great generous response they deserved. Rather was there a feeling "we have got so much, let us get more". I do not think many, except the deep thinkers, appreciated our attitude, it had all the appearance of weakness; it was, in fact, magnificent strength, restraint brought to its highest level. Would that Japan could have followed this lead and permitted General Chiang Kai-shek to carry out the wonderful work he and Madame Chiang were so courageously doing for the good of their country; a work in which neither spare themselves, which is performed unselfishly and with a passionate love for their country. Truly an example to all.

CHAPTER XX

1926, 1927

WHEN the boycott was in full swing, apart from the Emigration question, I wrote to the Commander-in-Chief saying that as I had never asked for one of the ships under his command for work might I have one for pleasure, and could he possibly spare a ship for Armistice Day, 11th November 1925? He wrote back a delightful letter and said he would send H.M.S. *Hermes* and leave her in Amoy for a week, and that I might arrange with Captain Talbot for anything I liked in the way of entertainment. In order to check any ebullitions on the part of the agitators at the appearance of so large and so strange a ship, for it was her first visit to the China Station and no ship of her type had ever been seen before, I inserted a notice in the native press giving the date of her arrival and a description of the ship. When she came she was anchored in the Inner Harbour, a magnificent feat as there were barely ten feet to spare fore and aft without hitting the bottom. No sooner had she appeared, drawing hundreds from the city to gaze at her, than the Boycott Committee issued posters throughout the city that H.M.S. *Hermes* was excluded from the boycott and was to be provided with whatever was wanted.

The greatest success was the Armistice Day parade, which was held on the Recreation Ground on Kulangsu, and was not only officially attended by the Chinese authorities and the Consular Body, but by a huge gathering of spectators. The sailors and marines headed by their band marched in full parade order through the Settlement. I was thus enabled to have a perfect display of our naval force without creating any ill-will. No-one was allowed to visit the ship without a pass from me. The students of the University, keenest of the agitators, asked for passes and I sent a pass for seventy-five. Ship's boats were sent to convey them. However, the others were not to be deterred and more than two hundred took sampans and went off on their own. The more malicious among them hoped to be turned off and have an

excuse for making a disturbance, but they were defeated by the ready wit of the Officer of the Watch, who welcomed the whole crowd, saying he realised the Consul had made a mistake in thinking only seventy-five wanted to come.

The visit was an enormous help to me. Every officer and man combined to make their stay a success. On two nights they lit the ship up with electric lights, a lovely sight in the harbour, and had searchlight displays. The ship's band was indefatigable and willingly played at a garden party given by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce to her officers and to the foreign community. I always remember with warm gratitude Captain Talbot's unstinting co-operation on this unique occasion. By this visit the ice was completely broken and a happier period ensued.

There is not much more to relate of Amoy. I had an interesting meal alone with a party of Buddhist priests who especially invited me to meet them. The leading Abbot in Fukien Province on this occasion gave me a pass which would make me a welcome visitor in every temple under his jurisdiction, a very wide area. I was never able to take advantage of this. I remember one old priest who was seated on a chair with his legs tucked under him, looking like a Buddha, suddenly waking from a reverie and without any form of introduction saying, " The heart is like the sea. When the sea is still it reflects all that is beautiful, passing clouds, hills and trees and birds, but when it is disturbed it can reflect nothing." He then once more relapsed into his dreams.

In February 1926 I had a very bad attack of angina pectoris which threatened to end my career, but I persuaded the doctors not to report how ill I was and carried on, having a camp-bed in the office and always being carried to and from the residence in a chair. The strain had been very heavy and few in the British community would recognise the utter loneliness of a task carried out against what they felt ought to be done. I could not blame them, and kept a stout heart by remembering that as a boy at Harrow I had light-heartedly asked for a hard life in the words of the famous Forty Years On, " God give us bases to guard or beleaguer." Although Amoy was the only port in these hideous years 1925, 1926 and 1927 which not only maintained but vastly increased its trade, the British community felt they could not give me an official farewell. But there were others who did under-

stand. The boys of the Customs Club not only refused any monetary present on leaving, they gave me a silver cigarette-case. All they wanted from me was a photograph to put in their common room. A friend of mine asked them why they had given me a leaving present, to which they replied, "Without him there would have been a strike. We would have had no job," adding the delightful touch, "and you would have had no servants."

My most valued souvenir came from Liu Kwang-ch'ien, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, than whom in my long career I have never met a more loyal friend, and I have met many. During a period of intense strain, when the feelings of his compatriots throughout China were wrought to the highest pitch, he ever sought to follow the path of rigid fair dealing. He knew but little English as he was just beginning to learn the language, and this fact added to the value of his parting present, as he chose the words himself. The date he put on the silver shield was the date on which the s.s. *Suisang* left Amoy with the first batch of emigrants. This also was a thoughtful choice.

The inscription ran: "In memory of justice, carefulness, peacefulness and kind co-operation". Think what this meant. Here was an official of a country rising as one man against the so-called brutal British Imperialism, realising that the outcry was unjust. Further, one who responded to my desire to avoid bloodshed, knowing what it meant to me to discard naval protection, and knowing only too well how little my attitude was understood by the British community. The words are indeed well chosen; in "justice" he sees I recognised the patriotic student, however blind his actions, had love of country at heart; "carefulness" — no cruiser, no need to land armed forces, no risk of bloodshed; "peacefulness", quite enough has been said to know how much I longed for peace, and of "kind co-operation", well, I felt I owed him more than he owed me; but he was also a man of vision and looked to the future for a full reward of our united efforts. It said more than pages of thanks, for I knew it meant you understand us, you trust us, hideous things are happening which we regret, but we can and will steer through. You have not baulked us by drastic measures, you recognise our difficulties and we are grateful.

I was so fully occupied in Amoy that I almost lost touch with what was happening in other parts of China, but big events were taking place. I can only touch on them in so far as they came directly under my notice. I observed that many Russians were applying at the Consulate for transit visas to Canton via Hongkong. I was suspicious, and after investigating the matter my suspicions were confirmed and I stopped it. Canton was showing signs of irritation against the Northern Government, and with the Northern Government were coupled the foreign Powers, the Legations being situated in Peking. The Powers had agreed to the levy of certain surtaxes which were to be used by the Central Government as security for bonds issued. This was resented by the Cantonese, who felt that surtaxes levied in Canton belonged rightly to them and should not be used to bolster up the Central Government. They turned to Great Britain and America for sympathy, and being disappointed at not receiving more sympathy threw themselves unreservedly into the hands of Russia. Hence the influx of Russians into Canton.

It was not difficult for the Russian advisers to persuade the Canton authorities that Imperialistic Britain was *the* enemy of China. Britain had extracted the Treaties from China ; damage Britain and the other Powers would toe the line. When I asked a Chinese friend why we were singled out for the full fury of the new National Movement he replied we were the only country really worth going for. Complimentary but unpleasant ! At Whampoa, near Canton, was the Military Academy, and here the cadets were taught to bend all their thoughts on destroying the evil influence of British Imperialism in China. I had been told in confidence by a Chinese official when our Military Attaché passed through Amoy on his way to Canton to tell him to pay attention to nothing else in Canton save the Military Academy at Whampoa, for serious trouble was brewing there. Its most famous instructor was the then little known Chiang Kai-shek, in eleven years to become world-famous.

Thus there was the strange combination of civil officials basing their ideas of liberty on American history and the military urged by the destructive impulses of Communism pure and simple. In 1926 Canton moved and under Russian leadership marched for the Yangtse. The main slogans were "Down with Imperialism",

"Abolish the unequal Treaties", "Do away with Consular jurisdiction", but there were many others. My first inkling of how dangerous the movement was came from a doctor in the interior. He had worked among the people for thirty years and had a good hospital. Like many others he welcomed the movement against the rapacious satellites of the Northern Government, and went out into the streets to join in the welcome to the National Army which was to save and unite China, and to bring to her all the enlightenment to be found in the tenets of their great leader Sun Yat Sen. Alas, he was sadly disillusioned. He returned to his hospital to find it occupied by the military. The operating-room with its slope for wheeling in patients had been converted into stables. His main building was taken for barracks and the patients dumped in the courtyard and he was told to do what he could with his own residence. One youth, a former student of his, occupied his chair and he was made to take a side seat while being dictated to. This is only one case. We had no trouble in Amoy, but destruction followed in their wake wherever they went. Churches were abused, all British and many American properties were seized, and the Concessions at Hankow, Kiukiang Wuhu and Chinkiang were overrun.

CHAPTER XXI

1927

I WENT home on leave late in January 1927, and on the way home heard of the Nanking Incident in which British subjects had lost their lives, and our cruiser with the American ship in port had been compelled to lay a barrage in order to enable the foreigners in the city to escape over the city wall. Our Fleet in China waters was thereupon strengthened, and a large force was sent to Shanghai under Sir John Duncan. Tension was keen. At this critical period I was appointed Consul General at Nanking, and proceeded to Shanghai in October 1927 to take up my post.

On arrival at Shanghai I found I could not proceed to my post pending a settlement of the Nanking Incident, and I had to reside in Shanghai. In addition to Nanking, I was put in charge of the Consulates at Wuhu, Chinkiang and Ningpo. It was not a happy state of affairs. In many Concessions and in the interior foreign premises were occupied by Chinese troops, who were told that as saviours of their country nothing was too good for them; churches were desecrated, students were demanding that Mission ecclesiastical establishments should be handed over to Chinese control and the National Government was demanding what virtually amounted to the abolition of all extra-territorial privileges.

I settled down to puzzle it all out, as I felt only serious conviction could carry me through. The large majority of Britons in China were clamouring for drastic action, and indeed there were sufficient grounds for refusing to deal with a Government which up to that time had done nothing but to insult in every conceivable manner the nationals of Powers, officials, merchants and missionaries, who were their friends, and to destroy their properties. I had tried to understand the student, who by now was relegated into the background. I delighted in his ardour and zeal for China, though I loathed his manner of displaying it and could never condone actions such as led them to keep every servant away from a dying missionary who had devoted forty

years of his life to China. Where they appeared to me basically wrong was in their incessant cry of "our sovereign rights" without any recognition of the concomitant responsibilities which such rights involve. Neither could I discover the slightest doubt in their minds that China had always been right and the foreigner wrong. Many even carried this feeling to the extent of declaring they owed the foreigner nothing at all for all that had been done for them and spent on their education, maintaining, in fact, that it ought to have been done. Yet I often perceived a touch of something which moved me, and I felt we ought to be big enough to look beyond all that was so irritating and to us an unnecessary friction, and try patiently to sympathise with the better motives which dictated their actions. I knew we had the power to punish. I knew we could withhold financial support where it was urgently needed, but I could not feel we should let the challenge, brutal as it was, goad us to rage. The National Government as challenger had not counted the cost, why should mere boys?

Thus I came to the larger issue. What were the factors which had led to the chaos in China culminating in the hideous Nanking Incident of March 1927? They seemed to me four:

(1) The overthrow in 1911 of an ancient civilisation without due preparation.

(2) The rule of the Military Governors (War Lords) and their selfish ambitions, a period which began immediately after the outbreak of the Revolution in 1911, was rampant after the death of Yüan Shih-k'ai and even up to 1935 had not been entirely suppressed.

(3) The development of Nationalism without true leadership, a period in which the combination of students and labour were to cause much trouble.

(4) Open anti-foreign Nationalism controlled and fed by Communism. It was, in fact, a deliberate adoption of a policy which for the moment appeared to rule out all moral purpose except national interest. This fatal lack of what is truly essential to enduring success in any Great Power made many doubt the capacity of the National Government to win through. This period ended with the establishment of the National Government in Nanking in May 1927, and, at the end of the year, with the repudiation of extreme Communism as a driving force.

I am going to take up all these points separately.

At the time of the outbreak of the Revolution in October 1911, roughly speaking we may say that China had had a known history of five thousand years. In order to prepare one's mind for a truly sympathetic view of the Revolution one naturally looks back to those factors which led to the overthrow of the monarchic system. One fact, I think, is outstanding, and that is the brutalities of the Portuguese settlers who came to trade with China in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Their overweening bearing ended in appalling massacres, and I think not only hatred but contempt for people who knew so little of the moral decencies of life and respect for a neighbour ; these virtues at that time had already been known to the Chinese for well over two thousand years. Passing over several tens of years we come to more frequent contact and to the time when the British Government was compelled to try conclusions with the Canton Government, fundamentally owing to the conceit of the Chinese authorities who held office at that time. It was owing to this conceit that the concessions were originally decided upon as being the only place in which foreigners might dwell. The authorities had no wish that the " foreign pigs and dogs " should live in their cities and in most places chose almost impossible spots for the residence of foreigners. Out of these impossible spots foreigners have created what are now known as Concessions. These in recent years have been an incessant source of irritation to students and others who wish to see China assume control over the whole country. It has always seemed to me a pity that this desire for complete control is not accompanied by a generous acknowledgment of the responsibility it entails and that only too often the protection of foreigners has not been taken too seriously.

The friction with the foreign Powers early in the nineteenth century resulted in wars and the signing of various Treaties which, somewhat naturally, are now considered and called " unequal ". At the same time I always wish that the Chinese students and friends would realise how much their own authorities were seriously to blame for the misunderstandings which arose. For although the early British merchant may not have been a saint, in the majority of cases their only desire was for trade and, as at the present day, they were earnestly pacifist at heart while ready actively to resent anything they considered

unreasonable or harmful to their trade. During this period the T'ai P'ing rebellion occurred which shook the Manchu Dynasty to its very foundations. The record of this rebellion is too well known for any further mention of it to be made.

In 1894 China received her first rude shock when war with Japan occurred. In this war she was hopelessly beaten and realised for the first time what humiliation in the eyes of the whole world meant. This did not produce so much sorrow as resentment. The war with Japan was followed by the Powers not only depriving Japan of what she had gained but themselves seeking concessions in China, and the phrase "spheres of influence" then came into common use; the Chinese called it "carving the melon". In continuation of the spheres of influence came concession-hunting. Looking back on it, this craze now appears indecent, if not disgraceful. The greatest triumph Ministers in Peking could secure was a concession for one of their own nationals and Peking was full of concessionaires. In the middle of all this land-grabbing by foreigners, whatever money may have been made by the fortunate official middle-man responsible for giving vast concessions to foreign applicants, there was a growing rise of feeling which resented the mad actions of Peking. At this moment the Boxer Rising occurred, which, although there is reason to think was anti-dynastic in its initial stages, was skilfully turned by the Court into an anti-foreign rising. A result of the Rising was the well-known Boxer Indemnity. In this a total of £60 million was demanded by the Powers from China. In assessing the total amount the American Government made an error of some £5 million. This was returned to China and with it was founded the endowment for sending Chinese students to America, and many of the National Government of to-day have owed their American training to its original beginnings.

The Revolution broke out in 1911 and, seeing the magnitude of the movement and that it implied the overthrow of the monarchic system which had existed for five thousand years, was easily successful. I think it is fair to say that it was accomplished without due preparation; for however sad the thought may be, lasting success in any movement of this kind can only be secured through acute suffering.

At the outbreak of the Revolution there was intense keenness to join the army. Up to that time the profession of a soldier had been looked down on, but everybody, including foreigners' servants, wished to show their patriotism by fighting for the Revolution. There were many people who knew what it would mean if China seriously armed, not only in threats to foreigners but in appalling sorrow to the poor people who were tilling their land and were not in a position to carry on. At the outbreak of the Revolution there were some bitter cruelties, but in happenings of this kind cruelty, like slogans, is perhaps essential to eradicate some of the influences against which you are working and to uphold the ideals for which you believe you are struggling.

The movement at first was decidedly pro-foreign. In fact, foreigners, chiefly Americans, saw the day when China would continue to progress until she achieved the full accomplishment of the republican ideal. There was one factor, however, to which no-one could blind their eyes, and that was that whereas the civil students had largely been trained in America practically all the military students were trained in Japan.

This leads me to my second reason for chaos in China : the Military Governors, better known perhaps as War Lords, and their selfish ambitions.

Many of the War Lords had received their military training in Japan. In the majority of cases they were completely indifferent to the misery and suffering they caused, and merely coveted position for the wealth it brought to their private pockets. Some were kept in position by their adherents, who relied on the success of their chiefs for their own prosperity. In a wealthy province like Szechuan, where the Salt Revenue alone produced from £80,000 to £140,000 a month, it was well worth while holding the position of Military Governor for a few months. They usually selected the large official residences of the Viceroys, Governors, Treasurers, Judges and other officials of the Manchu days for their headquarters. These residences comprised a series of spacious courtyards, large attendance halls, numerous private rooms and ample accommodation for the personal bodyguard. The entrance was always imposing with its sweeping curved roofs and huge solid wooden doors, and the wide courtyards, which had to be traversed before access to the reception rooms

was attained, all added to the dignity of the habitat of the War Lord.

I am unable to speak for the rest of China, but in Szechuan these residences were well-kept, the guards were smart and discipline good. If you were a personal friend of the War Lord you were courteously received, usually with a guard of honour, but if you were unknown the sentries and attendants had a distinct tendency to be rude. I was always able to secure a private interview, though on certain occasions underlings and secretaries had an irritating way of hanging about. It is a mistake to think of the War Lords as ill-clad, badly-housed brigands. Far from it; practically all they did was on a grand scale, including the levying of taxes. They were delightful to meet, and the soul of generous hospitality. Moreover I found that if they trusted you it was fully and without reservation. If pure patriotism and not personal greed had been the foundation of their actions, I feel that with careful selection China could have easily produced some very great military leaders from among the War Lords, but by those who loved China most it was felt during the darkest hours of chaos between 1915 and 1925 that nothing but some great common national danger could ever weld China together, and even if that occurred the question of a leader who could guide the destinies of united China was still unsolved.

Many of the military Governors at the outbreak of the Revolution were extremely young. General Hsiung K'ê-wu, who went to pacify Szechuan, was only twenty-five when he first entered the province. Yüan-Shih-k'ai in Peking tried to check the decentralisation of power which had resulted from its young military leaders usurping it for their own purposes without any ideas of love of country and without, except in rare cases, any desire for the improvement of the province over which they ruled. Unfortunately, Yüan in his wish to centralise power in Peking overlooked Yunnan Province, and in this province arose the military leader Ts'ai Ao, through whose means Yüan's desire to consolidate China under himself as Emperor was foiled. Yüan Shih-k'ai died at the early age of fifty-eight. With his death the decentralisation of power was complete. Still, there was nothing anti-foreign in the feeling of the authorities. So far as I was concerned they were all friendly and they were good

fellows, as stories in Chengtu will have shown. But this period of selfish military rule, of no well-defined foreign policy, of living from day to day led to student disappointment and we come to the third reason for chaos, a reason which although outwardly apparently short-lived was sincerely deep.

It was the development of Nationalism without true leadership.

Immediately after the war the French Government encouraged Chinese students to proceed to France in order partly to study the language, partly to learn engineering or a trade. In 1920, when the exchange was extremely favourable, it was easy to finance a movement of this kind, but subsequently when the exchange became adverse it was found impossible to advance the sums necessary to maintain the students in France. Many returned discontented; a very few who had the means to do so found a home in England. The students in France, finding promises made to them had not been kept (and this somewhat naturally seeing that during the rehabilitation period after the war the French labourer was not prepared to sacrifice half a day teaching trade to Chinese nor was he prepared to surrender half a day's work to labour of this kind), naturally turned to Communism as a safety-valve. They had seen the power of discontented labour well organised. They had further learnt to hate the use of force against liberty.

I was at that time secretly shown by a student in Szechuan some of the literature he was receiving from Europe — pamphlets such as *The Black Tide*, *The Red Tide* and *The World a Soldier*, all translated into very simple Chinese.

At the same time, to add to the discontent of the students, many lies were wired from interested persons from Washington giving supposed details of what was happening at the Washington Conference, and although these were denied the general attitude of the students was to curse everyone connected with the Conference and to instruct the Chinese delegates to refuse to agree to any of its decisions. In the succeeding years delays in the fulfilment of what had been promised at the Conference brought matters to a head, but here I am chiefly interested in the development of Nationalism without true leadership.

There is no doubt that the students were burningly patriotic.

They had a passionate and ardent desire to assist their country. They felt something was wrong and, without going to the root of the matter, at once decided it must be due to the foreigner. At this period in Chengtu, where I was stationed, they established a self-government society. The boys got completely out of hand and were ready to join in any strike. In fact, strikes only too frequently were organised by them and this chiefly from political motives. They were quite callous to the fact that in many instances their education was paid for by people residing in America, Canada or the United Kingdom, and pleas to them to resume work simply on the score of gratitude fell on completely deaf ears. In their organisation of labour they encouraged the formation of a Servants' Guild. One of the rules was that no foreigner might employ a servant in a dual capacity; a cook *might not serve at table, neither might the washerman assist*; only a boy was to do a boy's work. Even as regards the cook's bill, if this was queried the guild was to decide whether the bill was correct or not. If it was correct, the cook might not return to his master and no other cook would be allowed to serve the master until he had apologised to the guild for defaming the character of one of its members.

And now I come to my fourth reason for chaos: Anti-foreign Nationalism, developed and fed by Communism. This period centres chiefly in Canton. Its connection with students is chiefly interesting in the development of the Whampoa Military Academy, in which, as I have related, the now well-known General Chiang Kai-shek took such a keen interest.

The main questions which disturbed the Cantonese authorities were a refusal of the foreign Powers to recognise them as a military faction, and further, as mentioned before, the demand that all surtaxes allowed by the Washington Conference should be remitted to Peking for the service of internal loans in which they had not the slightest interest. The Cantonese hated the loans. They felt, with justification, that money levied from their own citizens should be expended in their own province and that the produce of their own labours should not be taxed for the benefit of the North alone. The fact that the foreign Powers maintained their Legations in Peking and adhered to a policy of supporting the Central Government naturally led to a hatred of

the foreigner as being one with a Northern régime and a hindrance to a Nationalist development of China on lines the people so ardently desired to secure. I cannot go too deeply into this question for reasons which must be obvious to all. There is no doubt that the Canton authorities did make an attempt to win over the sympathies of America and Great Britain. There is equally no doubt, as results showed, that in this they were not successful, and somewhat naturally they turned to the Soviet, the one Power which had recognised Chinese aspirations by voluntarily surrendering the jurisdiction over her Concessions in China to the Chinese Government.

Encouraged by the recognition thus received, and ably advised by General Galens, the armies of the National Government carried all before them in their advance to the Yangtse Valley. Here, too, success attended their arms and they finally entered Nanking in March 1927. It had been a sad time for those of us who loved China, but the restraint shown was not to be without its reward, and after the National Government was established in Nanking certain of the Civil authorities asked General Chiang Kai-shek to pause before proceeding further north. A lamentable extremist outbreak in Canton in December 1927, which entailed the destruction of about one-sixth of the city, showed how wise they had been in thus reviewing the whole situation. Extremists' views were abandoned and a happier era dawned. I like to think that the restraint we showed during the many blows which fell on us in the Yangtse Valley, especially at Hankow and Nanking, was not the least important factor in enabling the new Government to start without major foreign complications. They could never have had any real doubt of our sympathy with their desire to place themselves in the position to which they knew China was entitled among the Great Powers of the world.

CHAPTER XXII

1927, 1928

AT this period, that is after the capture of Nanking in March 1927, the capital was moved from Peking to Nanking, and even at the risk of repetition it may be well briefly to trace the split between South and North which only terminated when Chiang Kai-shek assumed real control of the destinies of China. I will only deal with facts as I know them.

The Boxer Rising in 1900 was confined to North China. Owing to the prompt action of the Yangtse Viceroys at Wuchang and Nanking, with the exception of Ch'ü Chou in the Province of Chêkiang, there were no massacres of foreigners in South China. Nevertheless the South was made to pay its full share of the Boxer Indemnity. This was resented. The South also bitterly resented the concessions made to foreign Powers by the Northern Government, and grew accustomed to coupling the Powers with the decadent Manchu Government as being responsible for the woes of China.

When the educational scheme for training Chinese students was inaugurated from funds returned to China by America out of her revised share of the Boxer Indemnity, the large majority of students went from South China. Very naturally they readily absorbed Republican ideals and conceived a dislike for Imperialistic domination, and it was perhaps not strange that we became typical of all that was objectionable and aggressive in the dealings of the Imperialistic Powers with China, and although other countries reaped full advantage for themselves from our Treaties, we were held mainly responsible for compelling China to accept and to adhere to these objectionable and to them "unequal" agreements.

Canton became a hotbed of disaffection and Republican ideals were carefully disseminated during the years 1900–1911. An unsuccessful outbreak at Canton was suppressed, and it was in Wuchang on 10th October 1911 that the Revolution started. It was speedily successful, but, although the Emperor abdicated

and the President established himself in Peking, the country was not unified and the South was not satisfied. From 1911 to 1922 was the period during which the War Lords flourished and civil war was rampant throughout the country. I can only touch on this as I can only write on what I saw, what I know. In 1915 the great leader Yüan Shih-k'ai was President and determined to centralise the power of all China in Peking. He received the solid backing of Great Britain in particular. He appointed chosen lieutenants as Governors General of the important provinces, but, as I have shown already, he made the mistake of ignoring Yunnan Province in the far South-West. The Governor of Yunnan Province struck at him through his most trusted lieutenant in the Province of Szechuan, and although the North sent a strong army to Chungking to save the situation, nothing was accomplished; the provinces of the West and South-West broke definitely from the North. Yüan Shih-k'ai made himself Emperor but only enjoyed his triumph for a short spell as he died in June 1916. He was detested by the officials in the South, and the vigorous support accorded him by British officials in North China was not overlooked. I was not infrequently reminded of it by certain members of the National Government with whom I became so closely acquainted in Nanking at a later date.

After the death of Yüan there ensued a period of inter-provincial strife during which various War Lords, especially in the Province of Szechuan, were induced by the Northern Government to continue their struggles, causing misery and devastation in hundreds of districts. In those dark days the hope for a unified China seemed dismal indeed. Then came the Washington Conference which proved a keen disappointment to the Chinese. By an agreement arrived at in Washington the Chinese Government was, among other so-called concessions, authorised to levy certain surtaxes on imports. The Cantonese felt that these surtaxes rightly belonged to themselves, and rebelled against remitting them to the Government in Peking to be used as security for loans in which they had no interest whatever, and which in addition served to keep the hated Northern Government in power. As the foreign Powers insisted in supporting the Peking Government, they also became objects of dislike to the Cantonese. It was not long before Canton declared independence

and decided on a campaign against the North. They had frequently sought for the sympathetic understanding of America and Great Britain, but to no purpose, hence in this challenge to the North the foreign Powers were regarded as little less than enemies. Among the Southern leaders was General Chiang Kai-shek, who for years had been the moving spirit in the Whampoa Military Academy. Under the direction of the Russian General Galens their success was complete and the end of 1927 found the National Government established in Nanking, though unruly factions in the North remained to be dealt with, and disaffected military leaders continued their attempts to maintain independent commands in many districts, having but little moral purpose as a basis for any of their actions, and rating the possession of wealth and power as of higher value than love of country.

Chiang Kai-shek always knew that combination after combination would be formed against him, but he believed in himself, he had personal conviction, and owing to consuming sincerity and an overwhelming faith in the importance of the task he set himself to perform unswervingly, he pursued his way, greatly daring, believing ever that something inside himself was superior to circumstances.

Thus it was that, after the repudiation of extremist views, Chiang Kai-shek felt it was safe to continue with his expedition against the North. This led to a clash with the Japanese at Tsinan. The immediate result of this clash was that once more the thoughtful among the members of the National Government told the General that he must come to terms with Great Britain and settle the Nanking Incident. "Great Britain", he was told, "may be difficult to understand and very slow to act, but this caution is due to the fact that they never go back on their word. Hence, they are reluctant to come to definite terms until they are sure that any agreement arrived at will be loyally fulfilled."

The actual settlement of the Nanking Incident entailed long and wearisome negotiations. The most difficult feature of these negotiations was the insistence of the introduction of Treaty Revision by the Chinese negotiators as part of the settlement. It was known that the Chinese Government really regretted what had happened in March, but it was impossible to persuade them

to give a generous public recognition of these feelings of regret, and I always feel that the general attitude of the Chinese Government at this time was unresponsive and ungenerous in view of the astounding restraint we had shown both at Hankow and at Nanking. It was incessantly impressed on us that we must show sympathy towards the aspirations of the National Government. This we were always ready to do, but for a satisfactory solution of problems of this nature it is no use to be told by one side "You do not really know our psychology", when the whole time what is required is a mutual sympathetic understanding of racial psychology. There is always a danger in dealing with Chinese idealism. I can hardly remember an occasion when it has not proved dangerous. For to accede to idealistic notions in political discussions is always mistaken by the Oriental as the weakness of complacency. A consistently firm attitude is always understood. Half-way measures, such as payments under protests when the levy is not officially recognised, have always been inventions of the devil and proved of little value, whereas in many cases which I could quote in my own career respect has been won by dealing calmly and justly but firmly and undeviatingly.

Many at this time knew our motives, knew the genuine friendliness and sympathy and, I may add, the extraordinary foresight which inspired them, and admired them. A story which always appealed to me, which was told me by an American in Hankow, was that of an old man in the native city at the time of the rush on the British Concession who was crying to himself in the streets and, when asked what worried him, replied that he should have lived to have seen a day of such utter disgrace when his countrymen had forgotten what they owed to people who had been so consistently their friends. I like to think, although naturally I did not know, that those in England who were directing us had the firm knowledge of the strength of a power which knew it could smite, but which stayed its hand and continued to do so, for this patience, I am certain, has been admired and recognised by many Chinese. It is true that the fact that we were patient led some of the Chinese in power to think we ought to go ahead and take individual action, such as the abolition of extra-territoriality, and based their thoughts on the fact that Sir Austen Chamberlain had made his offer to China in December 1926

independently and that we had sent the British Expeditionary Force to China without reference to other Powers. As a matter of fact, the British Expeditionary Force, under General Duncan, did a world of good and left a record such as no body of foreign troops had ever before left in China. The Chinese officials used to pretend that they resented the presence of these soldiers in Shanghai, but I often pointed out that as a matter of fact when history was written the presence of this British force in Shanghai would be proved to be one of the main factors which assisted the National Government to establish themselves on a firm basis. For with this, the finest body of men and best-equipped force ever seen in China, guarding Shanghai, it was obvious that the National Government were freed from all danger of Communism in this great financial centre and were therefore left free from anxiety within and able to curb military rapacity without. I was once laughingly told by a leading official to whom I had given these ideas that they came to him as entirely new and he added, "Put by you we can accept in a true spirit things said which, when said by others, sound insulting."

Before the Nanking settlement was finally signed I had to put up with a good deal of trouble and with matters which might have proved stumbling-blocks to anything like friendly relations unless taken with the fullest measure of understanding. The main trouble was the occupation of foreign residences by soldiers. I have passed a foreign residence occupied by soldiers accompanied by a lot of scallywag children who yelled at me "Kill! Kill!" using the Chinese word for slaying a pig or an ox instead of the ordinary word for killing. The soldiers took no pains whatever to keep the residences which they occupied clean. The filth of these buildings defied description. For example, the Consulate General at Nanking was converted into a cholera hospital where there was not even a medical attendant and in which, when men died, they were buried in the garden with one leg out of the ground to show where they were. The whole of one side of the compound was also converted into a latrine and large notices were affixed to the pillars of the porch at the main entrance pointing the way to these various places. The Vice-Consulate was absolutely wantonly destroyed, the villagers being permitted by the soldiers to come and take what they liked for the payment

of a dollar for a morning or two dollars for the whole day. I expostulated against this, merely to be told that I was grossly exaggerating. I was so annoyed that I asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs to depute the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, a capable youngster known as Captain Chang and who spoke English, to come with me and verify my statements. I was accompanied by Captain Thompson, R.N. On arriving at the Vice-Consulate, seeing banisters cut down, window frames torn out, floors wrenched away, not a door left in any room, not a pane of glass in any window, he merely remarked that this was nothing — it was ordinary robbery, whereas to his certain knowledge robbery with violence occurred every night both in London and New York. I kept my temper and satisfied myself by saying that a Vice-Consulate in London in charge of British Government troops had never been and would never be treated in this manner. When it came to the question of paying the Government claim for rebuilding and reconditioning these two buildings I was actually asked personally and unofficially to plead with His Majesty's Government to reduce their bill. I had my chance and took it ! The question was not referred to His Majesty's Government. The fact was that the men of the Long Gown had no authority over the soldiers and that the soldiers had been encouraged to indulge in wanton destruction. Still, in spite of all this unpleasantness, I always felt at the bottom of my heart after my experiences in Changsha, Chengtu and Amoy that a response was possible. In these trying days I relied chiefly on Admiral Tyrwhitt and Rear-Admiral Tweedie for advice and sympathy. What I really owe to them for encouragement to persist in what I felt was a correct attitude in spite of appearance to the contrary it is impossible to record.

With these feelings in my mind I started my tenure of office as Consul General at Nanking. It was not until August 1928 I was able to take up my residence in the Consulate General, but I had a busy time handling various cases that cropped up from my office in Shanghai.

Outwardly the situation in October 1927 was not bright, or even hopeful. Chinese troops had overrun all the Concessions in the Yangtse, and everywhere except the former Concession in Hankow they were in occupation of British premises, which

were steadily being ruined. No premises were safe from their depredations; properties of firms and missionary establishments, including even churches, all suffered from their hideous attentions.

In Chinkiang it was unsafe to live in the Concession and foreigners lived in house-boats moored inside the landing stages of the hulks belonging to the various Shipping Companies. A gunboat, sloop or destroyer was usually detached for their protection. Chinkiang was under my jurisdiction and it was not long before I was summoned there to handle a difficult case. Two British subjects, very foolishly to my mind, went to the Concession to visit the property of their firm, which was occupied by troops. They were very roughly handled and it was fortunate there was not a major disaster. The senior naval officer present took the view that British subjects had been beaten on British premises in a British Concession and proposed such drastic reprisals that I was commissioned to proceed at once to Chinkiang and settle the matter. Fortunately I met an official with whom I could reason, and I was able to persuade him to accompany me on board H.M.S. —— and to apologise to the Commander. The latter wanted positive guarantees that nothing of the kind should occur again, but I did not deem this reasonable, for how could a Civil official guarantee the behaviour of troops who were thoroughly out of hand, and what earthly use was a guarantee that could not be kept, except as an excuse for endless trouble? I therefore accepted the apology as closing the incident. I then took him to my house-boat and came to a thorough understanding with him. This was only one case. There were many other similar cases and I felt keenly, whether the Nanking Incident was settled or not, I ought to get into close touch with the heads of the Government at Nanking, even if I lived in a house-boat attached to the cruiser in port, which would emphasise our attitude regarding residence in their capital pending a settlement of the outstanding questions connected with the incident.

I realised the difficulties of the situation, but was by no means appalled by them, for I had behind me the experiences of Changsha (Central China), Newchwang (North), Chengtu (West) and Amoy (South). I considered that if we were to produce a better atmosphere there must be close personal contact. I did not feel this policy of itself implied taking everything sitting down, though

I knew it would require vision and entail infinite patience and unwearying tact. Still it seemed to me that if a serious attempt, which I longed to make, was to be set on foot to guide China's huge national movement on lines which would least threaten the peace of our Eastern possessions, especially Malaya, it could only be done by rigorous personal contact and incessant interviews. Moreover, many Britons were itching for a major incident which would compel the Government to give the bullying soldiers a sound drubbing, nor did they count the consequences, and I thought we ought to do all in our power studiously to avoid incidents which made the presence of a Consul to check the indiscretions of certain Britons eminently desirable.

Chinese merchants and nearly all the officials were very keen we should reopen Nanking Consulate General. They made no attempt to conceal this keenness and expressed genuine sorrow for the Nanking Incident, which they strongly maintained was the work of Communists. By December 1927 in Nanking there were as many placards "overthrow Communism" as there were "overthrow Imperialism". The Chinese authorities did all they could to persuade foreigners to return to Nanking, and invited certain well-known personages not connected with the Legation to visit them. They deliberately strove to give the impression that we were blocking the settlement and not the National Government, but this was grossly unfair, as at this time their leading authorities showed a lamentable lack of sincerity in their negotiations, and instead of expressing a generous desire to atone for a deed they deeply regretted, strove to use the settlement as a means of bargaining with us in the way of extracting promises regarding Treaty Revision. I always regretted this attitude, and indeed it was unworthy of a great people.

Naturally I could see the difficulties which stood in the way of a settlement. Perhaps the most serious was the refusal of the Government to punish the General in command of the troops who were responsible for the outrage, though he maintained it was the work of a subordinate and that he arrived too late. Still, it appeared that the Government had not in fact effective control of its subordinates, and unless that was secured, could not be recognised. In any case the powers-that-be did not favour the house-boat scheme, except for occasional visits, and I was condemned

to strain at the leash in Shanghai. I was compelled to agree that the Nationalist Government lacked effective control over their subordinates, but in such a gigantic upheaval I felt this was understandable. I even felt that in the hideous mass of wrong and folly there was true national feeling which could be carefully tended. However hard it might be, I was consistently determined not to be blinded by the exasperating, even criminal, actions of a section of the party, but to endeavour to take a very wide view, get at what was good and develop it sympathetically and literally. I knew the good was there and that ultimately we would search it out.

Throughout the winter of 1927-8 we did all we could to advance a *rapprochement*, but the Chinese authorities persisted in giving no tangible evidence of any desire to atone for the outrages. The final break with Russia had, however, occurred and it was hoped they would see the necessity of coming to terms with us. After all, we were only waiting for some indication of genuine good faith. To my mind this never really came, but the position was so impossible it was not surprising that, after a break-down in March, terms were finally arrived at in August 1928. Sir Sidney Barton and myself went to Nanking on 9th August for the signature of the agreement, and even at the last minute doubts were expressed whether Dr. C. T. Wang would accept the reparations notes, but I felt sure he would. These I had to type myself and borrowed a typewriter and paper from the Standard Oil Company. Little did they know how much of their paper was destroyed before I produced a perfect copy.

Before proceeding to Nanking I had occasion to visit T. V. Soong, the Minister of Finance, and perhaps the most outstanding figure in the National Government at that time. He had assisted in obtaining the release of a steamer which had been detained for carrying salt in contravention of certain local regulations. When he told me she was released I said "Thank Heaven", at which he laughed heartily. T. V., as he was known to all his friends, was an interesting character. He always struck me as fearlessly straight, and unwilling to allow himself to be used as a mere money-collecting machine for those in power. He had the best interests of China keenly at heart, and never favoured wild expenditure on military ventures. His first interview with Sir

Miles Lampson left a lasting impression on him; he had been surprised at Sir Miles's frankness and the unreserved manner in which he had spoken to him. Above all, he remembered the advice to take the small jumps first. He was very keen on the centralisation of taxation, but knew what he was up against, how each province claimed the right to retain revenues from its own products. He said he hoped when I got to Nanking I would call and chat over things in a friendly manner and not limit myself to formal official communications, as he vastly preferred a chat to correspondence.

I said I knew of his Russian proclivities, and he replied that in spite of the anti-Communist purge and repudiation of Russian extremists he had not changed. He knew my opinion was that Communism was fighting the Anglo-Saxon ideal and merely using China, for we had touched on this at a dinner-party when we first met, and he was interested in my having written down the oath of the Elder Brothers Society in Chinese for his wife. He said he could not entirely share my views regarding the Russian attitude and felt Russia had worthy aspirations. In any case Russia had provided the impetus to the National Movement which had carried it to the Yangtse Valley, and Borodin and Galens were extremely capable men. Without the Russian impetus the National Government would never have secured what they had. In his opinion Russia was finding out her mistakes, the destructive factors in Communism would ultimately give way to the landowner, the lover of his own soil, and he believed Russia would work out her own salvation. I hoped this was indeed so, for truly there was hope for the future if the non-aggressor Powers, Great Britain, United States, Russia, France and China, could really find a common basis in peaceful development, and not deny to others the freedom of thought they so dearly cherished themselves. China's actions as regards the various Powers were always under the shadow of the Most-Favoured-Nation clause, and whereas they might often have been willing to come to terms with any Power on specific subjects, they would never concede points from which Japan under that clause would also reap the benefit. After the settlement of the Nanking Incident with America and Great Britain, China turned her attention more and more to the Japanese question. Although

relations in Nanking were correct, and Japan went far to placate China in her dealings in the capital, this was not the case in many other parts of China. The students settled down once more under modified arrangements in the American and British schools and colleges and all former misunderstandings were wisely forgotten and generously forgiven, but they were very outspoken in their denunciations of Japan, and to those who were watching it seemed inevitable that this conduct if not checked could only end in serious trouble.

CHAPTER XXIII

1928-1930

I FINALLY landed at Nanking on 25th August 1928. Rear-Admiral Tweedie gave me a small reception on his flagship, H.M.S. *Bee*, and turned out a guard when I left the ship. On the pontoon was a guard of honour from H.M.S. *Serapis*. I was provided with a house by the Chinese authorities. Everything was done by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to make me welcome, and the Union Jack flew with the Chinese flag at the main entrance. I did not, however, like the idea of being the guest of the Chinese Government, and knew they required the house for the many visitors constantly coming to Nanking. I therefore rented offices in a building belonging to a British firm, happily situated opposite the residence of Dr. Wang, and lived with the Commissioner of Customs, Johnston, an old friend of mine. The Office of Works at once started on repairs to the Consulate General, and it was not long before I was able to use the office as a home, the main office serving as dining-room and the strong room making a very suitable bathroom. My first visit was to the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Y. L. Tong, who proved a real friend. He was related to Feng Yü-hsiang. He said I was very welcome and all were glad to see me as I was the first Consul General in Nanking, and he hoped the other Powers would follow our example. Nothing now stood in the way of good relations ; a new era had begun and there would be no going back. He affirmed there was a distinct desire to draw closer to Great Britain and everyone was pleased to have the representative of Great Britain back again. I told him how glad I was at last to be at my own post, and that I had no intention of harping on bygones. We must settle down to improving relations. I defined my duties as being in Nanking to interpret the wishes of Sir Miles and would do so as faithfully as I could. I knew his wishes were a gradual handling of cases systematically and methodically, working up, rushing nothing, in fact, in the phrase he had used to T. V., " taking the small jumps first ". Tong said Dr.

Wang was most anxious Sir Miles should visit Nanking and was prepared to give him a rousing reception. He added, as a hint, perhaps a Tariff Autonomy Treaty could be drawn up before he came and the Treaty signed at the same time. Like T. V. Soong he harped on the centralisation of Finance being the real problem and said it really looked as if Federated States was the solution. I replied that I knew from experience in Hunan, Szechuan and Fukien that the Federal spirit was very strong, but I feared so much was said of a united China it was not a solution which could be mentioned. China was united in her National spirit, but provincial feeling was very strong. I did not add what I felt, that it was a regrettable fact that the only thing which really united China was an anti-foreign outburst.

It was after this interview that I got to know Dr. C. T. Wang, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and our official relations at this difficult period developed into a close and intimate friendship which has lasted to the present day. Chenting T. Wang was a remarkable man and I never feel that his country truly appreciated the outstanding work he did during 1929–30 when he negotiated twenty-nine treaties and agreements with the various foreign Powers. Many considered him a " dangerous " man, but in our official relations I never found him anything but absolutely straightforward. He always did what he said he would, and he never let me down. He possessed an outstanding personality and had the keenest mind in China. He may not have been as profound as some of the older members of the Government, but with his American training he possessed a perfect knowledge of the West and Western ways, and this he combined with a wealth of knowledge of old Chinese lore. A talk with him was fascinating. I think he revelled in a diplomatic tussle, certainly he never scorned a challenge. Frankness met an immediate response from him, and I have never known him to abuse a confidence, and we had many. He had, too, the supreme gift of completely relaxing when work was thrown aside, and no-one who ever enjoyed the hospitality of this generous and perfect host will forget the whole-hearted enjoyment of a dinner at his house. Many were the merry bouts of the well-known finger game which I had with him and his guests, many are the cups of his excellent wine which warmed and gladdened the heart which

I have partaken of at his table. All my memories of him are happy.

When I started in on my difficult job the juniors in the Foreign Ministry were apt to remind me I was only a Consul General and not a diplomatic official, and that I could not expect direct access to their Minister, but Dr. Wang soon knocked that on the head by inviting me constantly to his home to discuss matters with him, and the junior officials in the Ministry soon took the hint and we all became very close friends and I was exceptionally well received by all whenever I had occasion to call. Dr. Wang, whom I must call C. T. as it is as the friend C. T. I ever think of him, also arranged interviews for me with all the leading members of the Government. He gave me a special dinner very soon after my arrival, and from that moment my position was assured, in any case so far as his Ministry was concerned.

Among the first officials I called on were Ho Ying-ch'in, the General in command, and T'an Yen-k'ai, Joint Chairman of the Central Executive Committee with Li Lieh-chün and at that time heads of the Government. General Ho is a Kueichou man, and at once we had a link in common, for Kueichou troops had formed my escort from Chungking to Chengtu on my arrival in Szechuan. He also knew the Governor Tai K'an who committed suicide when beaten by the Szechuan troops in July 1927. General Hsiung K'o-ch'en was also known to him and I was able to tell him the exact details of his end, the curious dream he had in which he had foreseen his death. I refrained from politics as it was my first interview. I was treated with marked courtesy and as he received me alone was able to talk freely. General Ho enjoyed shooting, at which he was a novice, and used to shoot with Sir Miles. He had no share in the regrettable incidents which preceded the establishment of the National Government in Nanking. In fact when the march north started from Canton, Admiral Sah, a loyal friend of Britain, deeply respected by all Chinese and then in retirement at Foochow, wrote and told me no trouble need be feared from the troops under General Ho's command, and spoke very highly of him. He was consistently friendly and when I left Nanking did much to pave the way for me in Hankow. He is one of the most loyal of all the adherents

of Chiang Kai-shek and as Minister for War has rendered valuable services. Quiet, modest, genuine and a perfect host, he was in every way an attractive character.

With the heads of the Government T'an Yen-k'ai and Li Lieh-chün I had a long interview. They received me with a large guard and marked courtesy. I told T'an Yen-k'ai it was a curious coincidence that when I first visited Nanking in 1901 I found a Hunanese, Liu K'un-yi, in charge as Viceroy and now I found another Hunanese, himself, at the head of the Government. Before talking further he said he wished to thank me for saving the lives of the eighteen Hunanese students in Chengtu during 1917, all of whom had returned safely to Changsha. We then spoke of Changsha in 1908–10, when he had been first Chairman of the Provincial Assembly, and he remembered I had been there. We had many friends in common whose names, though twenty years had elapsed, I remembered. He told Li Lieh-chün that when I was Consul in Changsha all the foreign properties had been completely destroyed during rice riots, and that the Consulate alone had been absolutely untouched. I told him not only untouched but even my chickens were fed by the Hunan troops, who looked after the place for me immediately after the riots. The way my property had been saved then, I said, had left a lasting memory and it was my gratitude for what had been done that made it a pleasure to help the Hunanese in Szechuan. They were keenly interested in all my stories of Szechuan, and much tickled, and impressed by how much I knew of the Ko Lao Hui (the Elder Brothers Society). These stories, and tales of Amoy, paved the way for a good mutual understanding and, as I always found was the case, they listened all the more readily as I never used an interpreter. There was one present, but after a few remarks to show he knew English he lapsed into Chinese.

Li Lieh-chün said they had read very carefully the pronouncements of the British Government regarding policy in China, and saw in them a real sympathy and were convinced of their sincerity. He hoped our relations would get closer and closer. I said there could be no doubt about it, look at Malaya, where the best spirit of co-operation prevailed. Li then turned to T'an and said, just as if I was not in the room or understood no Chinese, " It is very rare to find a foreign official who knows so much about China,

even to remembering the names in full of all his many friends." He then turned to me and said he hoped we would always have close relations and see much of each other. After questions regarding Ireland and our relations with Germany the interview ended. Li Lieh-chün followed up this friendly beginning by inviting me to an intimate family party at which his wife and the wife and children of an old Szechuan friend were present. He did not hold office long and soon gave way to the rising Chiang Kai-shek. T'an Yen-k'ai died within the year.

At this time I also met Admiral Ch'en Shao-kuan, Minister of Marine, who gave me a very warm welcome. As the Chinese Navy was so closely connected with the Province of Fukien, and Admiral Lin of Amoy was a great friend of his, it was not long before we were on intimate terms. He was an invaluable friend, and I was always sure of a hearty welcome from him. In fact, he used to keep a specially large glass as my private cocktail glass, and this was always produced by his servant when I called. He was unstinting in his hospitality to all British naval officers, and if sufficient funds had been forthcoming would have developed the Chinese Navy with our assistance on sound lines. I enjoyed few moments more than a chat at the Admiralty with him, though C. T. is always excluded when I make statements of this nature, — but my relations with C. T. were quite exceptional.

I had only been in Nanking a month when Dr. Wang began to press for a visit from Sir Miles. He wanted a long visit, not just a day or two but for a really long time, and suggested that if lack of accommodation at Nanking was a stumbling-block, could not Sir Miles go to Shanghai ? He was anxious we should take a lead in the matter, and he especially wanted Sir Miles on account of his close personal friendship with Sir Austen Chamberlain. He knew that the question of the removal of the Legation from Peking to Nanking had not even been considered, but was insistent that Nanking would remain the capital. From this he went on in a very frank manner to ask whether I could have diplomatic rank locally, as although he was always very pleased to see me and much enjoyed our talks, as he had amply proved by quite voluntarily and unasked having invited me for chats, yet for departmental reasons it was rather difficult for him always to deal with a Consul General. There was much reason in what he said.

I pointed out the difficulties and he was kind enough to say he wanted to deal with me as I had such a wide knowledge of Chinese affairs and we understood each other, but the point was, as Minister for Foreign Affairs he wanted a diplomatic officer to deal with. He was right, for the ordinary channel of communication for a Consul General was the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. The unkind thought that in all this Dr. Wang was trying to force our hands; I am convinced he was not. He was actuated by a genuine desire to get right down to solid constructive work with us and I felt this desire should be met. In spite of my humble rank, Dr. Wang never failed to show me the courtesies paid to the highest diplomatic officers. He invariably came out to the car when I left and remained standing till it had gone. His attitude was reflected in all his staff, sentries, servants and orderlies. I knew we had not yet got down to hard bargaining or negotiations, but I felt the way was paved and that there was a real desire for a good understanding. I knew, too, with his outstanding personality that a visit from Sir Miles would work wonders. I told Dr. Wang, however, there could be no question of a visit at that time as it would take still six weeks more before the Consulate General was once more fit for habitation.

It was a peaceful Sunday afternoon and just together with no-one else C. T. gave me the workings of his mind.

I do not think I am abusing a confidence when I repeat the impression this conversation, held thirteen years ago, left on my mind, for his views were frank and showed the honest convictions which guided his relations with us, and I often feel that the work he accomplished in creating a friendly atmosphere in Nanking has been forgotten by foreigners, much as the zeal he displayed in his passionate love for China has been forgotten by his own countrymen. He told me he had been a very close personal friend of their late great leader, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, and that during many a talk the Doctor had spoken of the strength and integrity of Great Britain. In the early days of the Revolution, Great Britain had looked down on the Nationalist cause, and all our support had been given to Yüan Shih-k'ai and less directly to the War Lords. This attitude had found its echo in Hongkong and Tientsin, and the *North China Daily News* (the leading British paper in China, published in Shanghai) adopted a scoffing attitude and the actions of the

Nationalist party were frequently subjected to ridicule. This was felt very keenly, and although Dr. Sun and himself still held to their admiration of Great Britain's national integrity, the two countries drifted apart. Dr. Wang, a keen student of British history, felt this acutely. The Kuomintang (Nationalists) were never given a chance by Great Britain and the Reds saw their advantage and took it. He frankly admitted he was largely responsible for drawing China and the Soviet together, but he had always told the Russian Ambassador he would have nothing to do with extremists. He had spoken frankly about the deadly evils of Communism, and had enquired what exactly the Soviet meant by their principles of equality; whether in their policy brain was to have no reward whatever. He did not at all approve of the actions of Borodin, but Communism ate like a canker into the Kuomintang. The party was rotten to the core with Communism and its very existence was threatened, and then . . . much as it was deplored and loathed by all thinking Chinese, came the Nanking Incident, now, broadly speaking, to be considered a blessing. All this he had spoken about to General Chiang Kai-shek.

Thoughtful members of the party after the Nanking Incident became aware of the hideous thing in their midst which was slowly destroying them and the necessary check was afforded. The advance on Peking was stopped. This was a blessing, for had there been no Nanking Incident they would have marched straight on to Peking leaving all the rottenness behind them. They were compelled to pause and this enabled them to clean up thoroughly from the Yangtse to Canton, and thus the party became stronger. The further move north was made and then came the affair with the Japanese at Tsinan. The moment *that* followed he saw Chiang Kai-shek and told him he must at once hold out a hand to Great Britain. The words he used to General Chiang were: "They are really a great nation: truly a great people. Treat them well and you will get an immediate response, but do anything in their back and they smite you." He went on to impress on the General that he would know where he stood with us. We were dead straight and he would always get a clean deal. We always meant what we said, though we were hard and arrogant and for that reason misunderstood. He then said to me

in his inimitable way : " We have very much in common ; we too are arrogant — look at a hundred years ago when we talked of barbarians and foreign devils ; but though arrogant you are the greatest nation in the world and we *must* work together."

He said we had been going uphill for a long time, but had now got over the rough places and were on the level, and he hoped our relations would grow stronger and stronger. Whenever I met him, Dr. Wang pressed me to urge Sir Miles to come to Nanking, insisting he represented the really great interests in China. He was very upset at the behaviour of the military in not restoring foreign properties and had told them bluntly their use of private property was a scandal. He had worked hard to have all properties restored, and had not made himself very popular in this respect. I discussed with him the formation of an International Club as a centre where all could meet on a friendly footing. He seized on the idea with all his well-known enthusiasm and said he would support me to the full if I would co-operate with him in this matter.

Dr. Wang emphasised his desire for friendly relations on China's national day, 10th October. The Japanese Consul had been anxious to ascertain whether I would be present, but I told him I had no instructions and only intended delivering an official message from Sir Miles at Dr. Wang's residence. He said he understood I had instructions to be present, but this was not the case. He intimated he would go. I had intended merely to call on the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs when I received a telephone message from Dr. Wang saying he wished to see me at once. I went, and he insisted on taking me in his own car with his wife and daughter to the review which was being held by General Chiang in honour of the day. He introduced me to General Chiang and Madame, who invited me to call on her as she would like a talk. I was later to get to know them both very intimately. Dr. Wang again invited me to his residence that afternoon when cinema pictures were taken. In the evening, and again on the following evening, the Secretaries of the Ministry had dinner-parties in the largest restaurant in the city. I was the only foreigner invited. All during these friendly festivities I was bearing in mind Sir Miles's oft-repeated counsel to me to go slow, and to proceed in a systematic and methodical manner ; but

I often felt our slow methods were misinterpreted, except by Dr. Wang, who knew we attached weight to what we said and did not plunge and then withdraw from what was promised. It was not always an easy job to convince him of good-will when he wanted action, but matters in the first seven weeks had gone much better than I had ever dared to hope.

Matters were not, however, always so easy and an incident occurred which threatened very unpleasant consequences. My host, the Commissioner of Customs, was set on by four soldiers when walking on the city wall. He was thrown down and sat on by three while the fourth kicked him in the face. Fortunately he had only soft shoes on, but Johnston was a terrible sight when he got home. He refused to give the police any help in their investigations, but added to my difficulties by giving the Shanghai press all the details. This was regrettable as there was a section of the press only too keen to prove that the troops were not under control, and that Nanking was not safe for foreigners. I always believe the attack was instigated by his chauffeur, whom he had cursed in public for not obeying a police signal, and had also beaten across the shoulders for driving a little lad on a bicycle into the ditch. My surmise was confirmed by the police, but we never obtained any proof, and although General Chiang ordered the strictest enquiries to be made, the case was never satisfactorily dealt with.

I was also unable to obtain the assent of the Chinese Government to the formal reopening of the Consulate General. Dr. Wang was ready to agree to providing a guard and a band to play the National Anthem. Admiral Ch'en was also willing, but I thought a British guard ought also to be present as Admiral Tyrwhitt had expressed his willingness to be present at the ceremony of raising the flag. He would not agree to this as he thought it would be a mistake to publicly revive memories of an incident which was a hideous dream to many of them, and he personally wanted it forgotten. I was anxious that the National Government having repudiated Communism should do a really outstanding public act of recognition for their grief at what happened, and be thoroughly open and generous in sharing a dignified official ceremony. The military authorities refused to furnish a guard for the purpose, and all thought of a ceremonial

reopening of the Consulate General was abandoned.

I considered this a pity, for the soldiers had been taught before they left Canton on their march to the Yangtse to hate the foreigner, and I think some public act of the nature indicated would have done much to eradicate a feeling which even then was still very bitter. Seeing, too, that the Doctor and Harbour Master had been murdered in the grounds, and the Consul General wounded, the residence converted into a cholera hospital and the dead buried in the lawn and the garden converted into a latrine, it seemed to me a reasonable request that the newly established Government should signify their pleasure at the complete restoration of friendly relations by assisting at a public reopening of the Consulate General. It showed a lack of moral greatness, for in their hearts they must have known what was the really big thing to do, instead of being afraid a certain section of the residents of Nanking might object to their actions.

It was all rather distressing as Dr. Wang was incessantly pressing me to persuade Sir Miles to come to Nanking, but he quite rightly was not disposed to put himself in the position of being involved in controversies and would not come until morally certain that the new Tariff Treaty was to all intents and purposes agreed to in advance. This meant really hard work, as I knew he was anxious to come and fully realised the situation must be much clearer before he did so. As the Tariff Treaty implied recognition of the Government it was not a question that could be hurried.

The failure of the Chinese Government to come up to the scratch over the reopening ceremony also seriously vexed the Minister, and it was not at all times easy to explain the workings of the minds of a Government which consisted of seventeen members. Thus I might discuss a question with Dr. Wang, who usually saw the sensible standpoint and could recognise we had our point of view, and go home full of hope. I would then learn the matter had to go to the Government, and would be told some of the seventeen members were very "sensitive" on the point. This sounds ridiculous, but in the early days the National Government, with some outstanding exceptions, were extremely sensitive. There did not appear to be anyone strong enough to say this is the right thing to do and we are going to do it; the

majority of the military were frankly anti-foreign and the student element was not too friendly. Thus in this case of a ceremony, the majority of the Government rigidly refused to carry out our wishes, refusing to try to understand why there should be any ceremony, and completely failing to recognise the effect a really great gesture would have had on the public at home.

One of the most interesting of all the officials I met during my early days at Nanking was Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang. I had always wished to meet the Christian General, and had ever been delighted in the tale of how he baptised a whole regiment with a hose-pipe, though the truth of this story was subsequently denied. My first visit was not very promising. Marshal Feng was an outstanding personality. He was just over six feet tall and hugely proportioned. He dressed in the simplest clothes and lived a very frugal life. I was not very politely received and to most of my remarks he merely said, " You are perfectly correct." His voice was gentle and he looked at me very, very straightly. His only real comment was about the curse newspaper correspondents were. He said they were the curse of the world and ought all to be killed, but perhaps he had in mind the many Japanese correspondents in Nanking. After vain efforts to chat I said, " I expect you are terribly busy," to which he promptly replied, " I am," and left the room. His secretary looked at me rather blankly and I said, " We had better go," and so we left. Again his guards were not polite.

Six days later I had some confidential information for his ears alone. I wrote and asked to see him. His Chief of Staff replied that Feng had nothing to do with diplomats and that I had better see the Foreign Minister. I sent back my letter adding my information was for his ears alone, and he could see me or not as he wished. He at once sent an orderly to escort me to his residence. This time his guard presented arms. We were absolutely alone and he let himself go ; he was extremely pleasant and very confidential. He invited me again to see him five days later and this time the guard were at the end of the lane waiting for me. He completely unbent and told how Borodin had abused him for throwing over Russia when he replied, " Your ideas of a People's Revolution is massacre of the people." He was delighted with this, which, rendered in Chinese, is a play on words. (*Ni-ti*

Kuo Min kê ming shih k'ê ming Kuo Min.) He regretted he had only been to Moscow and had not visited Britain and America. He was very anxious to send military students to England and in all he said seemed keenly anxious to obtain a wider view. These interviews came to the ears of Dr. Wang and I was pleased to hear Marshal Feng had really enjoyed them. In any case they paved the way for a very friendly and most successful visit when Sir Miles finally came to Nanking.

CHAPTER XXIV

1928-1930

IT was 7th December when this happy date arrived. The work had been hard, but the way had been thoroughly prepared and I was convinced the visit would be an outstanding success. Sir Miles came by train and was accompanied by the Chinese Secretary, Commercial Counsellor, a Secretary of Legation, private secretary and cipher officer. We used to speak of the visits from Peking, which were made periodically, as visits of the circus. Dr. Wang met Sir Miles at the station and entertained him at dinner the same evening. It was a very cheerful function. Visits were paid to many officials, the most important being General Chiang Kai-shek and Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang. General and Madame Chiang also entertained the Minister at lunch. On 12th December the Minister took the night train to pay a short visit to Shanghai. The next day, Dr. Wang being absent in Shanghai, a mob of one thousand students attacked his residence, which was only a few hundred yards from the Consulate General. Two gendarmes came to me and asked to use our 'phone and to close the gates. Soldiers expostulated with the students, but none made any attempt to stop the riots, fanned by agitators who considered Dr. Wang was making too many concessions to foreigners. They tried to burn his house, but his servants put out the fire, by throwing water instead of oil from oil-cans on the blazing furniture. But his car was destroyed and half the beautiful new glass and crockery from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Peking, glass-topped tables were smashed and furniture completely wrecked. The mob did not come to the Consulate General.

On 15th December Sir Miles returned and by the 19th everything was ready for signing the Treaty. Four of the leading members of the Government came to dinner and we talked while the final drafts and notes were being compared. At 11 P.M. Dr. Wang 'phoned and asked if Sir Miles and I would go and have a rubber while the Treaty was being finally polished up. We went. Dr. Wang and I played against Sir Miles and one of

the leading secretaries and lost two dollars. We had excellent games. At 1.15 A.M. on 20th December the Treaty was signed and healths were drunk, Dr. Wang kindly saying, "You owe most of this to Hewlett."

The next day Sir Miles presented his credentials. I had great difficulty in struggling into my uniform, which was lamentably tight. We left the Consulate General at 9 A.M. We were in five cars with Chinese officials in attendance. Soldiers and police lined the whole of the route and large guards were drawn up in the street in front of headquarters and in the courtyard inside. I had a major disaster on entering my car as everyone of the seams in front of my trousers gave way, though mercifully the buttons held. Still it left an unseemly display of black lining and the ability of the buttons to do their duty caused me intense anxiety; so long as I could cover this ungainly patch with my hat I was quite all right, but it was unpleasant to have to stand at the salute with the spare hand doing its best to hide the black patch. The ceremony itself was simple and very dignified. General Chiang Kai-shek stood in the middle at the upper end of the room, on one side were the members of the Government, on the other the staff of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and military officials. We lined up behind the Minister and were introduced to General Chiang after the formal presentation of credentials had taken place. There was a very cheerful gathering afterwards. I took Dr. Wang to a corner, told him to look when I removed my hat and see what I was suffering, but not to laugh. Laugh however he did, and duly narrated my dilemma to all at the official lunch he gave immediately afterwards. Sir Miles left for Peking at a quarter to four, crossing the river in H.M.S. *Cockchafer* and receiving salutes from H.M.S. *Suffolk* and the Chinese flagship as he passed. The same evening I went to Shanghai by train for a brief holiday and T. V. Soong very kindly took me in his private car. An unfortunate incident, which had its funny side, happened to the Minister, his staff and three other members of the Diplomatic Body when a Chinese General pinched the engine from their train and left them stranded. The four foreign representatives held an indignation meeting on the platform, but an engine was found, largely patched with matting, which laboriously dragged their train till met by a new engine which finished the

journey in record time. Dr. Wang could not resist a laugh over this unfortunate occurrence, but was genuinely annoyed that it had happened, and as General Chiang Kai-shek was informed of what had taken place there is no doubt that the gross discourtesy shown by the offending General was suitably dealt with.

After the signature of the Treaty I had time to look into other things, and with the help of Dr. Wang the International Club was inaugurated. The building was given and furnished by the Foreign Minister and Dr. Wang was the first president, myself being vice-president. Up to the inauguration of the Club the Consulate General had been the centre of re-union for all foreign diplomats and Members of the Chinese Government, and very happy parties they were. Two or three dinners of eighteen people were given by me monthly ; but it was a heavy expense and Dr. Wang knew this, for no-one in Nanking was more lavish in entertaining than himself. Our ideas were identical. In the words he used when the Club was opened, by an act of kindly courtesy on my birthday which happily coincided with the fourth anniversary of the establishment of the National Government at Canton, he ably expressed these ideas : " We live in the days of international co-operation and it is only meet that we should do all we can to promote better international relations. The Club is intended as such, and it is our hope that we shall make it a point to promote better international friendship, good-will and understanding." While we were in Nanking it fully realised all expectations. There was not a happier meeting-ground for all nationalities anywhere in China.

During Sir Miles's visit attempts were made by one or two of the secretaries in the Foreign Ministry to exclude me from Dr. Wang's official dinner and lunch given in honour of the Minister. These attempts came to his ears and were frustrated by Dr. Wang sending me a personal and individual invitation to be present. It was obvious, however, that having recognised the Government as *de jure* arrangements would have to be made for closer diplomatic liaison, and I was not surprised when early in June Mr. Newton, the Counsellor, was sent to establish himself in Shanghai. It was clearly stated to Dr. Wang that his functions were not intended to supersede, but to supplement mine, and a hope was expressed that the Foreign Minister would continue to appreciate

my services as highly in the future as in the past. I had no doubt whatever that my personal relations with Dr. Wang and other members of the Government would not be affected in the slightest degree, whatever change this appointment might bring in my actual duties, and my memories of my relations with Newton and his successor, Frank Aveling, especially the latter, are of the happiest.

By March 1929 matters were running well for us, but all was not well with the Central Government, and I had many talks with leading officials on the subject. These were entirely personal, but they gave me an insight into the workings of the Chinese official mind. The chief anxieties were caused by disaffection, amounting to open rebellion at Hankow and, less hard to detect, the unceasing efforts of Communists to cause trouble in Nanking. The Hankow revolt was handled firmly. T. V. Soong was accused by those who disliked him, and there were many, of promoting the war, but this was not entirely true. He did not urge his brother-in-law Chiang Kai-shek merely to renew the civil war with a hostile faction, he was advocating the suppression of rank rebellion. No-one wanted war. China had already suffered far too much, but unless the newly established Central Government accepted the direct challenge they had received from Wuchang (opposite Hankow, and the seat of the Governor of the Province of Hupei) they were not worthy of the name of a Government. General Chiang knew the issues involved. He had the men, Soong could provide the money, much as he always detested heavy expenditure for military purposes, and they felt they had public feeling behind them. The attitude of the Christian General Feng Yü-hsiang gave cause for anxiety as his movements were puzzling, but in a talk with T. V. we agreed it was unthinkable Feng would go against the Government, and I knew he had no faith in government by massacre. I did not even think he believed in Soviet extreme methods, and felt the activities of Communists were now confined to trying to work through the poorer classes with the assistance of over-zealous students who were disappointed at not getting Government jobs. As a matter of fact, Feng did not again appear very actively in politics and the revolt was suppressed, but the Communist elements continued to work and

were soon to take the field as a united army.

Catchwords and slogans referring to British Imperialism and the oppressed peoples of the East led to many discussions, and through them all was the incessant placing the blame of all China's sorrows on outside influences, and since 1840 on Great Britain, who was ever blamed for extracting the unequal Treaties. I strove hard to combat the misunderstandings which lay behind a misuse of the word "Imperialism", and maintained that two thousand years hence history would record that the British as a race had never destroyed, they had always developed, and that in every part of the world in which we had held influence that part of the world had benefited.

I told all this to T. V. once and said he could not deny it, it was absolute fact. I knew how easy it was to saddle us with all sorts of evil doings, but the outstanding fact remained and he well knew that in 1927, although we had a large force in Shanghai and a large Fleet, we had maintained them solely for the preservation of order and had taken no punitive action.

I also instanced the liberal beneficence of our sway by our rule in Malaya, where our influence spread mainly out of a desire to protect the noble and brave Chinese traders, whose heroic struggles in Malaya were but little known. The early Chinese traders used to penetrate into the interior of Malaya and at that time it was no crime to murder a Chinese, but whenever a Chinese was murdered two took his place and by patient heroism they established themselves. A man like Sir Hugh Clifford who went to Malaya when only seventeen realised this, had seen the cruel abuse and had gone all-out for law and order. It was really in order to shield the courageous Chinese pioneer that the British Government some fifty years ago took over Malaya to save him from utter lawlessness. T. V. was deeply interested in this story and I wished I could have obtained for him full records of this early history of Chinese in Malaya. I had a very warm corner for T. V., and I think all who met him respected him. He was the victim of the most scandalous personal attacks in Shanghai, which I know he found galling, but he adhered rigidly to what he felt was right. He also helped me with advice on many matters, and in settling irritating questions regarding illegal taxation in the interior, regarding which I was very well in-

formed and often able to give him information which others endeavoured to keep from him.

Communist activities in Nanking seemed so threatening that the manager of the International Export Company, who had a very valuable cold-storage factory outside the city, asked for special naval protection. The factory was situated in an area which housed all the lowest and worst elements in the neighbourhood and the manager's grounds for fears were well founded. I felt that as Nanking was the capital, and seeing we had recognised the present Government, I ought to throw the whole responsibility of protection on them. I therefore spoke to both Dr. Wang and Admiral Ch'en and they promised the necessary protection. I assured them I trusted them fully and accepted their word. I then heard H.M.S. *Berwick*, a 10,000-ton cruiser, was coming and the press issued a statement I had asked for her, which was not the case. I at once saw Admiral Ch'en and explained the position quite frankly to him. He fully understood and told Dr. Wang and President Chiang Kai-shek. It meant much to me to have an understanding person like Admiral Ch'en to talk to. I took Captain Robinson of H.M.S. *Berwick* to call on the Admiral, and he explained to Ch'en that his ship had come to co-operate with the Chinese authorities if the Communists made efforts to create disturbances. I subsequently learnt the leading authorities were wholeheartedly delighted at knowing they could rely on us for co-operation as their position was by no means secure. Captain Robinson also asked the Admiral whether his cadets would like to visit the ship, and the offer was readily accepted. He entertained forty-eight and the visit was a huge success. Captain Robinson worked very closely with me and I capped his efforts with a naval dinner, seven officers from our three ships, Admiral Ch'en and four officers, and to my great delight General Ho Ying-ch'in. I had sent him a personal letter to say if he, as a military man, was not afraid to meet so many naval fellows, I would be delighted to welcome him. We had a very merry evening, and at the close Admiral Ch'en with a smile which all who knew him rejoiced in, turned to Robinson and said, " Send what you like, we quite understand." Thus the whole incident closed in the best of good fellowship, and what seemed a mistake was really a blessing in disguise, for the President

had his special guard outside the factory, the *Berwick* was here, all were working together and we all knew just what the other fellow was doing or meant to do.

And here may I record what a very deep debt of gratitude I owed to the Navy. Quite apart from the encouragement and advice I received from the more senior officers, the officers in command of every ship which visited Nanking invariably entered whole-heartedly into my efforts to break down the barriers which had risen between China and our country during 1925–7, and to recreate a spirit of genuine mutual understanding. These efforts were keenly supported by Admiral Ch'en who was unstinted in his hospitality to the officers of H.M. ships. I was also indebted to many officers for assisting in the wearisome decoding of the wireless messages and telegrams with which we were often literally deluged ; but my gratitude was not limited to the officers only, for the men assisted nobly. It must be remembered that the Universities, especially the University of Nanking, were filled with students whose patriotic zeal led them to be keenly anti-British. I felt the best way to combat this regrettable spirit of hatred would be through football, so I arranged a series of matches between the ships of the Yangtse flotilla and Ginling College, for which I gave a silver shield. I was asked that the men going through the town to the College grounds should not wear uniform in case it excited the crowd, but I refused to accede to this request and said I relied on the boys themselves to see that nothing untoward occurred. The matches were a huge success and the shield was ultimately won by the Chinese College, which was perhaps fortunate as it left with them a permanent memento of very happy gatherings. These games enabled me to make many friends among the students and they gave me a photograph of their team at the end of my time in Nanking. I also had a dinner for the football teams. I was advised not to attempt this as I would only expose myself to a rebuff as Chinese students would never sit down at table with naval ratings. My advisers were entirely wrong. The dinner could not have been more cheerful, and it was a sheer delight to watch the lads learning games of cards from the men. The Military Attaché who was with me rejoiced in this happy evening as much as I did.

The success of these games with Ginling College brought a challenge from the Central University which was *the* hotbed of anti-foreign agitations. I decided to risk it, although I knew some of the students had vowed they would never permit sailors in any uniform to enter their compound.

The police were worried over this venture, and the Chief of Police was present with a large guard in mufti. The men who came from H.M.S. *Sepoy* were told to pay no attention to any queer things the Chinese might do, such as substituting players while others got their breath, and to take anything that might happen good-naturedly. The ship was asked to supply the referee, and never have I seen a match so skilfully handled. When the *Sepoy* was leading 3–1 he gave a foul against them in front of their goal. The University back took the free kick and missed. The huge crowd roared with delight and there was no danger of any trouble after that. During the game one of their team tripped up one of our team from behind, but our fellow at once presumed it was an accident and on getting up shook hands with the offender, an action spotted by the huge crowd which was watching. A rattling good match was won by the ship 5–3, and the University asked me to arrange at least two matches a month during the following season. I was told the matches did much to improve the play of the students, especially in head-work, to which they had paid little attention till they saw how effective it was with our men. One of the Chinese teachers said, " In any case your fellows have taught them not to mind making their hair dirty ! "

Rumours of Communist activity persisted throughout March and April, and although far more credence was given to them by the Japanese authorities than by ourselves, there was no doubt that among the highest officials a feeling of great uneasiness existed. Quite suddenly I found a guard of twelve men sent to the Consulate General without any request from me, and found they had been sent by Dr. Wang. Then in addition, three detectives were sent from Garrison Headquarters, who although they did not see me made searching enquiries regarding all entrances to the Consulate General and also as to how far my " boy " was really interested in serving me. The President also sent a special guard to the International Export Company. As all objection to the

presence of H.M.S. *Berwick* had been removed, and as the guards were Chiang's picked men, I could not help feeling that the President, Madame Chiang or T. V. felt that at any time they might be in a difficulty and want somewhere to retreat while arrangements were made to escape. I did not think they were there to protect me, even though they had orders to fire if there was real trouble.

I think I had reason for this surmise. Chiang Kai-shek had been successful in quelling the Wuchang rebellion and felt he must send in his resignation as Premier as the people might fear his power was too great and that he would virtually become a dictator. T. V. also thought he himself must go, for well he knew the attacks on the Soong Dynasty, and he felt if he resigned it would ease the situation. (The Soong Dynasty was a nickname given by opponents or in chaff, seeing that Madame Sun Yat-sen, Madame K'ung and Madame Chiang were all sisters of T. V.) He knew that bankers and merchants in Shanghai had stated that if Chiang Kai-shek won a complete victory over Wuchang he must resign, although they invariably added that if that meant Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang came to the front Chiang would be asked to return. It was, I know, a real difficulty to know what to do with Feng, who had left Nanking and appeared to be sulking ; how to give him something big enough. Chiang realised exactly what these leading Shanghai merchants felt, and because he knew he would be asked to return if Feng came out, he argued that if he sent in his resignation it would be merely considered bluff and insincere. He wisely decided, therefore, to hold his post and watch popular feeling. It was a bold decision, for much hinged on the misunderstanding with Feng being smoothed over, and in addition the period of military domination was supposed to be over and the so-called period of political tutelage commenced ; but Chiang realised and hoped others would realise that the Civil authorities could not carry out any further moves without strong military backing, and consequently a military man must remain at the head of the Government for the present, and indeed for some time to come. Chiang Kai-shek knew that combination after combination would be formed against him, but he had such a pure devotion to his country and unshakable belief in his mission that he steadily pursued the course he set himself. In all he did he

was more than ordinarily helped by his wife. What he owes to her wisdom and devotion he alone knows. I have known very few more devoted couples, and it is rare to meet so much charm coupled with such outstanding capacity as are combined in the personality of Madame Chiang.

I was privileged a few years later to have more than one intimate talk with the Generalissimo, as he came to be known. I think what struck me most was his personal conviction in himself in the task he had set himself of uniting China. In this conviction there may have been a touch of the mystic, but only that touch which is evidence of a great leader. He ever had unwavering faith in the importance of the work he had to do, and he dared to believe that he possessed an indefinable something within him which was superior to circumstances, however adverse. He pursued one end alone, and what his hand found to do he did it; neither did he ever permit the idealism of the new National movement to blind him to the existence of uncomfortable facts. He abhorred extremes. I think, too, that during the years 1930–33 he realised more and more that however important politicians and parties might be, far more deeply important was the character of the people, the patient, long-suffering people of China, and their welfare has been a matter of serious thought with him. No-one could meet him without realising the manly humility of a character faced with such a gigantic task.

In spite of, perhaps because of, the uneasiness of the situation, the National Government decided to have an impressive public funeral of their great leader, Sun Yat-sen, and his body, which had been embalmed in Peking, was brought to Nanking. Matters took a little arranging, as the Government issued no invitations to be present, and the Commander-in-Chief was unwilling to ask whether he should attend, as that might only invite a rebuff. Moreover, I learnt that "patriots" intended carrying banners with anti-foreign slogans, among others "Turn out foreign warships from inland waters". However, with the assistance of Admiral Ch'en I got all these matters smoothed out and was assured that the presence of our naval authorities would be welcome, and that no offensive slogans would be displayed. The circus arrived from Peking in full force on 29th May. On

the 31st Sir Miles and staff, accompanied by Admiral Tweedie, Captain Arbuthnot and Paymaster Captain Ayre and Flag Lieutenant Evans, at 7.30 A.M. went to headquarters, where we were received by a guard of honour and where all the foreign representatives and their staffs collected and were introduced to General Chiang Kai-shek, the President. After that we all proceeded to party headquarters, where the body was lying in state in a glass-covered coffin. Wreaths were laid before the coffin by each of the Foreign Missions and we all filed past the body. The burial took place next day in the mausoleum prepared on Purple Mountain, just over a mile outside the city. It is a beautiful site with a wonderful view. The ascent to the mausoleum consists of many flights of steps, and in bright sunlight the white marble and blue roofs gleam with a brightness which makes this memorial to the Great Leader visible for miles around. We were all up at 2 A.M. on 1st June for the ceremony and at 3.30 left for party headquarters in seven cars. At 4.30 the coffin was brought out and placed on a motor hearse and the whole effect of watching the dawn slowly breaking and the bright moon was weird. The members of the Chinese Government formed on one side and the Foreign Missions on the other, and we all held a rope to give the impression we were drawing the body to its resting-place. It was strange how few sightseers there were and I could not help feeling it was the burial of a party leader and not of a national hero. We walked as far as the Drum Tower, when we returned to the Consulate General for breakfast and a rest. The total route was over eight miles, and by 6 A.M., when we went back, some of us were already tired. At nine we again got our cars and motored direct to the mausoleum, arriving just in time for the final obsequies. The coffin was carried up the steps by skilled chair-bearers from Peking who manœuvred the difficult slope without in any way moving the coffin. In the mausoleum we filed past the last resting-place and finally got back by noon.

In view of the fact that the whole of the Diplomatic Body were in Nanking, the celebration of the King's Birthday was a brilliant function. The President gave a lunch on this day as well, followed by a garden party given by Dr. Wang. The day ended with a dinner on board H.M.S. *Kent*, Admiral Waistell's flagship,

at which fifty sat down to dinner, including all the Diplomatic Body and every member of the Chinese Government. It was a tremendous success. Admiral Ch'en also gave a large naval luncheon, and apart from increasing anxiety regarding the political situation matters could not have been smoother.

CHAPTER XXV

1929, 1930

DR. WANG was much hampered in his forward policy by the constantly varying political situations, but he never wavered from the task he set himself of making new Commercial Treaties with each Power individually, and he was always optimistic. Just before the funeral of Sun Yat-sen he had obtained a settlement of the Nanking and Hankow Incidents with Japan, and had entered on negotiations for a Commercial Treaty. Although Japanese sources were largely responsible for the persistent unrest caused by rumours of Communist activities in Nanking, I do not think that in those days of 1929 Japanese leading officials were hostile to China. From conversations I had with their Minister, Mr. Saburi, I am convinced they were not, as he called on me on arrival in Nanking to ask how I had created such a friendly atmosphere which had been of great benefit to all. A leading member of the Japanese Government, too, had, to a foreign diplomat who was a friend of mine, criticised both the American and British Notes regarding Extra-territoriality as not going far enough. The complete cancellation of the jurisdiction of foreign Powers over their subjects was one of the main platforms of the National Government. In his opinion, ever since the Washington Conference the Powers had been promising concessions to China and expressing good-will without going any further, and in his opinion the Notes gave China cause for disappointment, if not for bad feeling. There was a good deal of truth in what he said, but I think if Britain had given China a definite date stating the number of years after the promulgation of laws they decided must elapse before they would be prepared to withdraw their jurisdiction and make Britons amenable to Chinese Courts, the Chinese authorities would at once have bargained for a reduction of the period stated, however reasonable it might be, and further useless discussions would have ensued ending in nothing being accomplished. Japan was prepared to go further than we had offered, especially in this fixing of a definite date for the abolition of extra-territorial

jurisdiction and for the full return of the Concessions and Settlements. The fly in the ointment was Manchuria, and special concessions to Japan in the three provinces China would not discuss. This bred bitter feeling. The Chinese had never forgiven Japan for her demands extracted from the Peking Government in May 1915, and annually celebrated the date of their signature as a day of shame, or national humiliation. Anniversaries of this kind are dangerous in the East; they do not tend to repentance as a result of this form of self-abandonment, but they produce hatred for the people who cause them to feel shame.

Japan considered that she was given no chance to pursue a friendly policy and when the military secured power dropped all pretence of doing so. Since the Washington Conference, too, they had lost the restraining influence of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and felt we had deserted them at the bidding of America. They therefore adopted the attitude of the naughty boy in the Family of Nations and more or less said, "As you are no longer nice to me I don't care what I do, or what you think." I was never surprised at the Japanese readiness to appear to give concessions to China, for I was convinced the Japanese Government felt they had the power to punish China on any pretext, and what better pretext could be found than failure by the Chinese to protect foreign nationals after China had assumed full sovereignty, and what was easier than to provoke incidents? I viewed with dismay the unreasoning manner in which students and even some local officials made use of every conceivable form of annoyance against Japan, though it must be confessed the actions of the Japanese incessantly gave them an excuse, and they kept careful toll as insult followed insult.

The fatal inability of certain members of the Government to grasp the delicacies of racial psychology led them astray. The Chinese Army, in its conceit, wanted war, the students demanded war and the officials had no fixed policy but hoped for the best. If only heart-searchings on days of shame had led to a fixed determination to completely reform the internal administration of their own country, mainly by saving the honest peasant from ruthless taxation and from the merciless exactions of the military, a large step towards the unification of the country would have followed. But their own authorities did not have that decided love for and

sympathy with the humble toilers in China that many foreigners possessed. In dealing with Japan an unshakable belief in China's future was an essential, coupled with patience and vision. Make the heart of the country so solid it could never be broken, having the certainty that apparent losses on the outside borders were merely temporary, however galling. Above all, conceal hatred, simulate friendship.

It is possible that in their dealings with Japan the Chinese Government were led astray by the apparent complacency with which Great Britain had submitted to the blows delivered in 1925, 1926 and 1927.

If this was so they completely overlooked the magnificent national greatness evinced by our attitude. I do not think it ought ever to be forgotten and it stands out in marked contrast to the aggressive policy pursued by Japan. During three ghastly years, 1925–7, every conceivable action was taken by China under Communist extremist dictation to compel us to shed blood. The incidents were carefully staged. Yet in spite of the appalling destruction and wilful pollution of British properties, official, missionary and commercial, we stayed our hand. Who will forget the unequalled discipline of the men of H.M.S. *Wanderer* and the marines from H.M.S. *Hawkins* who guarded the Concession at Hankow and were stoned and had filth thrown on them for three and a half hours without firing a shot? Even the Nanking Incident when the Consulate General was overrun, British subjects murdered and many premises rendered too filthy for habitation, did not alter the main policy of conciliation. Great Britain knew her power but rose above resentment, national and personal, and sought to develop the best rather than exterminate the worst. Only real greatness can achieve this. The restraint of Great Britain was a death-blow to extreme Communism, which the Chinese Government repudiated when they turned to sane reasoned judgement under the magnificent leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. Though in his heart he had no love for foreigners, he had the statesmanship to realise the extent of the restraint shown by Great Britain, the earnestness of her profession of friendship. Yet China showed but little deep gratitude, and this fact led Japan to doubt her sincerity. The Chinese Government continued to indulge in incessant pinpricks, searching ships,

imposing business taxes, demanding to see the account-books of British firms, complete re-registration of land, in all their actions appearing to be directed by a queer conceit that no-one dared actively to oppose her. She really abused our friendship, but we never struck and I think we achieved our object, a truer mutual understanding based on affection and respect and not on hatred.

I am convinced we lost no prestige by this consistent policy of conciliation though we may have led China to believe she would never be touched. Her authorities failed to grasp that we had countered Communism with peaceful methods, that we could forgive fully and greatly, and they ignored the fact that in dealing with Japan they were dealing with a country which regarded idealism as a dangerous element, and which was convinced that morals and a policy of expediency such as we had adopted since 1927 was idealistic and would not be pursued by them. Was it not true that up to that date the history of British relations with China was almost a tragedy of misplaced optimism! The Chinese Government might have realised Japan would not consider the half-measures usually adopted by foreign Powers as of any value, and that when they had weighed up the situation they would make an occasion to begin their punishment, and with a determination to go through with what they commenced. Perhaps they did realise it and were so convinced of their inherent strength they conceived it worth while to placate popular animosity against Japan by acquiescing in the desire for war rather than any concessions. They were probably correct in their estimate of the capacity of their people to undergo any form of sacrifice with patience, for hideous holocausts were known to them, millions had died from floods or drought in years gone by, and if ghastly tragedy was to overtake them in a new form it was to be accepted as the will of Heaven.

As 1929 drew to a close the situation got worse and worse and brigands made frequent appearances close to the city. The main causes of the uneasiness were doubts as to the loyalty of Feng Yü-hsiang and Yen Hsi-shan in the North, and incessant rumours of projected risings in Nanking itself. Governor Yen was urged to act by dissatisfied members of the party who, having failed to get jobs, spread rumours that there was serious opposition against him, but Yen was wise enough to know the motives of

these folk and paid no attention to them. Feng at that time was really ill with a mysterious internal complaint and very high blood-pressure. He was learning Japanese in view of a projected trip and amused himself learning painting. He ignored politics and did not even have a wireless set in his house. Public feeling was against further civil war, and although Yen Hsi-shan's moves were uncertain a renewal of fighting seemed improbable. The real danger to China in the North was the use Japan might make of the known dissatisfaction in those parts, for it was an incontrovertible fact that the rumours of projected risings mainly came from Japanese sources. Still thoughtful Chinese argued it was natural Chiang Kai-shek should have enemies in his position, but it was essential there should be one strong man as a figure-head and Chiang was strong enough to win through for the present; he was, in fact, what the country wanted; power must be centralised if the unification of China was to be secured and its integrity preserved.

Thus although the North was uneasy, its leaders did not strike. This was fortunate, as late in September General Chang Fa-kuei in Central China, thinking no doubt he could combine the disaffected units and make a name for himself with the "ironsides" under his command, did strike. He hoped he could work through the Provinces of Hunan and Kueichou and, collecting the forces which had been scattered at Wuchang, aim a blow at Canton. For real success he was counting on Feng Yü-hsiang and Yen Hsi-shan moving at the same time, when China once more would have been split up in areas ruled by War Lords. It is marvellous to think what Chiang Kai-shek lived through and worked through, and only his conviction in his mission and his ability to perform it, with his wife's incessant devotion, enabled him to win through to the position he finally attained. The rare efforts of the Central Government to centralise and stabilise finance were used against them by Generals who had not secured all they wanted and who, rebelling against schemes of disbandment to relieve the country of the heavy expenditure on worthless troops who were a menace and plague to all peace-loving countrysides, incessantly indulged in blackmail, saying, "Give us all the money we want or we fight." Chiang Kai-shek was, in fact, surrounded by piles of dry straw which only wanted

a good spark for a huge conflagration, but he was working from the centre and able to extinguish each outbreak before it spread. He did in this case. Pessimists considered Chang Fa-kuei's move only the first of many. It was realised that he could not possibly continue to satisfy the financial demands made upon him from every quarter, and his popularity was by no means established. All the elements for real trouble existed, and there were few signs for believing that he could win through in the long run. Unpopular Governments in the past had turned attention from themselves by encouraging anti-foreign outbursts, and it was fairly obvious only a real danger and a common enemy would ever combine China as a whole, but in 1929 the National Government had no anti-foreign leanings and the authorities in Nanking faced the future with courage and vision. They continued to develop their capital, built new roads and Government offices, and with the help of American advisers laid plans for beautifying the city.

To the ordinary beholder Dr. Wang appeared to have but little to do and no worries. He frequented the International Club and threw himself heart and soul into the social life of International Nanking. He dined there, danced, played billiards and bridge and was the life and soul of every party. With the American Consul General we spent an afternoon looking for a golf course and found a lovely site in the beautiful park country outside Nanking. A huge stadium was built and a lovely bathing-pool; ground, too, was reserved for a race-course. This faith in the future of Nanking deserved the fullest reward. An American naval officer once said to me that ideal international relations were more nearly realised in the International Club at Nanking than in any place he had visited in the world.

A British circus visited Nanking, but had to be withdrawn owing to soldiers demanding admittance free. In fact, a riot was only stopped by pinning the tent entrance under the elephant's head, and as the elephant sadly wagged its head from side to side it produced a laugh and serious trouble was avoided. My first intimation of the presence of the circus had been a telephone message at 9.30 P.M. to say the elephant refused to cross the pontoon to the shore from the hulk and what could be done? I could never understand why a Consul General should have been expected to be able to coax a female elephant when its own

trainers failed. Fortunately she chose to land before I turned out to see what could be done.

I think this period, *i.e.* December 1929, was probably the most lonely time General Chiang Kai-shek ever experienced and it really seemed as if we were on the verge of a volcano, but in spite of an attack on him in Shanghai the President never wavered. He took the ordinary precaution of personal protection by having trusted guards and a properly protected car, but his foreign advisers were not always too discreet and he must have felt he had very few in whom he could trust. I never felt he was on really friendly terms with Dr. Wang and regretted this, for C. T. deserved well of his country and was a loyal friend. Even he did not feel sure of himself in these doubtful days. A group was also forming to welcome Wang Ching-wei back to China in the hope he would form a Government with less dictatorial powers and I knew men who had been approached with a view to joining him.

A mutiny of troops at P'u-k'ou, the port on the other side of the river to Nanking, showed how dangerous the situation was. It was touch and go ; it was not a very serious affair, as with more energy those responsible for the mutiny might have made a good coup. As it was, the General responsible bungled the matter. He first tried to persuade the President to go over to P'u-k'ou and review his troops, and when this request was refused, asked for permission for his troops to cross the river to Nanking on the feeble pretext he wanted to get to Canton quickly by rail via Shanghai. This was also refused and the mutiny took place at once. After doing a bit of damage the mutineers dispersed and the movement fizzled out. At the same time there was a serious disturbance at the Mint owing to the disarming of the guards. These men belonged to the command of a General who had done very fine work for the President in Hunan Province, and the incident, like the insulting disarmament of the guards left by Feng Yü-hsiang, created a very bad impression. Many officials moved their families to Shanghai and questions were asked in the House regarding the safety of British women and children, to which Mr. Henderson replied H.M.S. *Suffolk* (Captain Arbuthnot) was at Nanking and H.M.S. *Berwick* following, and that instructions had been sent me in the event of danger immediately to order the withdrawal of all women and children.

It was a difficult situation and I was indebted to Admiral Ch'en for keeping me informed regarding the mutiny and trouble at the Mint. With the memory of March 1927 cruelly fresh in one's mind it was obvious risks should not be run, but I was anxious not to raise a panic among Chinese residents which the removal of women and children could not fail to produce, as information of this nature spreads like wildfire in China. At a meeting of the Consular Body, therefore, I deprecated issuing an evacuation order and advised waiting till there was definite news that matters seemed likely to get out of hand. The same evening, 7th December, I had a dinner and a small dance for my daughter. At 10.30 P.M. news came that the railway line between Nanking and Shanghai had been cut and shortly afterwards the American Consul and Japanese Consul came round and we decided to evacuate our women and children. They had all gone by 10th December, but by 21st December the situation had cleared sufficiently for them to return.

CHAPTER XXVI

1930, 1931

THE year 1930 was an anxious one. Yen Hsi-shan rebelled in the North and was joined by Feng Yü-hsiang. The fighting was bitter and casualties very heavy, but the rebellion was suppressed. The Communist armies in Hunan met with a measure of success and established a form of government on the north bank of the Yangtse near the entrance to the Tungting Lake. In Nanking itself early in April there was a very unpleasant outbreak. The British International Export Company, who had suspended work owing to disturbances in the interior, decided they could re-start the export of frozen egg products on a small scale. The way for their doing so was carefully paved and the authorities had full information regarding their intentions. When they reopened they had only employment for two hundred men and two thousand sought admission. A mob collected by the rejected then proceeded to beat up the chosen. The wildest rumours were started, the worst and most malicious being that bluejackets from H.M.S. *Cornwall* had landed and killed some men in the factory and blood had been seen streaming from under the factory gates. Communist activities were always rife in the Central University and agitators found an easy task in stirring the students to stage a demonstration, and soon a howling, shouting mob was at the gates of the Consulate General on their way to the factory. The leaders looked like maniacs, leaping in the air and waving banners, and the mob followed their lead in yelling anti-British slogans in chorus. I advised the police who had been sent hurriedly to the Consulate General to leave the gates open, arguing that if the gates were shut it would encourage the mob to force them open and that if they were open they might fear a trap, and I was mercifully right in my surmise. The police handled the situation with wonderful skill and the procession moved on to visit the factory, which was outside the city and over four miles away. They never got there. Chiang Kai-shek acted promptly, everyone kept their heads and what might have ended in a serious

disaster was only a very unpleasant incident. The President took a very serious view of the demonstration, which he stated had a political significance. Many said the students were actually financed by Feng Yü-hsiang who wanted to discredit the Government in the eyes of the foreign Powers. Chiang Kai-shek stated it was Communists who had egged on the students for the same purpose. He declared if anything of the sort occurred again the Government would take drastic action and not hesitate to shoot and to close the Universities. He officially denied the rumours about the men from H.M.S. *Cornwall*. Chiang well knew what a disturbing factor students might be and he determined to guide their energies into safe channels; but he had to deal with them again the following year when I was absent on home leave, when they attacked and wounded Dr. Wang, who resigned in consequence and left politics for good.

My many friends among the members of the Chinese Government expressed their personal regrets for the unpleasant scenes which had taken place outside my residence in a very genuine manner.

I also received a personal letter from Dr. Wang:

> Will you accept a little present from me as an expression of my high regards for you? As Great Britain's Consul General stationed in our capital you have been a very important factor to bring about and promote Sino-British friendship. History will record your achievement.
>
> I hope you will forget the disgraceful incident that happened the other day. Misguided youths often do most stupid things. I want to tell you again how sorry I was when I first heard of it on my return yesterday. You could well imagine how I felt when a year and a half ago such youths came and broke up my residence. Please accept my deep sympathy for the gross injustice they did to you and also my sincere regrets.

The present was a volume of the new Treaties bound in scarlet silk and autographed. As few copies are extant bound in this manner, I gave this treasure to the Vaughan Library at Harrow School.

In the fighting with Yen and Feng, Chiang Kai-shek suffered a severe blow in the loss of Tsinan, the capital of Shantung Province, but thoughtful officials were rightly convinced he was

the only man who could hold the Government together. They spoke highly of his qualities, especially his thoroughness and his love for the people, whose welfare he had very genuinely at heart. While none of Chiang's adherents feared defeat, they could not even with victory see into the future clearly. There was a lamentable lack of men to fill important positions, though many were clamouring for posts. It seemed almost like groping in the dark with unknown pits ahead, into any of which the new struggling Government might fall, and Communism an increasing danger. They recognised they had made many mistakes, and indeed with the colossal task before them mistakes were only natural; but they believed too in the future, and that with their ideals and unity of purpose they would win through. The ambitions of the Northern leaders were selfish and ultimately doomed to failure. This quiet conviction that all would end well always impressed me. None anticipated an early conclusion of their difficulties.

The natural delay of our Government in taking up the negotiations on the abolition of extra-territoriality fretted certain members of the Government, for they felt that they were exerting their best efforts to suppress the Northern rebellion and were confident they would do so, but apparently we doubted their ability to do so, and they constantly harped on the absence of the Minister in Peking as proof of this, and as encouragement to the malcontents in the North. We were also embarrassed by the action of Lennox Simpson (Putnam Weale) in taking control of the Customs at Tientsin without the authority of the Central Government, and nothing would persuade even our best friends in the Government that there were very good reasons for not taking legal action against him. They felt he could have been dealt with under our Orders in Council, and our failure to do so, coupled by the continued residing of Ministers in the North, gave the rebel Yen encouragement. Remove this and the rebellion, having lost moral support, would break down.

By the end of August 1930 events in the North had taken a decided turn for the better; the Shansi troops had been thrashed and Yen was no longer a danger. The President was beginning to win more and more admiration as a strategist and a man, and his enemies realised it was a hopeless task to defy him. Manchuria at that time did not enter the picture, as the Young Marshal,

Chang Hsüch-liang, was friendly and showed no signs of interfering with politics inside the wall. Communism was still serious, but it was felt it could be checked. Communism in any case in China had none of the features of Communism as practised in the Soviet Union, . . . no deep fervent belief, though it had obtained root in certain student quarters. For example, at the Central University, always a hotbed of extremists, at lectures lights were suddenly extinguished and when switched on again the room was found flooded with slogans, "Down with Chiang Kai-shek", "Uphold Communism", "Down with the Government", and in spite of the strictest measures being taken very shortly afterwards the whole University compound was placarded with similar slogans. The Garrison Commander was fully alive to these activities, and during this period at least twenty students met their end and there were close on four hundred executions in the city. I knew a good deal of what was going on, as twice during the month without any warning eighteen men were sent to the Consulate General as special guards at 2 A.M. Really in the country districts Communism was an economic problem. Borodin had callously advocated a massacre of some six million people as a means of solving the economic problem, but slaughter of the people did not appeal to the National Government as a means for securing the success of the National Movement. What the Government felt was wanted were the following: (1) suppression of banditry, (2) improvement of education among farmers and labourers, (3) extension of communications. It was hoped they could undertake these improvements in any case in the regions adjoining the Yangtse, where a concentrated effort could be made to attain perfection in all three essentials.

In discussing all these matters with the many officials I so frequently met, I found that those whose conclusions were usually most correct were those who could suppress the imported (foreign educated) part of themselves and argue with a Chinese mind. Nor was this surprising, for China was very mediaeval and the man with the soldiers behind him held the power. Only a deep knowledge of Chinese history could give you this mind. The foreign trained official did not always possess it and did not correctly gauge Chinese internal politics and was apt to err. The President, who never really liked C. T., in spite of his quick brain,

and found him mainly useful on account of his exceptional relations with foreigners, gradually dictated foreign policy more and more. I do not think either that he fully approved of party interference in politics though he never challenged the party. He had differences with the great party leader Hu Han-min undoubtedly, but they really arose from natural human feelings and did not vitally affect fundamentals. Hu Han-min felt he had been slighted and pushed on one side, but he never called upon the party to rise on his behalf. He had too keen an intellect for that. Chiang Kai-shek on his part felt, quite rightly, he had won a very hard struggle for his Government, both as regarded policy and administration. This too was natural and human. In addition, during this short period his mind developed keenly and he had very definite ideas; it was therefore equally natural that having the power behind him he should put these ideas into effect. Thus friction existed between him and the popular party leader Hu Han-min and political agitators made the most of it. Political agitators worked in forms of clubs and tried to arrogate to themselves powers which should rightly belong to a Government. They were mainly hostile to foreign interests and extremist in National ideals. The President curbed their power with consummate skill and very gradually; he never challenged them directly, though he had a firm way of removing people who stood in the way of progress necessary for the future of China as he saw it. The death of T'an Yen-k'ai was a serious loss to the non-militaristic members of the Government. T'an was far more accessible than Chiang Kai-shek and it was easy to see him and thrash things out with him, but since his death the militarists dictated the policy and did not want to thrash things out. If anyone opposed him he was shot or otherwise kept quiet. Even an upheaval would only mean a change in the militaristic authority.

The fact that Chiang Kai-shek became a Christian was generally accepted as natural in view of his wife's family ties and their very close Christian associations. Family undoubtedly was one reason, but he had been struck by the good conduct, discipline and loyal devotion of Christian soldiers at the front, and a study of the Bible, which he always took with him, brought conscientious conviction. I do not think there was any question of

doctrine, but I believe the service and sacrifice of Christianity appealed very strongly to the President, and he also found strength in ordering his life on a basic principle.

There is little else to record of these happy strenuous days at Nanking. In work and in social functions the authorities combined to make life pleasant. My wife and I were privileged to use the private club of some of the leading Members of the Government at Tongshan, some twenty miles out of the city, where there were the most perfect baths from the natural hot springs. Then, too, on the occasion of the visit of the Young Marshal, Chang Hsüeh-liang, we were the only foreign guests invited to an official dance given by the authorities in his honour. Many questions were settled by friendly talks, such as paper-chases at Shanghai, boat-racing outside Shanghai, both opposed by anti-foreign elements in the Provincial Government concerned, and a generous retiring allowance was secured for a British railway engineer who held the fort alone during troubles and mutinies, and whose wife was badly wounded in a very brutal assault made on her at night by an armed man. The Economic Mission which visited China late in 1930 was very well received and cemented happy relations by presenting a cup to the International Club.

Thus once more I found a whole-hearted response from the Chinese authorities when they were convinced of the sincerity of my love for China, and the happy relations once established were never marred. Perhaps the kindest remark ever made to me was made by Mr. Shigemitsu, the Japanese Ambassador, when I left Nanking on home leave in January 1931: "When you return you need do no more work. Just come and live here and the Diplomatic Body will provide you with a residence so that you can carry on the good work of maintaining the friendly atmosphere which you alone created, and from which we all benefited."

Although I was again posted to Nanking on my return to China in November 1931, I only spent one month there, when I was transferred to Hankow. I went to my new post full of determination to devote myself unsparingly to the pluckiest British community in all China, and a community which since December 1926 had borne with remarkable fortitude every

adverse blow which had smitten them. I arrived in Hankow twelve days before Christmas Day.

On leaving Nanking I was once more to learn the depth of genuine feeling of the humble Chinese with whom I came constantly in contact. The head boy of the Club just before I left came and saw me and said he had a favour to ask ; he wanted me to promise something. I asked what it was and he said, to promise to give none of them any cumshaw when I left, because if I did so it would spoil the inner meaning of what they intended to do. I promised reluctantly, for I liked adding to their enjoyment when occasion served, and I had always been treated with marked courtesy. They gave me a silver shield with four Chinese characters meaning " You have left, your memory remains ".

My own native staff gave me a beautiful piece of scarlet embroidery interwoven with delicate threads of silver with black velvet characters meaning " Where love is bequeathed it is impossible to forget ". The Chinese character which I have translated " impossible " literally means " difficult " ; a road may be difficult to travel on or an affair may be difficult to manage. Thus it has also the meaning " hard " as in phrases like hard to bear, hard to accomplish, even " painful " as in painful to witness ; hence the " difficult " in the inscription implied it was so " hard " that it was impossible to forget. I am convinced this was indeed correct.

Many people are prone to think, or like to pretend to think, there is no real feeling behind these gifts, and that they were mere formal courtesies, if not given in the hope of obtaining a more valuable return. This may be true with some gifts, but with gifts such as I have mentioned I am convinced it is far otherwise. I have never lost my love for humanity, and I love to believe in sincerity and depth of feeling behind gifts of this nature. I liked to picture my staff and the Club boys carefully selecting the four characters with which to express feelings hard to express otherwise, and perhaps obtaining the assistance of a Chinese scholar, the writer at the Consulate General or any other to concoct a sentence both literary in its composition, not too common, and expressive of what they felt. The Chinese love of giving pleasure by means of gifts carefully thought-out is one of their most charming traits, and so far as I am concerned I shall never doubt

the affection and good-will which lay behind them. While I was in China I was able in my office to have scrolls and embroideries round me as the huge walls offered ample space, and work was rendered brighter and happier when every time I looked up I saw a reminder of friends I had made all over China from the highest to the most humble.'

CHAPTER XXVII

1931-1935

I ARRIVED at Hankow at 6 A.M. on 13th December 1931. Apart from the Staff of the Consulate General I was met by special deputies sent by General Ho Ch'ang-ch'ün, Commander-in-Chief for the District, General Hsia Tou-yin, the Garrison Commander, General Yeh P'êng, the Chief of the Gendarmerie, and Mayor Wu. I subsequently learnt from General Ho that he had received letters from Nanking from Admiral Ch'en, General Ho Ying-Ch'in, Dr. Wang, the Mayor and the Ministers of Industry, of Health and of Communications to give me a warm welcome. My relations with the Chinese officials were therefore assured and caused me no anxiety. To the British community I was not so welcome, nor was this surprising. After the British Concession was surrendered in December 1926 without a shot being fired in its defence, the area became known as Special Administration District 3 (S.A.D.3) and was governed by an agreement known as the Ch'en-O'Malley Agreement. Under this agreement the District was administered by a Chinese Director assisted by British advisers. It was therefore made to appear on a level with S.A.D.1, the ex-German Concession taken back by China after the war, and S.A.D.2, the ex-Russian Concession handed back to China by Russia, though in fact, in any case in my day, the Director seldom took any drastic action without first having a quiet chat with British advisers or the Consul General. Still after 1927 the port had suffered keenly at Chinese hands, so much so it seemed as if deliberately and callously it had been made the experimental ground for every form of device to extract concession after concession in the way of taxation and in other ways from Great Britain. A Consul General whose conciliatory activities at Nanking were well known, who moreover was reputed to be almost extravagantly pro-Chinese — I never quite knew what this meant — could not be very welcome. Then, too, relations between the Consulate General and the community had not been too happy, and Britons in Hankow had

formed a Residents Association to air their grievances in an emphatic manner at Shanghai and elsewhere. I felt keenly the chill of the welcome, but I had ever trained myself to see the other fellow's side of the question and I respected the feelings which underlay it. I knew, too, where so much grit and dogged pluck existed I should finally win through and secure loyalty if not, as I hoped, devotion.

Immediately on my arrival I learnt that General Yeh P'êng had arbitrarily prohibited a race meeting which had been arranged for, and for which necessary protection had been promised. My predecessor had felt unable to interfere and I saw my chance. I at once called on the General with the Chairman of the Race Club, and after an excellent talk in which I told him I really could not start official relations with a quarrel, he agreed to giving permission for the races to be held. This was a gratifying success and was genuinely appreciated as the race meeting affected not only Britons, but all foreigners and many Chinese. A meeting was always attended by a huge crowd. I was asked to be a judge at the races and invited to the " Champions " dinner when I had to make a speech, which was very well received.

I was then warned that at the official luncheon which the Chamber of Commerce were preparing, the Chairman intended firing off a speech at me and that it was pretty blunt. I called on him at once and tackled him. This appealed to him, as I gathered it was some time since a Consul General had been into anyone's office. He told me about his speech which he had memorised. He explained it was not meant to be insulting, but meant to buck up the community after all they had been through. He volunteered to cut some parts out, but as he had memorised it I told him to carry on. I am glad I did so ; for in the end it reacted in my favour and was rather regretted. Having been told what the community expected me to do in blunt terms, I replied by telling them what I intended to do, but I felt I could not start my last three years in China on such an unsatisfactory basis. I knew what many were saying, hinting I was afraid to meet them, would only see them privately and would have nothing published, so I asked the President of the British Residents Association to summon a meeting of the whole British community in the Victoria Hall. My Vice-Consul and predecessor advised against this course as

rash, feeling I should only disappoint them; but my great stand-by, Rear-Admiral Hill, Rear-Admiral Yangtse, approved and in my own heart I knew I was right. The result was a supreme success. The community were delighted that the Consulate General walls were broken and they could get at me and feel welcome, and the younger generation of Britons welcomed one who meant to make Hankow go and would not sit down with the old die-hards and moan about the old days, wailing that everything was doomed. The Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and President of the British Residents Association were completely won over, and thus started three of the happiest years I spent in China.

During these three years I watched with interest the steady development of what can only be called true greatness among all concerned with the welfare of British interests in the port. With intense sympathy I saw a British community which had been subjected to the hardest blows, hardest of all the surrender of their Concession, rise superior to personal resentment and embark on an era of sane co-operation with Chinese officials and merchants which made Hankow an outstanding model. They came to realise there was indeed something inside themselves which could be made to rise superior to circumstances, and with magnificent spirit they treated as small annoyances blows of every kind which would have broken the heart of many another community.

It was not only as an official that I was accepted in Hankow, but the younger members took me completely to their hearts and there was not one single function of any kind whatever, dinners to cricket, rugger, soccer teams, inter-port luncheons and gatherings of every sort, to which I was not invited. My final farewell when there were eighty-four hosts I shall never forget, and when I left the Club dining-room in a silence that could be felt, with everyone standing in his place, I knew I was receiving the deepest, truest, most heartfelt tribute any official could possibly have won from those among whom he had lived, for whom he had striven. Yes, I loved Hankow.

During my last three years I became closely acquainted with Generalissimo Chiang and Madame. They paid one or two visits to Hankow and I met them frequently at Kuling, the summer hill resort inland of the old Treaty Port of Kiukiang, on the south

bank of the Yangtse and about ninety miles from Hankow. He always made the most searching questions about trade in Hankow, and in his thirst for accurate details often bowled me out. In these quiet talks I was able to draw his attention to the appalling taxation which hampered trade, and the unreasonable exactions extorted from merchants moving goods by rail from place to place, when the hire of a truck was taxed, moving to the platform taxed, placing them on the truck again taxed, hiring a watchman to guard the goods made another exaction, and I have reason to believe he acted on information I gave him. He was also rigorous in compelling Army officers to vacate Mission premises in the interior. There was no doubt about his deep love for his country. Once he asked me in the quiet, quick way he had when keen on his subject, "What do you think China wants most for future progress?" and I replied, "Closer co-operation with foreign countries, and complete reorganisation in levying taxes and the government of the people in the interior. Have patience and vision and make people so happy and strong at the centre and heart of China, from which you could work outwards to her boundary provinces, that temporary aggressions (referring to Manchuria) might be ignored." He demurred and said that meant a very long time, but I said not so long when the histories of nations were considered. In our history, which was not old compared with Chinese history, we had a little paragraph stating that for four hundred years we were part of the Roman Empire, and that did not mean much to us now; neither would it mean much two thousand years hence to read that a portion of China was under foreign domination for one or two hundred years while reform was going on in the interior until China emerged as a Great Power. The main thing was laying foundations for the future and quite unselfishly not expecting to see results, but having full belief in the certainty of China's glorious future. China was, in fact, unconquerable. She was going through a bad phase and might well have to face much worse times, but in the end she was bound to be successful. Her millions in Manchuria, Malaya and elsewhere rendered her future certain; China had patience. She must have faith and vision. I counselled close co-operation with foreign Powers to secure development. I said I knew extremists in China wished to get rid of every form of foreign assistance in

Customs, Posts and the Salt Services, but it was a mistake. If you loved your country and ardently desired the best for her, then do all you could to promote her interests. Speaking of my own country, there were men with brains who were fond of China and would give sterling service in developing any form of commercial enterprise, railways, shipping and even official undertakings, including Navy, Army, Air Force and railways, and who would control finance scrupulously in the best interests of China, so why not use them ? Anti-foreign extremists would protest that China could run her own concerns well enough ; but truly it was not so, and surely if you hated the foreigner you could bury hatred and simulate friendship and just because you disliked him pay him well, use him to the full, and when his work was done thank him and let him go, and having paid him well you need not feel under any deep obligations. Many such topics did we discuss in detail, but he felt that with a certain Power co-operation meant annexation, and he never agreed to treating Manchuria differently from other provinces in China.

In September of 1933 Chiang Kai-shek asked whether it would be in order for him to telegraph to Sir John Simon, then Foreign Secretary, to consider my name as successor to Sir Miles Lampson, but I implored him not to do so. He then said he wanted me back in Nanking and could I resign the Service and come ? They had many advisers but he wanted a friend he could absolutely trust who could talk Chinese and he wanted me. I told him I would willingly resign if I had the full consent of the Foreign Office. Although the matter was favourably considered there were Treasury difficulties to be overcome, as I had still three more years to run before I could retire. However, it was settled that when I did retire I would join the Generalissimo as confidential friend and that he would give me a house at Nanking. Madame Chiang wrote : " My husband said that with your love and understanding of our people, and your knowledge of Chinese affairs, you will be a great help to him in his task of building up the country. He hopes, therefore, that when you retire from the Consular Service you will join us as our personal adviser." She added with reference to A. C. Benson's *Thread of Gold* which I had given to her : " I want to thank you for the little book you sent me. I like especially the marked passages. Coming across

them makes me feel as though a friend had paused to point out the oasis whereby I could refresh my mind in that particular chapter, and gain new strength in searching for the Threads of Gold in living."

In May 1934 the Generalissimo asked me to go to Kuling to see him. I was met at Kiukiang by a Colonel and an A.D.C. and escorted to the hill resort where a room had been taken at the hotel for me. He told me he wanted finally to clinch last year's proposal and wanted me as soon as possible, and on 16th January 1935, when I was on my way home on leave, I met him in Shanghai, when it was arranged definitely that if I could satisfy the Treasury and retire while at home I would rejoin him at the end of the year. I was allowed to retire on 2nd September, nine months before I reached the age of sixty, and returned to China, but I never saw either Madame or the General again, and although a house had been prepared in Nanking my attempts to call were frustrated and letters unanswered. It was, at first, a keen disappointment to me as I still had in me so much to give to China, and I know I could have helped Chiang Kai-shek and Madame Chiang as a personal friend in normal times more than any foreigner I have ever met. This is not boasting, it is merely conviction, knowing myself and the passionate love I had for the people among whom I lived for thirty-six years.

When I saw how matters stood I simply withdrew and made things easy for them, and as affairs developed I realise I could have done but little to help, and can only feel thankful I was spared the complete destruction of all my personal belongings in the holocaust which swept Nanking as a result of the war with Japan which broke out ten months after I finally left China for good.

CHAPTER XXVIII

GOOD-BYE

OVER and over again I have asked myself why I loved China so deeply, and doing so I realise more and more fully that I find a strange fascination in memories of Chinese surroundings which often makes me long to re-visit scenes I loved, and which, reluctantly realising this longing will never be fulfilled, make me pore over old diaries, old photographs and pictures of China which never cease to delight me. I realise, too, more and more that this fascination is not confined to the scenes in which I spent such happy years ; it is heightened by memories of the people among whom I lived, whom I loved.

I do not believe that if you speak Chinese you of necessity become less and less English. Neither do I believe that if you write Chinese your mentality has become such that you are perhaps not quite normal. Rather do I feel that by speaking Chinese you can get to the heart of the people, by writing you win their innermost thoughts. I was not conscious of any mental peculiarity when I retired after thirty-seven years' service, in spite of speaking and writing Chinese with sufficient ease ; rather in my retirement has it brought me untold joy, for I get simple letters from old servants, Club boys, golf caddies and others with whom I was connected. These letters would form many chapters in themselves and they express a wealth of affection and esteem which not many have won from these simple, humble folk. How many foreigners do Chinese address quite simply and naturally as " old father " ?

In looking back I realise I loved the people of China, not her patriots. In the people I found something really great, though with the student patriot I could realise a deep need for sympathetic understanding. Yet it was in the masses unmoved by world events I found patience and courage, and I never ceased to marvel at their simple attachment to Nature and the soil; truly in China the meek have inherited the earth. I cannot see that the inner secret of China's wonderful power for resistance lies with her

leaders; surely it lies in the humble homes where the family system fosters the knowledge of ancestors gone by, and produces; perhaps unconsciously, a definite pride of race. It is this pride which nullifies the ambitions of the invader, for whoever may come to rule the humble farmer, the family ever remains the family whatever visitations Heaven may inflict on him; and by this sturdy devotion the stability of the race is secured. I conceive it a happy thing, not a lamentable fact, that the people possess the feeling that for them it is not safe to meddle in public affairs, for thereby they have quietly preserved a dignity seldom to be found in political agitation. They are so happy in this quiet self-preservation, so appealing in their simplicity. How easy it is to bring joy to those humble childlike hearts! I often think of a New Year's Day travelling from Wanhsien to Chengtu. I was having lunch at a table in a booth on a queer old covered-in bridge which spanned the river. The usual curious crowd of nippers was present, and I also spotted an old woman to whom I gave an empty pickle bottle. The bottle was white glass and a rarity. I can picture now her happy smile and the joy with which she went off with the bottle saying, "This truly is a happy New Year's Day!" Then again the keen demand for empty Gresham cigarette tins, flat tins recently introduced by the B.A.T. when I was at Hankow. Not only did the little caddies love them, groundsmen asked for them, and the Irish fathers told me that if they packed medicine in them when dispensing the recipients considered a gift had been bestowed on them. Simple trifling matters, perhaps, but showing the surest foundations of happiness and content. Now many children prefer, irritatingly prefer, the simple toy to the lavish gift of the rich uncle who, present to see the joy his lavish gift produces, finds a rag doll is the favoured treasure?

There are abundant opportunities for bringing joy to these childlike hearts. Many things discarded carelessly, given in a certain manner, find a home, for the Chinese love and enjoy what is given to them, however simple; they seemed to have grasped what a hurrying fussy world ignores so often, a true vision of the best in life, a delightfully healthy enjoyment of what they get, not a longing for what they cannot acquire. No-one who has seen the happiness of simple folk returning home with their pathetic

purchases for New Year's Day, strips of paper, bright red, with perhaps a fringe of gold if there were a few extra cash to spare, can fail to have been moved. They seem to realise simple joys are lasting, and they seem to enjoy eternal childhood. I do not think the so-called benefits of civilisation mean anything to them, I do not know why at present they should. They would rather get fun and enjoyment out of what they know than seek unknown benefits ; surely this is wisdom. Nature they know and so they remain close to her and prefer to be her slave rather than the dependant of a machine which requires care and attention. This natural life gives them physical health, and no matter what the surroundings may be, the Chinese farmer enjoys what he has. We may say certain conditions are filthy ; to him Nature is never dirty. I find this sane and healthy ; there is an absence of fear in it all, even fear of dirt. It may be argued that all this is too human, but surely contentment is the truest aid to peace of soul. He eats his own produce, he watches over his own family, he minds his own affairs, so why should he interfere with others ? I do not find this strange—are not many features of social work rather in the nature of fussing and meddling ? but the aloofness it produces and the complete indifference to political affairs is largely deplored in changing China. Yet if facts are faced, what protection does the farmer receive from the majority of his officials ? He is taxed beyond measure, he has no legal protection, there are no outstanding examples of political integrity to fire his soul with a desire to belong to his party. All he wants are his own tried village elders, who know conditions, who administer common-sense justice, who bring peace to the very human heart of the simple people. They have the urge to work, their desire to live is indomitable, and as I have abundantly found, they possess a consistent fund of good-humour. Truly blessed are the meek for they have inherited the earth. They exist not for their rulers, but almost in spite of their rulers, and in these kindly family-loving hearts lies the unconquerable soul of China. Governments may change, but the people — never.

I had many scallywag friends in Hankow, chiefly among the rickshaw coolies and golf caddies. They were a delightful crowd. The rickshaw-pullers had a bad reputation, and in many cases deserved it, so I determined to try and win them over to better

conduct by getting interested in them personally. I first joined issue with them when I went to the landing stage to take some naval officers to golf. The rickshaw lads were waiting for them as well, and when I got out of my car one truculent fellow said to me, "You are stealing our trade." I looked him in the face and replied, "You are perfectly correct. I never thought of that, I merely wanted to be quick, but here is your fare and now you lose nothing." After this, whenever I went to the landing stage they used to open the car door and usually got ten or twenty cents unless too many came. Finally it became customary to ask permission. They soon discovered I had a very serviceable flow of really good abuse in Chinese and that I used it freely if anyone opened the door without permission. This delighted them, and as the older rascals loved to hear these outbursts they often used to urge a strange coolie to open the door and have a hearty laugh when he got abuse and no cumshaw. I gradually got to know several of them, and they responded well to my personal interest in them. In fact, one brought me intact the regalia of a mason which a sailor had left in his rickshaw. I asked why he had not taken it to the police. He said they asked too many questions and he knew I wouldn't, and he wanted the sailor to get his things back as soon as possible.

When I left Hankow a deputation of these lads waited on me. My office boy told me that some ten lower-class people wanted to see me in the office; none had stockings or shoes, one had not even a shirt, but it was not etiquette for people like that to enter the Consul General's office. I laughed and said etiquette was a very false thing; they were obviously wanting to do something which had sincere truth as a basis, so let them in. They came with crackers and a very simple letter of farewell which they had persuaded a clerk in one of the firms to type. They also came to the steamer, and when they were stopped coming up the gangway, climbed up the side in their determination to say good-bye. Is it any wonder I felt a keen sorrow at leaving China?

The golf caddies were great fun. My first caddie was a nipper who, seeing I played every day, said, "You go to the Caddie Master, tell him I want No. 29 every day." He carried for me over two years and then I got him placed in the Hankow Light and Power Company, where he is doing well. His name

was Golden Harmony. At a race meeting I won a sweep and he had a small share in the winnings as he had bought a ticket for me and had not chosen the lucky number. The boy who bought the winning ticket had a tenth, forty-two dollars. After the racing was over I got my clubs to practise driving and told him to get a couple of fore-caddies. On the way to the practice ground he said, " Do you see that fore-caddie ? " and on my answering " Yes," added, " I have specially selected him ; his family are terribly poor." I could not resist such a delicate appeal, so he too had a little. I always had two fore-caddies, which led folk to comment what remarkably good lies I had in the rough. The caddies used to call " out of bounds " in one word, " outer-boundza ", and they knew if repeated often enough, especially when I could clearly see I had gone out of bounds, it would produce language which, like the rickshaw coolies, they loved to get out of me. The caddies were mostly drawn from hovels in the neighbourhood and I knew the terrible want their families were suffering after the floods of 1931, so partly for their own sakes, partly to enhance the Race Club's reputation in the families living near, I gave an annual feast. It was a happy sight to see a hundred and twenty children sitting down to the only feast they had ever had, as much rice as they could eat, a bowl of soup and five dishes of various meats and vegetables. Before the meal I always had a chat in Chinese. When I entered the room the Caddie Master tapped on the floor with a stick and all stood up in perfect unison, and at the word " Salute " hands were smartly raised. I used to remind them that they were important members of a big club, that if those who smote the ball cursed them they must not lose their tempers, rather must they admire them as good players. Then, after saying " one, two, three ", they were allowed to yell " outerboundza " and again " one, two, three ", when they called out " hao " (all right) and sat down.

When I returned to Hankow, after retiring, finally to pack up I was greeted on board on arrival at 7 A.M. by thirty-five caddies with the Caddie Master. They had come about two miles. More had wanted to come, but the Caddie Master felt thirty-five were enough. After breakfast I went to the Golf Club and had great fun distributing coloured shirts, pullovers, socks, khaki pants, pencils and cigarette tins (flat ones from home, rare in

China and much in demand). I had collected about seventy at home, and on board ship on the outward voyage; it took three men with sticks to maintain order when the distributions of cigarette tins began, and even then a pane of glass was broken. For the clothes I had selected caddies I knew, old friends like K'o Fu L'ai (Kroflite), Buttons, the Parrot and the Pine Grove. The older caddies went for the yellow shirts, the little fellows seized on the khaki pants. During my last three months I had a very small caddie with a big heart and amusing temper, which I often had to check. His name was Fire Sea, a queer mixture. One day he said, "Get me a job." I replied, "I am willing to help, but the difficulty about you is that you are unwilling to grow." He retorted, "Although as a man I am very small, I can still sweep a floor." He got his reward and my friend A. E. Marker, with whom I spent my last days in Hankow — and happy days they were — gave him a job as lift boy. I still get letters from my two special caddies, whose memory of past happy days seems as vivid as my own. They are doing well in jobs I secured for them. As a farewell present they gave me a pair of hangings with silver characters in glass. The inscriptions read, "The beauty of a room consists not in its size", "The scent of flowers lies not in numbers", implying that one life had brought them much happiness. A thoughtful gift for children of fourteen. I hope I do not appear unduly to stress the loyalty and affection I won from these humble folk, but I have done so purposely, not only because it is a pleasant memory, but because so many living in their midst have failed to see any deeper value in their services than the material comfort they bring to the lives of those who employ them.

Since this was written has come the war with Japan. The great event has occurred which will bind China as one, and from which she will emerge a united country. In previous foreign wars only localities in this huge country have been involved, either the South were opposing the attempts of the foreigner to gain a footing and the North was uninterested, or the North, as in 1900, were deeply involved and the South rather thought a corrupt Court had brought the calamity on themselves. But now East, West, North and South are all involved and the whole of China is suffering. Nothing could possibly have occurred so calculated to lay the foundation of a strong united China, a permanent

block to Japanese Imperialistic expansion, than the "Incident" so callously undertaken by the Japanese Military Party. The actions of the Japanese have been marked by a stupidity which passes belief. They had a golden opportunity which they completely threw away, preferring the bestial methods of wholesale murder so dear to Axis hearts to ordered government on sane lines. I am astounded at Japanese stupidity and utter lack of balance in handling the Chinese problem. The sole idea of the Japanese Military Party has been by sheer force to get on top, to be master and to make Chinese slaves without any question of equality, and by cruelty to hold down in fear a people who could easily have been won by outstanding good government and justice. Why did the Chinese residents of Wei-hai-wei petition the British authorities not to return that tiny Colonial Administration to China? The question is easily answered. They required justice from oppression, fair taxation, ordered government, — in fact, they wanted to continue to live in peace knowing exactly where they stood. I do not believe there is a country in the world more responsive to good government and equitable treatment than China. Had Japan pursued the policy she adopted in 1900 of protecting the people and only punishing the Chinese Government, a large measure of success might well have attended her efforts, for the Chinese were tired of incessant civil wars and weary of the selfish ambitions of their leaders, and would willingly have acquiesced in any form of government which got rid of the exactions of the military War Lords and the pitiless rapacity of their soldiers, whom they dreaded and hated. But Japan gloated in her armed superiority and indulged in an orgy of lust and cruelty the memory of which will last through many generations. When will overweening, arrogant, brutal, force-loving Powers ever learn that nothing permanent is ever built on fear?

Japan by her actions has created a new and united China, a China which will rapidly take her place as a world Power, and this gives food for thought. Britons are too prone to ignore the past, indulge in a rest-giving complacency in the present and be vaguely optimistic about the future. At a well-attended lunch they rejoice to hear the Chinese Ambassador state that China will ever remember with gratitude the sympathy and financial assistance Britain has given her in her need, and they believe him.

Yes, I think thoughtful Britons interested in the future of China, and of their own interests in China, should think out the future without indulging in that excess of sentiment to which so many surrender themselves in any questions affecting that fascinating and inherently great country.

When China emerges from the present struggle it will be with the conviction that she is unconquerable, which is a fact. She will expect, and rightly expect, full sovereignty over all her territories ; Concessions, Settlements, foreign gunboats in inland waters, extra-territorial jurisdiction, any form of control in Customs, Posts or Salt Administration, all will have to be so modified that they will practically cease to exist. It will be useless then to point to any sympathy shown to them, or financial assistance given to them ; all the Chinese Government will remember, quite ignoring our own stupendous tasks and difficulties, is that at the outbreak of war with Japan, we did not range ourselves openly on their side. Slight consideration will be paid to existing rights and all the arguments about unequal Treaties will be revived. All this must be faced quite squarely and surrender will have to be made in a gracious manner, be met generously and rather in the spirit we are only doing what it is our duty to do. But we must not expect that it will be considered as generous on our part ; from the Chinese point of view it will be merely just.

Still, with the understanding of our people, whose great strength is in rising above personal and national resentment and letting bygones be bygones, I feel we will once more pardon the bitter years we passed through in 1925–7 and again face the changing circumstances with foresight and wisdom. I also feel that China will realise more and more deeply how truly we are her friend, how in spite of all that is past and however much appearances were against us, we have ever striven to develop all that is best in that great country, and I look with confidence to the day when the two Great Powers, the British Commonwealth of Nations and the oldest civilisation in world, will march side by side faithfully and with mutual sympathy, promoting the peace both love so dearly and ensuring justice and freedom for the millions who can be so happy and prosperous and contented under good rule.

But China must seriously look within before she rises to the

greatest heights. She must not ever blame the foreigner for everything that goes wrong, but must seriously settle down to a complete reorganisation of her internal administration. The care of the people who have suffered so hideously during the war must become a permanent concern, and every effort be made to render the people happy. They must be protected from military rapacity and subjected only to just taxation. The examples of the New Life must come from above, and I am convinced that, with his passionate love of home and his love of the soil, his patience under suffering, his unremitting toil, the humble countryman will respond in a manner undreamed of by the large majority of China's leaders.

The return I got from servants, Club boys, caddies, coolies, shop-people, emigrants, rickshaw-pullers, Sing Song girls and the hosts of humble folk I came across, including soldiers and countrymen, from simple straightforward decent treatment, interest in their lives, their homes, their weddings, their sorrows was so outstanding, the simple marks of gratitude so genuine that, had I not had other weighty responsibilities, I would gladly have devoted my whole life to endeavouring to make all who came in contact with me happier. In them I see the eternal unconquerable heart of China, and not until the highest in the land realise the true meaning of Public SERVANT will China fulfil the magnificent destiny which is hers. The task is so easy, the opportunities so glorious, the reward so rich in happiness. There is nothing to remove, nothing to destroy, only the richest qualities imaginable to develop. Passionate love of home to guide so as to include love of country; the leaders of the Government must deserve this love. Love of the soil, also so to guide as to mean patriotism; the Provincial authorities must win this. Win their confidence, command their respect, seek out their best interests, make them truly happy and then gradually, when you have gained all this, and it is easily gained, teach them, without pressure, the simpler benefits of culture and science, and by producing interest secure a natural desire for deeper learning. To have patience, have vision, have an unshakable belief in the country, have rigid integrity in all public dealings; be content not to see results, rest happy in foundations well laid is all that is required, and the reward is sure. I can conceive of few happier lots than that of an official in the

New China whose actions are ruled by the dictates of the heart, with, of course, a proper check from the head, and whose sole interest is the welfare of the people under his charge. I had many sincere and valued friendships among Chinese officials and gentry, but it was the people who taught me to love China and the people who led me to believe in her unconquerable spirit.

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THE END

Printed in Great Britain by R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh.*